



Information and Privacy  
Commissioner/Ontario

Commissaire à l'information  
et à la protection de la vie privée/Ontario

News Release

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## **New teacher guide to promote Freedom of Information and protection of Privacy is headed for Ontario classrooms**

TORONTO – Ontario's Information and Privacy Commissioner, Dr. Ann Cavoukian, today released a new grade 10 guide for Civics teachers, *What Students Need to Know about Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy*.

“Lessons in the guide should clearly demonstrate to students how material obtained through freedom of information requests can have a dramatic impact on their own lives,” said Commissioner Cavoukian. “One lesson includes a story that outlines how a reporter, who had become ill after eating at a Toronto restaurant, used FOI to obtain the results of health inspections at a large number of Toronto restaurants. A public outcry led the City of Toronto to start posting inspection results on a public website – a practice a number of other cities have since followed.”

“Students will learn why privacy matters,” said the Commissioner, “including how personal information posted on the Internet can be used and abused by others if you are not managing your ‘online brand.’ Bullies, identity thieves and stalkers thrive on the information they find on the Web, and many prospective employers make decisions based on what they find from their online searches. The material that students post today can have a very real impact on their future.”

The guide contains individual lessons created with the help of front-line education professionals, to assist teachers across the province in meeting the expectations set out by the Ministry of Education for the mandatory grade 10 Civics curriculum.

The IPC's *What Students Need to Know About Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy* program – launched in 1999 – includes free teachers' guides applicable to three different school levels. Among these:

- a guide for grade 5 social studies teachers (the level where students first study government); which is in the process of being updated;
- the new, extensively updated grade 10 guide for Civics teachers; and
- a grade 11 and 12 guide. A significantly expanded and updated version of this guide – which will include units for four different subject areas (Grade 11 Media Studies; Grade 11 Canadian Politics and Citizenship; Grade 11 Understanding Canadian Law, and Grade 12 Canadian and International Law), will be released early in 2011.



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The new grade 10 guide has been posted to the IPC's website, [www.ipc.on.ca](http://www.ipc.on.ca), and is being distributed to school boards across Ontario. If you would like a copy of the guide, please send an e-mail to [info@ipc.on.ca](mailto:info@ipc.on.ca). (*School boards can contact Bob Spence, whose contact information is listed below.*)

Ontario's Information and Privacy Commissioner is appointed by and reports to the Ontario Legislative Assembly, and is independent of the government of the day. The Commissioner's mandate includes overseeing the access and privacy provisions of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, as well as the *Personal Health Information Protection Act*, which applies to both public and private sector health information custodians, in addition to educating the public about access and privacy issues.

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