

# Digital Citizenship Lessons From A 9-Year-Old With 18,000 Twitter Followers

by Alan November of November Learning | [NovemberLearning.com](http://NovemberLearning.com) @Globalearner

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Olivia Van Ledtje might only be nine years old, but already she has a global following. She loves to read, and she records a video blog called LivBits in which she shares information about the books she has read and her observations about life in general. Her vlog is so popular that she just launched a Twitter account, [@thelivbits](https://twitter.com/thelivbits), last July—and already she has more than 18,000 followers! I think there are two key lessons about digital citizenship that educators at all levels can learn from Liv.

## **1. Social media is a great way to connect with subject matter experts, extend your knowledge, and even engage with people you admire.**

In a [podcast](#) I recorded with Liv last October, she revealed that her biggest surprise in using Twitter was hearing from one of her favorite authors, Victoria Jamieson.

“I was reading *Roller Girl*, and I hashtagged something from the book—‘tougher, stronger, fearless’—and she tweeted at me,” Liv said.

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Imagine how inspiring it can be for students when somebody famous they look up to engages with them on social media! As I said to Liv, when I was her age, that wasn’t something I ever would have dreamed of. But with social media, it’s entirely possible to connect with anyone at all.

Liv says she gets ideas from people all over the world from being on Twitter. One of her favorite follows is [Kristin Ziemke](#), a Chicago-area teacher and staff developer. She is

selective about who she follows: “I see what they’re passionate about, see what they like, and see if I’m interested in what they’re doing,” she says. “If I am, then I follow them.”

Liv is using social media to expand her worldview, learn from other experts, and even connect with people she admires. She is learning about global and digital citizenship by extending her personal learning network online, which is a lesson that applies to both students and educators alike.

## **2. Even our youngest students can be active on social media if they understand the rules.**

Liv credits her mother with teaching her about the rules of good digital citizenship and how to be safe and respectful online. And she has a message for educators who might be concerned about letting their students on social media at an early age: “I think teachers should let kids go on social media,” she says, “not to look at anybody random but to look at authors’ posts to learn more about that author.”

I’m excited to say that Liv will be sharing more about her experience with social media and her insights on digital citizenship at an early age as one of the keynote speakers at the 2017 Building Learning Communities conference in Boston July 26-28. For more information or to register for the conference, [click here](#).