Building your activist network

LESSON OBJECTIVE
Students will learn how social networks can be leveraged to promote advocacy efforts. Students will also learn how to develop online content to spread information about a cause of interest.

▶ **ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS**	▶ What is the power of networks in advocacy efforts?	
▶ **AGE**	▶ 10-18	
▶ **MATERIALS**	▶ Projector	
▶ **PREPARATION**	▶ Identify a video to demonstrate social connection relevant to your community ▶ Students need internet access to complete this lesson	
▶ **ISTE DIGCITCOMMIT COMPETENCY**	▶ ENGAGED: I use technology and digital channels for civic engagement, to solve problems and be a force for good in both physical and virtual communities.	

SUPPORT MATERIALS
Visit **facebook.com/fbgetdigital** to access resources for parents and young people that can complement the lesson students took on Empowerment today.

Using human social networks for advocacy

Part 1

TELL YOUR STUDENTS

There is a famous phrase that says, "It isn't what you know. It is who you know." While this isn't 100% accurate (what you know is also incredibly important!), it is a helpful reminder of the importance of networks.

Whether you are looking for a job or trying to play sports at the next level, having a good network can allow you to make contacts who can help you achieve your goals. Advocacy efforts are no different. The bigger and better the network of people we know, the easier it will be to create change in our communities.

From our family members and friends to our teachers and community leaders, we already know more people than we think, especially when we include friends of friends and extend our network beyond those closest to us. These individuals can be great resources for reaching our goals.

There are many people we might not know yet who can help us achieve our goals. Social media and the internet more broadly present other ways of meeting the kinds of individuals that might contribute skills or resources to our advocacy efforts.

Part 2

VIDEO

On a projection screen at the front of the room, show a video example aligned with your/students' local/regional context to showcase how people are connected through social networks and how we can benefit from these connections.

ASK YOUR STUDENTS

▶ How might information be spread effectively through your existing social networks? How can we use these connections to promote advocacy efforts?

TELL YOUR STUDENTS

In the following activity, you will create a shareable online resource that describes the cause that you care about. By sharing your advocacy efforts online, you can tell others about what you care about and potentially meet new people who may be able to assist your efforts!

Assignment

TELL YOUR STUDENTS

Create a shareable online resource (e.g., using Google Docs, a social media platform, a Wordpress blog, a website on Neocities, a slide presentation using Scratch, etc.) about an issue you care about, where you will:

1. Write an introduction explaining the cause and why you believe it's important.

2. Provide links for several websites (e.g., an online article) dedicated to the issue.

3. List three people who write, blog, tweet or make digital media content about this area. (Optional: If you can, write a tweet to each of these individuals and tell them about your cause and what you would like to achieve.)

CLASS INTERACTION

Give students 30 minutes to complete the activity. Depending on the time allotted, in the current or the second group convening, ask students to share their resources with the larger group and have a 15-minute discussion highlighting effective strategies.