

Cybersecurity is for Everyone

Cybersecurity Awareness Month
October 2025



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Division of Local Government and School Accountability

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Week 1 Agenda

- Cybersecurity Myths
- Cybersecurity Threat Landscape
- You Are the Front Line
- Key Actions for Strengthened Defense
- Stop, Drop and Roll
- Passwords
- Your Personal Security Matters
- Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA)
- Week 2 Preview
- Cybersecurity Resources

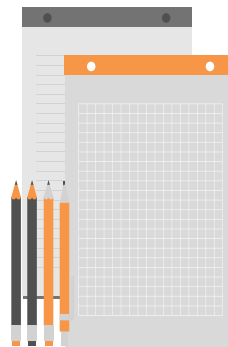


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Cybersecurity Myths

- “Cybersecurity is for IT people.”
- “My data is already out there, so what?”
- “It wouldn’t happen to me.”



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Cybersecurity Threat Landscape Education (K-12)

July 2023 through December 2024

- 82% of 4,600 U.S. K-12 schools impacted by a cybersecurity disruption.
 - 14,000 cybersecurity threat events occurred.
 - 9,300 confirmed cybersecurity incidents across 4,600 schools.
 - Human behavior was targeted 45% more often than technical vulnerabilities.

Source: Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center, 2025 K-12 Cybersecurity Report: Where Education Meets Community Resilience. An 18-Month, Retrospective Study of Cyber Threat Trends and Defensive Impact in K-12 Education.
<https://www.cisecurity.org/insights/white-papers/2025-k12-cybersecurity-report>



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Cybersecurity Threat Landscape State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial (SLTT)

October 2024 through February 2025

- 80% reported having fewer than five dedicated IT employees.
- 70% said they lacked IT funding.
- 64% cited an increase in cyber threat sophistication.
- Other cited concerns included a lack of documented IT processes.

Source: Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center, Nationwide Cybersecurity Review: 2024 Summary Report
<https://www.cisecurity.org/insights/white-papers/nationwide-cybersecurity-review-2024-summary-report>



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Cybersecurity Threat Landscape

Examples of malware threats impacting K-12:



SocGholish

Tricks people with fake browser updates.



NanoCore

Available for cybercriminals to purchase on the “dark web.”¹

¹ A hidden portion of the Internet often used for its anonymity.



CoinMiner

Installed through advertisements and secretly mines cryptocurrency.



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Zero Trust is a Culture

- What is zero trust?
- Culture needs to be nourished.



Recognize an issue.

Report the issue.

Know who else the issue could impact.

Inform others.



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You Are the Front Line

- Empower each other.
- Foster communication.
- If you see something, report it.
- “It takes a village.”



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Key Actions for Strengthened Defense

- Implement multi-factor authentication (MFA).
- Assess what sensitive data / information is accessible online.
 - (Understand your exposure)
- Have a functional data backup.



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Stop, Drop and Roll

Cyber fire drills

- Do you know what to do?
- Practice your cyber incident response plan.



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Passwords

A **password** is a string of characters (letters, numbers, and other symbols) used to authenticate an identity or to verify access authorization.



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Why Are Passwords Important?

Passwords help you to:

- Prevent unauthorized access.
- Prove who you are.
- Protect confidential information.
- Promote accountability.



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How to Choose a Strong Password

Don't Use:

- Common phrases.
- Personal information.
- Repetitive characters.
- Simple, easy to guess words.



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How to Choose a Strong Password (continued)

Don't:

- Reuse personal passwords for work.
- Accept “remember my password” prompts.
- Share your password with others.



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How to Choose a Strong Password (continued)

Do Use:

- A passphrase.
- A sentence.
- A string of unrelated words.
- Unique passwords.



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Examples of Weak Passwords

- Pet's / children's names
- Birthdates
- Favorite sports teams
- Easy to guess:
 - 12345
 - Qwerty
 - password



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Examples of Strong Passwords

- IloveF00tballAt7PM!
- SunsetsR3mindMe@HomeWindow!
- GymAt5th3NShine@w0rk!



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Your Personal Security Matters

- Were your passwords in a breach?
- Strengthen your passwords.
- Don't reuse passwords.



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Password Resources

OSC's Local Government Management
Guide on IT Governance:

- Area #7 – Access Controls

<https://www.osc.ny.gov/files/local-government/publications/pdf/information-technology-governance.pdf>



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Multi-Factor Authentication

What is multi-factor authentication (MFA)?



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MFA-Related Technology

How do these technologies relate to MFA?

- Identity Managers
- Single Sign-On
- Password Managers



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MFA is a Preventive Control

MFA could prevent, or mitigate the resulting impact, of a breach.

- A 2024 common third-party school vendor breach
- A 2023 school district breach
- A 2022 county breach



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MFA Frustrations and Myths

- “It’s inconvenient.”
- “It’s difficult.”
- “It’s expensive.”



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Managing MFA

MFA can often be implemented and managed through an IT system's Admin Console or other administrative interface.

- Where user accounts are created, updated and disabled.



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Week 2 Preview

- MFA is not a guarantee.
 - MFA bypass
 - MFA fatigue
- Why is MFA still important?
 - Modern phishing identification and response
 - Advanced and emergent schemes



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Information Technology Governance

Local Government Management Guide

Information Technology Governance



Security Self-Assessment



<https://www.osc.ny.gov/files/local-government/publications/pdf/IT-Governance-Self-Assessment-Form.pdf>

<https://www.osc.ny.gov/files/local-government/publications/pdf/information-technology-governance.pdf>



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New York Local Government and School Cybersecurity: A Cyber Profile

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Cyber Profile

<https://www.osc.ny.gov/files/local-government/publications/pdf/nys-local-gov-school-cyber-profile.pdf>



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LGSA Resources

LGSA Cybersecurity Resources

Audit Reports	https://www.osc.state.ny.us/local-government/audits
Training	https://www.osc.state.ny.us/local-government/academy
Publications	https://www.osc.state.ny.us/local-government/publications
LGSA Help Line	localgov@osc.ny.gov or (866) 321-8503 or (518)-408-4934
ATU Cybersecurity Team	Muni-Cyber@osc.ny.gov or (518) 738-2639



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Additional Resources

Additional Cybersecurity Resources

Center for Internet Security (CIS)	https://www.cisecurity.org/
Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center (MS-ISAC)	https://www.cisecurity.org/ms-isac
NYS Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (DHSES)	https://www.dhSES.ny.gov/cyber-incident-response-team
NYS Office of Information Technology Services (ITS)	https://www.its.ny.gov/
NYS Police Computer Crime Unit (CCU)	https://troopers.ny.gov/computer-crimes



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Additional Resources

Additional Cybersecurity Resources

Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA)	https://www.cisa.gov/
United States Department of Justice Cybercrime	https://www.justice.gov/criminal-ccips
Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)	https://www.fbi.gov/investigate/cyber
National Institute of Information Technology Services (NIST)	https://www.nist.gov/cybersecurity



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Questions?

Contact us

- **LGSA Applied Technology Unit Cybersecurity Team**
 - Muni-Cyber@osc.ny.gov
 - (518) 738-2639
- **LGSA Help Line**
 - 1-866-321-8503 or
 - 518-408-4934



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Thank You



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