# Insight on Education
## By Superintendent Nick Carter, Ed.D

"We are all now connected by the Internet, like neurons in a giant brain."–*Stephen Hawking*

The social, emotional, and economic impact of technology in our children's lives is increasing by the day. Children in the 21st century are growing up in the information age. Where many in older generations used an encyclopedia or dictionary, our 21st century children can access needed information in a matter of seconds utilizing the internet. The possibility exists that 90% of the world's population could be connected to the internet within the next 10 years. Technological advancements present our children with many exciting possibilities while also subjecting them to uncertain dangers.

Many children spend a minimum of 7 hours daily in front of televisions or computers. The increased exposure to television and computers does have an impact on the overall development of children due to the content being consumed and who they meet online. Google classroom and other educational opportunities have proved to be beneficial technological tools our children utilize for educational purposes. However, dangers such as cyberbullying have the potential to significantly harm our children's well-being.

Most adults use technology differently from children, so a digital age gap exists making it difficult for parents and educators to understand dangers children face on the internet. This gap makes it increasingly difficult for adults to monitor and advise children on what is acceptable practices online. As a result, it is imperative that we as adults model and teach our children digital intelligence. "Digital intelligence or 'DQ' is the set of social, emotional, and cognitive abilities that enable individuals to face the challenges and adapt to the demands of digital life" (Park, 2016, para. 5). These abilities are broken down into the eight areas below:

- Digital Identity: This is the ability of someone to understand his or her online identity and reputation. We must teach our children the importance of protecting their reputation online at all times.
- Digital Use: This is the ability of someone to use technology in a healthy manner. We must teach our children that a balance must exist between their online and offline lives.

- Digital Safety: This is the ability to identify and deal with online risks like cyberbullying and radicalization. We must teach our children how to handle exposure to obscene and violent content online.

- Digital Security: This is the ability to detect scammers and hackers. We must teach our children how to navigate these risks and protect their personal identity.

- Digital Emotional Intelligence: This is the ability to develop positive relationships online. We must teach our children the importance of practicing empathy in our online and offline relationships.

- Digital Communication: This is the ability to work with others online in a productive manner. We must help our children realize that a vast number of careers require online collaboration.

- Digital Literacy: This is the ability to use digital media productively. We must teach our children to be competent in the area of computational thinking.

- Digital Rights: This is the ability to understand personal and legal rights using the internet. We must teach our children to understand freedom of speech, right to privacy, and other civil liberties.

The technological advancements of the 21st century present our children with a wide array of beneficial opportunities. Our commitment as adults to teaching children about the responsible use of technology has never been more important. Ensuring that our children master digital intelligence skills will enable them to graduate high school life-ready and soar into the 21st century working world.

<div align="center">References</div>

Yuhyun, P. (2016). 8 digital skills we must teach our children. *World Economic Forum*. Retrieved from https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/06/8-digital-skills-we-must-teach-our-children/