



# Garfield Teaches Internet Safety to 5,433 Tampa Bay Students

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Christina Johnson  
cjohnson@isc2.org  
C. 954.612.1588  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Garfield Teaches Internet Safety to 5,433 Tampa Bay Students  
2nd Annual Cyber Safety Day Tampa Bay Educates 291 Elementary Classrooms

Clearwater based nonprofit Center for Cyber Safety and Education (Center) provided 5,433 third and fourth graders in Hillsborough, Pinellas and Manatee school districts with free cyber safety educational materials during the 2nd annual Cyber Safety Day Tampa Bay, as part of Data Privacy Day.

Schools participating in Cyber Safety Day received the award-winning Garfield's Cyber Safety Adventures: Cyberbullying, Be Kind Online program. The cyber safety lesson was conducted Tuesday city-wide and taught children how to use the internet in a safe and secure way. Through the engaging and interactive Garfield lesson, students learned how to avoid becoming a cyberbullying and online etiquette.

"Right now, with COVID and Distance Learning, it is even more important that we talk and teach our students the importance of Digital Citizenship to keep themselves and others safe," said a teacher participating in Cyber Safety Day Tampa Bay.

According to the Center's event registration survey:

- 82% of participating Tampa Bay schools said they do not have a digital citizenship program in place
- 1-in-3 teachers participating in Cyber Safety Day Tampa Bay said there is a definite increased need for cyber safety education due to eLearning as a result of the pandemic
- 86% of surveyed Cyber Safety Day Tampa Bay educators are concerned or witnessed social media misuse by students

•40% of kids in grades 4-8 chatted with a stranger online. Of those, 53% revealed their phone number to a stranger and 11% met with a stranger, according to the Center's Children's Internet Usage Study.

"The pandemic has put internet safety concerns front and center - and our teachers and parents are seeing that children may not be as ready as they thought to handle so much screentime." said Patrick Craven, Director of the Center. "With the help of local businesses, we have taken the first step by provided schools with this award-winning cyber safety program so that our own children will be safer online.," said Craven.

The event was made possible thanks to the generosity of community and business sponsors. KnowBe4 has stepped up to become a Partner Sponsor for the 2nd year in a row. Also returning this year as an Advocate Sponsor was Colorfast Printing. Other key sponsors are Abacode, ComplyUp, Microsoft, Moffitt Cancer Center, and Philip Swim.

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#### About Center for Cyber Safety and Education

The Center for Cyber Safety and Education (Center), is a non-profit charitable trust committed to making the cyber world a safer place for everyone. The Center works to ensure that people across the globe have a positive and safe experience online through their award-winning educational programs, scholarships, and research. Visit [www.IAmCyberSafe.org](http://www.IAmCyberSafe.org) to learn more.

Garfield's Cyber Safety Adventures Series won the national Learning® Magazine 2019 Teachers' Choice Award for the Classroom, the 2019 Academics' Choice Smart Media Award, and the 2020 Modern Library Award. Teachers and librarians chose the Garfield materials for their ability to engage elementary children and foster retention of core cyber safety lessons.

Christina Johnson  
Center for Cyber Safety  
+1 9546121588  
[email us here](#)

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