Be Internet Awesome: A Critical Analysis of Google’s Child-Focused Internet Safety Program

Jim Seale, Nicole Schoenberger

Word Count (excluding references): 4933

Abstract

Child safety concerns are a crucial element of conversations about Internet usage, with numerous Internet safety programs seeking to help children protect themselves while online. Google joins these existing efforts with its release of the Be Internet Awesome program, which is designed to teach children how to safely and responsibly explore the Internet. Existing reviews of the program do not include critical examinations of its content and its recommendations for children. As such, this paper critically examines the content and underlying messages of Be Internet Awesome to discover how it conceptualizes and presents Internet safety threats. This analysis reveals that although Be Internet Awesome is well designed and addresses common Internet safety themes, the awareness it aims to help children gain is not comprehensive. Specifically, the program fails to consider the usage of information past a surface level, ignores elements outside of the user’s control, and portrays Google as a benevolent and authoritative Internet expert.

Keywords: Be Internet Awesome; children; Google; Internet safety

Introduction

The Internet is vast, as are the benefits it provides and the hazards it poses. While changing how we seek information and interact with one another, it also opens the possibility of exploitation. Discussions of Internet safety often emphasize the need to safeguard children from dangers posed by their engagement with the Internet (Edwards et al., 2018; Livingstone, Kirwil, Ponte, & Staksrud, 2014; Moreno, Egan, Bare, Young, & Cox, 2013). Although children are generally told not to talk to strangers, when they go online, they do just that. Combating this issue are numerous endeavours to both regulate children’s Internet activity and educate them on safe usage. These include NetAlert, Take Control of Your Digital Footprint, Safer Internet Program, NetSmartz, and Common Sense Education (Ey & Cupit, 2011; Livingstone, 2013; National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, n.d.; Spina, 2017). With its release in July 2017, Google’s Be Internet Awesome program has joined this roster.

Targeted towards Grades 3 to 5, Be Internet Awesome seeks to help children remain safe online, maintaining that children must be prepared to make smart decisions in order to “make the most of the Internet” (Google, 2017a). The program is composed of four components, which are the Internet Code of Awesome (the Code), Be Internet Awesome Pledge (the Pledge), Be Internet Awesome Curriculum, and a browser-based game called Interland. Both the Code and the Pledge outline the program’s five central tenets: “Share with Care,” “Don’t Fall for Fake,” “Secure your Secrets,” “It’s Cool to be Kind,” and “When in Doubt Talk it Out” (Google, 2017f; Google, 2017c). Each of the first four of these tenets correspond to a level in Interland (Google, 2017e), and the ready-made curriculum package incorporates the program’s other elements into activities.
designed for a classroom setting. All four components emphasize child safety, encapsulated in the slogan “play safe, learn safe, stay safe” (Google, 2017a).

*Be Internet Awesome* has received overwhelmingly positive reviews, and the authors of this article concur that it delivers noteworthy benefits. Program strengths include connections with other Internet safety organizations, digital accessibility, and interactive resources for children (Cumming, 2017; Moscaritolo, 2017; McClintock-Miller, 2017; Ravipati, 2017; Spada, 2017; Stein, 2017; Whitwam, 2017). In creating *Be Internet Awesome*, Google partnered with established “Internet safety experts,” including iKeepSafe, ConnectSafely, and The Family Safety Institute (Cumming, 2017; McClintock-Miller, 2017; Ravipati, 2017; Stein, 2017; Whitwam, 2017). While components of this program may be used offline, the fact that *Be Internet Awesome* is browser-based and freely available ensures widespread accessibility (McClintock-Miller, 2017; Moscaritolo, 2017; Ravipati, 2017; Stein, 2017). Another advantage of the program is that it takes the form of an instructional tool that children find fun (Cumming, 2017; Ravipati, 2017; Spada, 2017). Not only does the program provide information about Internet safety, but it also includes interactive resources and entertaining games. These design elements are clearly intended to appeal to children and thereby increase engagement with the program.

Given that the program was only recently introduced, there is a relative dearth of in-depth reviews, both from an academic perspective and from other organizations. This paper addresses this gap by examining Google’s Internet safety program in view of the following criteria:

1. What elements make up the *Be Internet Awesome* program?
2. What Internet safety issues does Be Internet Awesome focus on?

3. How does the program promote Internet safety in relation to each of these issues?

4. What Internet safety considerations are left out of the program?

5. How do the lessons learned from Be Internet Awesome prepare children to protect themselves from online threats?

By focusing on these questions, the authors of this paper set out to uncover the values Be Internet Awesome conveys. This was assessed through an exploration of the type of language used to articulate Internet safety concerns included in the program, as well as by noting the absence of any concerns expressed in the greater literature on children’s Internet safety. The authors’ findings suggest that the language and central tenets of the program emphasize personal responsibility but fail to address elements of Internet safety outside of the user’s control. In other words, these tenets do not delve deeper into Internet usage than what is immediately apparent to the user. The program ignores risks incurred through organizational data breaches and portrays trust in organizations like Google as a sound Internet safety strategy.

Literature Review

Internet Benefits
On the Internet, children have access to avenues for social and cross-cultural interactions reaching around the world (Holloway, Green, & Livingstone, 2013; Moreno et al., 2013). They benefit from increased social support and friendships as well as a strengthened sense of connectedness and belonging, all while learning essential social and digital literacy skills (Holloway et al., 2013; Moreno et al., 2013; Thierer, 2014).
Additionally, the Internet may improve children’s educational performance. In fact, studies have demonstrated a positive correlation between early childhood Internet usage and school achievement (Holloway et al., 2013). Schools also use the Internet and connected technology to expand the types of educational resources and knowledge sources available to children (Moreno et al., 2013). These new opportunities supply children with learning and development possibilities, the advantages of which cannot be discounted.

**Internet Risks**
Despite the range of benefits arising from children’s use of the Internet, there are also some major risks. To start, potential exposure to sexually explicit or pornographic content is a leading concern (Livingstone et al., 2014). Violence is another major theme in the literature because children may view violent content online and/or become threatened with violence themselves (Livingstone et al., 2014). Next, the Internet’s promise of anonymity has given rise to cyber bullying, with up to a third of children being subject to this risk (Moreno et al., 2013; Thierer, 2014). Similar to some of the other risks, the Internet can also facilitate exploitation and sexual solicitation in situations where children may be asked to share personal photographs or meet individuals they do not know (Holloway et al., 2013; Thierer, 2014).

Privacy related concerns pose another significant Internet risk and are often not as readily apparent as the threat posed by explicit content or cyber bullying. Sharing or posting personal information such as one’s name, age, year of birth, location, or even photos of oneself is especially problematic from a privacy standpoint (Livingstone et al., 2014). While information itself is not inherently a threat to children, the ways it is used can be (Edwards et al., 2018). This threat is exacerbated by the unregulated nature of
the Internet and the ease with which digital information can be manipulated (Ey & Cupit, 2011).

**Children and the Internet**

Internet usage among children is becoming increasingly common, particularly in Western societies. In the West, most children use the Internet on a daily basis (Edwards et al., 2018; Livingstone, 2013; Moreno et al., 2013; Thierer, 2014), and more than 85% of American students in kindergarten through grade 12 have access to Internet at home (Spina, 2017). Education systems also contribute to the prevalence of children’s Internet use, especially through incorporating tools such as tablets in the classrooms and assigning school work that requires Internet connectivity as early as kindergarten (Ey & Cupit, 2011). Furthermore, children frequently use the Internet to access social media to socialize with friends, watch videos, and play games (Edwards et al., 2018; Holloway et al., 2013).

Children are cognizant of some of these concerns, such as the dangers of meeting people they only know online and viewing inappropriate material (Ey & Cupit, 2011; Holloway et al., 2013; Livingstone et al., 2014). However, they are often unaware of the risks and potentially long-term consequences associated with their online actions. They may, as a result, create an artificial distinction between “real life” and online situations (Ey & Cupit, 2011; Thierer, 2014). Additionally, children may struggle to evaluate online information, and they are thus more likely to partake in risky behaviours such as giving personal information to untrusted sources (Ey & Cupit, 2011; Holloway et al., 2013; Livingstone et al., 2014; Thierer, 2014). Children ultimately remain unaware of how to maximize their online safety and privacy.
Teaching Internet Safety
According to Moreno et al. (2013), successful Internet safety education requires widespread knowledge dissemination. While this view positions teachers as excellent Internet safety educators, and school curricula often touch upon Internet safety topics such as stalking, obscene material, and consumer exploitation, this does not guarantee the teaching of corresponding preventative behaviours (Žufić, Žajgar, & Prkić, 2017). Additionally, many teachers increasingly view Internet safety education as a parent’s responsibility, drawing a clear connection between parental involvement and children’s safe Internet usage (Ey & Cupit, 2011; Moreno et al., 2013). Here too there are limits, however, the most significant being parents feeling underprepared to teach their children, who have likely grown up as “digital natives” (DeFranco, 2011; Moreno et al., 2013; Thierer, 2014).

Traditional approaches to Internet safety for children emphasize filters, monitoring, and restricted use (Thierer, 2014). Yet, research suggests neither supervision nor filtering content is very effective, as illustrated by YouTube Kids, a video app that filters YouTube’s content to provide a curated collection of children-friendly videos (Maheshwari, 2017). Though the filtering is said to be automatic, videos containing violence, death, and other inappropriate content have slipped through the app’s algorithms (Maheshwari, 2017). Beyond illustrating the fallibility of algorithms for filtering inappropriate content, this demonstrates the danger in relying on technology to ensure a safe Internet experience for children. Restricted use may temporarily shield children from Internet related risks, but this strategy fails to prepare them for using the Internet without such restrictions in place.
Initiatives that adopt an empowerment approach, encouraging critical thinking about information and online activity, are more effective than those based on the traditional idea of “don’t talk to strangers” (Thierer, 2014). Risks, and in this case Internet safety concerns, can then be addressed through awareness building education, in addition to equipping children with strategies for handling these types of risk encounters. Helping children gain skills to deal with challenges they may encounter online actualizes the notion that you “teach a child to think and you prepare them for a lifetime” (Thierer, 2014, p. 63). Thus, effective programs empower children with the knowledge needed to identify risks, and the ability to protect themselves. This more nuanced approach acknowledges the Internet’s presence in children’s lives.

**Methodology**

**Approach**

In approaching this analysis, the researchers adopted a general value sensitive design framework, which seeks to examine the relationship between particular values and design. Value sensitive design explorations are based on three categories of analysis: conceptual, empirical, and technical.

Conceptual explorations seek to describe and conceptualize what values are present in a product’s design (Brey, 2010; Friedman, Kahn, & Borning, 2008). The inclusion of values may be deliberate or unintentional, but they carry implications for how the design is constructed and what it promotes as significant regardless of the creator’s intent. Empirical investigations focus on the human context surrounding the design, specifically the user’s needs and how they make use of the design (Brey, 2010; Friedman et al., 2008). The third aspect of this trifecta is that of technical examinations,
that is, how the product’s design promotes or impedes certain values, or even how it can be designed to deliberately support specific values (Brey, 2010).

**Method**

The researchers conducted a content analysis of *Be Internet Awesome* through first-hand observations. One researcher predominantly completed this analysis, with the other researcher acting in consultation. Given both a lack of comprehensive reviews and a desire to better understand the content itself, observations were based on the *Be Internet Awesome* website. These observations were informed by Internet safety concerns outlined in the literature review and through an exploration of how *Be Internet Awesome* embodies these concerns.

Conceptual and technical considerations from a value sensitive design perspective constituted the foundation for the analysis. The researchers used the conceptual framework to determine how the *Be Internet Awesome* program demonstrates the importance of Internet safety through its content. Though Internet safety is the overarching theme and primary value of the program, conceptual considerations allowed the researchers to examine what aspects of Internet safety the program emphasizes and how it frames online threats to children.

The researchers also drew on technical considerations to examine the ways in which *Be Internet Awesome* highlights certain views of Internet safety and explicitly or implicitly promotes those conceptualizations. For technical considerations, our analysis focused on:

1. The program’s choice of language to describe Internet safety and online threats to children;

2. How the program proposes to address these concerns; and
3. Recommended actions for children to learn to protect themselves online.

In critically examining *Be Internet Awesome* and its presentation of Internet safety for children, the researchers identified gaps impacting the program’s efficacy. Each gap is discussed below and followed by concrete recommendations for how to address it.

**Analysis**

Although *Be Internet Awesome* has been lauded for providing children with tools to protect their privacy and be effective digital citizens, its conceptions of safety and privacy are translations of the traditional “malevolent stranger” safety training for the Internet Age. While *Be Internet Awesome* represents an important development in that children now develop street smarts specifically catered to the internet age, legitimate new threats to personal information and privacy posed by the Internet go unmentioned. The program does focus on individual users and the ways in which they use and misuse information, but it remains silent on the role that organizations play in user privacy and information security. User rights, terms of service, organization level data breaches, data selling, and other concepts crucial to understanding one’s privacy on the Internet appear to fall outside the scope of *Be Internet Awesome*.

**Internet Code of Awesome/Be Internet Awesome Pledge**

The *Code* and the *Pledge* make up the program’s central structure. While they convey similar messages, the main difference between them is their respective wording. The *Code* is worded as a directive, whereas the *Pledge* is written in first person as a promise made by students to uphold the program’s values: “I will take responsibility for protecting important information by crafting strong and unique passwords” (Google,
Such elements make it clear that *Be Internet Awesome* is intended to empower students to take charge of their Internet safety.

**Interland**

While the *Code* and the *Pledge* form *Be Internet Awesome*'s central framework, the *Interland* game serves as the main vehicle for student learning. The game is based on four levels, each of which corresponds to an island and one of the first four tenets of the *Code* and the *Pledge*. While the themes described in the initial explanations of the island levels align closely with the program’s tenets, gameplay is often only tangentially related. For example, Reality River features a multiple-choice test on how to avoid phishing and scams, which is enacted by jumping across platforms to cross a river. In Tower of Treasure, the importance of using lowercase, uppercase, and special characters in passwords is translated into collecting boxes containing these characters (Google, 2017e). Moreover, *Interland* is rife with reminders that it is a Google product, from an obligatory “Google presents” in the opening credits, to the vibrant and recognizable Google colour scheme. There are also more subtle reminders, such as references to Google’s incognito mode and suggestions that high search result placement is an indicator of reliability (Google, 2017e).

**Be Internet Awesome Curriculum**

The *Be Internet Awesome Curriculum*, commonly referred to as the *Curriculum*, combines the program’s five central tenets with the lessons from *Interland*, bringing them together for classroom use. It provides lesson overviews, themes, goals, and standards, as well as three to five classroom activities for each of the first four tenets, and a comprehensive overview for the fifth, —“when in doubt, talk it out”. One activity in each section is devoted to playing the corresponding part of *Interland* and going through
discussion questions, while other activities involve role playing and assessing fictional profiles, messages, and scenarios (Google, 2017b). These activities are more directly connected to the tenets than the gameplay of Interland, as they encourage students to think critically about their online safety.

With that being said, the program defines online privacy in very specific terms. For example, the Curriculum defines privacy as “protecting your personal information and that of others” (Google, 2017b, p. 30). It also maintains that individuals pose the most significant threat to one’s personal information, as illustrated by statements such as “the same tools that make it easy for us to share information also make it easier for hackers and scammers to steal that information” (Google, 2017b, p. 31). Notably, individual hackers and scammers are highlighted, instead of for-profit companies, which can access all data entered into a site and need not disclose how they use this data. When we rely on such organizations for email services, website hosting, Internet browsing, and software, we may be putting our data at risk (SwinfenGreen & Dorey, 2016). While these services and products make navigating the Internet easier, they also collect an increasing amount of personal data and information.

Unfortunately, the privacy risks do not end with the organizations to which we provide our data, as they often rely on other companies to store and process this information, thereby further muddying the waters (SwinfenGreen & Dorey, 2016). Like Be Internet Awesome’s definition of privacy, its conceptualization of security is similarly narrow, defining it as “[u]sing good habits for securing hardware and software” (Google, 2017b, p.30). However, the examples and activities included in the Curriculum consist only of using privacy settings and creating good passwords. The message here is
twofold: there is no reason to distrust companies with your data, and you are personally responsible for ensuring that your data is safe.

**Discussion**

After examining the materials and themes that comprise *Be Internet Awesome*, the researchers identified three significant gaps in the program:

1. It fails to consider the usage of information past a surface level;
2. It ignores elements outside of the user’s control; and
3. It portrays Google as a benevolent and authoritative Internet expert.

**Fails to Consider the Usage of Information Past a Surface Level**

A fundamental flaw in the *Be Internet Awesome* program is that while children are encouraged to be active participants in protecting their online security, they are not privy to all the ways information is used on the Internet. The program demarcates the limits of normal usage, essentially focusing on the information a user can see and interact with when using the Internet conventionally. When it comes to being vigilant about safety and privacy, however, understanding how to navigate the information available to us as users is not sufficient. The advice given by *Be Internet Awesome* tends to stop short of considering the actions and interests of organizations that create and curate content. This can be seen in the *Curriculum*, where threats are portrayed as malevolent individuals, and when organizations are mentioned, the suggested methods for determining their trustworthiness are rudimentary. Again, the risks are represented as stemming from other users, rather than the organizations and companies to whom we give our data.
Indeed, neither “organization” nor “company” appear in the Curriculum, though there are indirect references in the section, teaching students to think critically about whether a site is trustworthy. The Curriculum defines “trustworthy” as being “able to be relied on to do what is right or what is needed” (Google, 2017b, p. 17), but the suggested methods for determining trustworthiness have little to do with this definition. They include considerations such as “does the URL start with https:// preceded by a green padlock?” and “does a site’s URL match the name and title you’re looking for?” (Google, 2017, p.18). While these elements are important security signifiers, there are no recommendations for how to ensure that personal data will be responsibly managed by the organization collecting it. The only allusion to what these organizations may do with data is when participants are advised to check “what’s in the fine print” because “(that’s where they put the sneaky stuff)” (Google, 2017b, p.18). Coming from Google, a company with an 1884-word Terms of Service Policy that links to a 2905-word Privacy Policy, which in turn links to 186 other documents, this shows a profound lack of self-awareness (Google, 2017d; Google, 2017g).

Like the Curriculum, Interland’s central metaphor is that the Internet is a natural resource to explore and make use of, and that individuals pose the greatest threat to users (Google, 2017e). In Interland, these dangerous individuals include the Phisher, the Hacker, the Oversharer, and the Bullies (Google, 2017e). As previously alluded to, though, the Internet is a product of intentional design, and this design conveys values. The Internet user must contend with how their information will be used by organizations that create Internet platforms, as well as individuals and groups that may gain access to organizational user data covertly. Be Internet Awesome does mention hackers, but they
are depicted as stealing the passwords of individuals, rather than large sets of personal user data from organizations.

**Recommendations**

While teaching children to protect their information from individuals is a noble endeavour, this alone does not meet *Be Internet Awesome*’s stated aim of “teach[ing] kids the fundamentals of digital citizenship and safety so they can explore the online world with confidence” (Google, 2017a). For that to be the case, the program must also foster a basic understanding of what goes on “behind the scenes” with user information. The program instead treats the Internet like a black box where information is absorbed on one end and extruded on the other, overlooking where the information is or who has access to it in the interim. This may serve Google’s long-term interests, but it is not in the best interest of the next generation of digital citizens.

**Ignores Elements Outside of the User’s Control**

*Be Internet Awesome* uses positive language meant to empower children and give them a sense of control. This is demonstrated in a letter intended to be sent home to parents, which states, “As children mature into teenhood, our role shifts to helping them learn to make their own safe and ethical decisions” (Google, 2017b, p.3). It adds that children need to “get smart about sharing: what, when, and with whom” (Google, 2017b, p.3). The *Pledge* is also written in this empowering first-person style, followed by space for children to sign. By signing the *Pledge*, they agree to statements such as “I will watch out for phishing and scams and report questionable activity every time,” and “I will take responsibility for protecting important information by crafting strong and unique passwords” (Google, 2017c). According to the *Pledge*, these actions are important
because “that’s what it takes to be a safe and fearless explorer of the online world” (Google, 2017c).

The issue with this mentality is that even when users thoughtfully consider what they share, report questionable activity, and create strong passwords, this may not be enough. Their information can still be hacked, leaked to the public, used for advertising purposes, or even packaged with other user data and sold. Much of this data is collected by indirect means and therefore does not have to be provided by the user to be at risk. Given these factors, the singular focus on personal responsibility is particularly damaging when paired with the “black box” approach to the Internet discussed above. Google is essentially tasking students with protecting their data without an understanding of what occurs between entering the data and the data appearing on the screen. The answer to the question of how one can become a safe and fearless Internet explorer is far more complicated than Google makes it out to be.

**Recommendations**
To summarize, the *Be Internet Awesome* content holds value, as it is important for children to understand how to minimize the risk of their personal information getting into the wrong hands. However, the program’s language connotes a degree of comprehensiveness that is simply unfounded. *Be Internet Awesome* would better serve children by supplementing the program’s proactive, empowering language with an acknowledgement that companies and organizations that create online tools have a significant role to play in the protection of personal data. It would also behoove the program to be more transparent in its explanation of how the organizational side of the Internet operates to ensure privacy is maintained.
Portrays Google as a Benevolent and Authoritative Internet Expert

The program’s two main shortcomings are its focus on information at a surface level and its lack of engagement with elements outside of the user’s control. Notably, both mesh with the long-term interests of Google as an organization. A user base that implicitly trusts the organizations that provide online content, who are willing to share their data and are only concerned about threats posed by fellow users, provides content creators like Google a significant amount of leeway. *Be Internet Awesome* never presents deciding to refrain from sharing information on the Internet as a viable option. Instead, students are told, “As you get older, a strong online presence can bring with it all kinds of benefits” (Google, 2017b, p. 8). Therefore, one can surmise that the program’s overall recommendation is to share carefully but keep sharing!

It is also important to again pause on some of the program’s not-so-subtle promotional messages. Of course, the most obvious is the pervasive Google branding throughout, beginning with the “Google presents” in *Interland’s* opening, and continuing with distinctive Google colour schemes and typefaces (Google, 2017e). In its advice for children, several Google products and tools are mentioned as well. For instance, in the Reality River level of *Interland*, students are told that using “incognito mode” while on a shared computer is a good idea, and that a website’s legitimacy can be gleaned by checking to see if it ranks highly in the search results (Google, 2017e). These references may seem innocuous, but exposing impressionable young consumers to these tools and products within an educational setting is troubling. In situating Google as a trusted authoritative figure, the program could drastically affect the ways in which users interact with the tech giant as consumers in the years and decades to come.
Schools should be a place where students develop critical thinking skills, not brand loyalty.

**Recommendations**

Putting forward recommendations for resolving this issue is difficult because the best solution would be for this kind of training to be undertaken by an organization less invested in how consumers conceive of privacy on the Internet. At the very least, *Be Internet Awesome* should have significantly less Google branding and fewer references to Google products. While one could argue that mentioning Google products makes the program more applicable to the average Internet user, market dominance should not be used to justify product placement in the classroom.

**Conclusions**

**Recommendations for Parents and Educators**

Despite the gaps this paper has brought to light, *Be Internet Awesome* can be used as an effective instructional tool to teach children about Internet safety. However, we recommend supplementing the activities provided in the program with others to encourage children to think critically about what is missing from *Be Internet Awesome*. For example, children could be encouraged to reflect on where their data is kept when they turn off their computer. They should also consider what kinds of personal information could be found on company servers and try to investigate where their information is stored. Finally, children should critically evaluate the origins of *Be Internet Awesome* and question why Google is interested in teaching Internet safety. These may seem like complex topics for the target audience, but they are no less important than teaching children about the dangers associated with malicious individuals on the
It seems irresponsible to not also teach children about the potential dangers posed by the data storage practices of organizations.

**Future Academic Research**

There are many opportunities for further academic research regarding the *Be Internet Awesome* program. While this content analysis provided insight into what considerations might be missing from the program, there does not seem to be any existing research that examines *Be Internet Awesome* in a classroom setting. Gauging children’s reactions to the program’s material would be a significant contribution to the literature. Academic reviews of *Be Internet Awesome* from disciplines outside of librarianship are another heretofore unexplored aspect of this topic. Considering the interdisciplinary nature of children’s online safety, it would be fascinating to learn from a range of perspectives, including researchers in the fields of education and computer science. What contributions await us that other disciplines may be better situated to make?

**Final Thoughts**

While *Be Internet Awesome* uses Google’s design power to teach students about Internet safety, the program’s conceptualization of Internet safety omits key considerations. Specifically, it does not acknowledge the role of companies in keeping data and personal information secure. Instead, its focus on user-centred strategies obscures the degree to which users are often powerless when it comes to controlling how their personal data is used. Finally, *Be Internet Awesome* generally presents Google as impartial and trustworthy, which is especially problematic given that the target audience is impressionable youth. Google attempts to charge the user with
responsibility for privacy and data security, yet it does not allow the user to see what goes on with their data behind closed doors. Rather than “teaching kids the fundamentals of digital citizenship,” *Be Internet Awesome* seems intent on convincing children that Google has their best interests at heart. Without a more critical orientation that implicates companies, the program will do little more than foster a generation of digital consumers concerned only with those aspects of online safety to which they are directly connected.
References


https://beinternetawesome.withgoogle.com/

https://beinternetawesome.withgoogle.com/pdfs/Google_BeInternetAwesome_DigitalCitizenshipSafety_Curriculum_.pdf


https://www.google.com/policies/terms/

https://beinternetawesome.withgoogle.com/interland

https://beinternetawesome.withgoogle.com/

https://www.google.com/policies/privacy/


