CYBERSECURITY AWARENESS MONTH

2024 Guide

Presented By

CYBERSECURITY & INFRASTRUCTURE SECURITY AGENCY — CISA

NATIONAL CYBERSECURITY ALLIANCE

#CybersecurityAwarenessMonth
#SecureOurWorld

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ABOUT THE MONTH

Cybersecurity Awareness Month is an international initiative that highlights actions everyone can take to stay safe online.

Even amidst large-scale data breaches and cyberattacks, Cybersecurity Awareness Month reminds everyone that there are simple, effective ways to stay safe online, protect personal data, and ultimately help S*ecure Our World*.

The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), the federal lead for the campaign, and the National Cybersecurity Alliance (NCA) create resources for organizations to talk to their employees and customers about staying safe online. Cybersecurity Awareness Month is supported by corporations, government agencies, schools, tribes, non-profits and professionals dedicated to cybersecurity education and protecting our communities.

THEME: SECURE OUR WORLD

The theme for Cybersecurity Awareness Month 2024 is "Secure Our World". Launched in 2023, Secure Our World empowers everyone to understand the simple ways to protect yourself, your family and your business from online threats. We're increasingly connected through digital tools and more of our sensitive information is online. This convenience comes with risks. Each of us has a part to play in keeping ourselves and others safe. It's easy to do and takes less time than you think.

KEY MESSAGES

Between the strong passwords entered, 6-digit pins texted to our phones, and fingerprints scanned, cybersecurity is a constant part of our everyday lives. When done right, these everyday practices greatly improve our online safety and give us the peace of mind that our data, finances, organizations, and families are protected.

While we've seen incredible advancements in technology, like AI, the tried-and-true cyber basics still apply and are greatly effective at keeping you safe. This is why we continue to highlight the four simple ways to stay safe online during Cybersecurity Awareness Month:

- **USE STRONG PASSWORDS AND A PASSWORD MANAGER**
- **TURN ON MULTIFACTOR AUTHENTICATION**
- **UPDATE YOUR SOFTWARE**
- **RECOGNIZE AND REPORT PHISHING**

FAST FACTS

According to the National Cybersecurity Alliance 2023 Oh Behave! report:

- **84%** of people considered **online safety a priority**
- Only **38%** of people use **unique passwords** for all their accounts
- **About a third** of respondents began using a **password manager** after receiving cyber training
- **79%** of respondents were familiar with **multifactor authentication.**
  - **70%** of those who have heard of MFA security measure know how to use it
- Only **36%** of people always install **software updates** when they become available
- **69%** of people express confidence in their ability to identify **phishing** attempts
  - **51%** of Americans actively report **cybercrimes**, particularly instances of **phishing**.
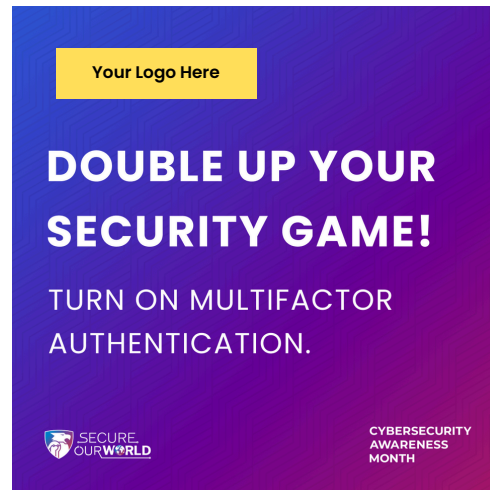
SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDE

Cybersecurity Awareness Month is a time to work together to protect each other. One of the best ways to get involved is to join the conversation on social media by sharing safety tips and resources that highlight the steps your organization is taking to educate employees, customers, or even families and friends, on how to stay safe online, using the hashtags:

<p align="center">#CybersecurityAwarenessMonth</p>
<p align="center">#SecureOurWorld</p>

Use our pre-drafted social media posts and graphics leading up to and throughout the month. Feel free to customize them with your own messages. See examples below of how you can add your logos to the social media graphics!

Follow CISA and NCA on social media to receive the latest updates and resources.

CISA	NCA
X	X
LinkedIn	LinkedIn
Facebook	Facebook
Instagram	Instagram
Youtube	Youtube

Remember that cybersecurity education isn't limited to October! Use these messages to educate your organization and community all year long!

SAMPLE EMAIL ANNOUNCEMENT

Start getting employees engaged in Cybersecurity Awareness Month by sending an email! Use the draft copy below to get started:

Suggested Subject Line: Help Us Secure Our World this Cybersecurity Awareness Month

October is Cybersecurity Awareness Month, an international initiative that educates everyone about online safety and empowers individuals and businesses to protect their data from cybercrime. Even amidst large-scale data breaches and cyberattacks, Cybersecurity Awareness Month reminds everyone that there are simple, effective ways to keep yourself safe online, protect your personal data, and ultimately help secure our world.

[Company/Organization] is proud to be a Champion and support this online safety and education initiative this October.

The theme of Cybersecurity Awareness Month is *Secure Our World*! This initiative reminds us that there are simple actions we can take every day to protect ourselves, our families, and businesses from online threats.

Cybersecurity Awareness Month focuses on the top four ways to stay safe online:
[Use the behaviors below or customize them to fit the needs of your organization. Share details including your organization's approved password manager and how employees should report phishing to your IT department.]

1. Use strong passwords and a password manager
2. Turn on multifactor authentication
3. Recognize and report phishing
4. Update software

Cybersecurity Awareness Month is led by the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Agency (CISA) and the National Cybersecurity Alliance. For more information about ways to keep you and your family safe online visit https://www.cisa.gov/cybersecurity-awareness-month and https://staysafeonline.org/cybersecurity-awareness-month/.

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

Make a public announcement about your Cybersecurity Awareness Month Campaign. Use the sample press release below to get started!

[Company/Organization] Announces a Commitment to Secure Our World by Taking Action during Cybersecurity Awareness Month to Reduce Cyber Risk

Cybersecurity Awareness Month highlights the growing importance of cybersecurity in our daily lives and encourages individuals and businesses to take important cybersecurity steps everyday to Secure Our World and stay safe online.

October 1, 2024 — [Organization name] today announced its commitment to cybersecurity education by participating in the 21st Annual Cybersecurity Awareness Month. Founded in 2004, Cybersecurity Awareness Month, held each October, is the world's foremost initiative aimed at promoting cybersecurity awareness and best practices. Cybersecurity Awareness Month is a collaborative effort among businesses, government agencies, colleges and universities, associations, nonprofit organizations, tribal communities, and individuals committed to educating others about online safety.

[Optional: Insert quote from your organization about your involvement in the month or organizational cybersecurity mission]

From mobile to connected home devices, technology is deeply intertwined in our lives. Emerging technologies have many great benefits for society but with those new technologies come new opportunities for bad actors to disrupt our online activities at home, school or at work. Cybersecurity Awareness Month aims to highlight some of the emerging challenges that exist in the world of cybersecurity today and provide straightforward, actionable guidance that anyone can follow to create a safe and secure digital world for themselves and their loved ones.

The theme of Cybersecurity Awareness Month is *Secure Our World*, which encourages all of us to take four easy steps each day to ensure our online safety:
- Understand the benefits of using a password manager and dispelling existing myths around password manager security and ease of use.
- Turn on multifactor authentication on personal devices and business networks.
- Recognize and report phishing – still one of the primary threat actions used by cybercriminals today.
- Install updates on a regular basis and turn on automated updates.

Cybersecurity Awareness Month continues to build momentum and impact with the goal of providing everyone with the information they need to stay safe and more secure online. [Organization name] is proud to support this critically important online safety awareness and education initiative, led by the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency and the National Cybersecurity Alliance.

For more information about Cybersecurity Awareness Month and how to participate, visit cisa.gov/cybersecurity-awareness-month and staysafeonline.org/cybersecurity-awareness-month/.

BUILDING YOUR CAMPAIGN

This section provides tips on how to promote Cybersecurity Awareness Month and develop your own campaign. Cybersecurity Awareness Month promotes positive behavioral change through simple guidance and empowering messaging. The theme of Secure Our World encourages collective action to reduce cyber threats. To ensure success this October, keep this in mind when creating resources and planning activities.

IN YOUR ORGANIZATION

- **Emails**: Send an email to colleagues, employees, customers and/or your school about the month. Outline how your organization will be involved. Highlight the key behaviors and advice provided in this toolkit. See the "Sample Employee Email" in this toolkit to get started.

- **Newsletters**: Incorporate Cybersecurity Awareness Month into a newsletter, utilizing the "Sample Employee Email" provided within this toolkit.

- **Contests**: Host a poster/video contest in which students can create informative online safety resources for their school and community. Display the winning entries and consider awarding prizes!

- **Promotion**: Work with leadership to issue an official press release, proclamation, or video announcement to show your organization's support. Announcements should highlight what your company does to practice cybersecurity. See the "Sample Press Release" in this toolkit.

- **Event**: Host a local or virtual event or training for your organization. Discuss smart security practices, relevant cybersecurity issues, and allow participants to ask cyber-related questions. Continue reading for more tips on hosting an event or training session.

- **Gamification**: Host a phishing game or competition. Send fake phishing emails to your employees and reward those who catch and report the most phishing attempts.

- **Incentives**: Issue a company promotion related to the month, such as a product discount, a competition, or giveaways for customers.

BUILDING YOUR CAMPAIGN

IN YOUR ORGANIZATION (continued)

- **Info booth**: Set up an information station! Whether it's in your school's student center or a company break room, set up an area to hand out info sheets and talk to people within your organization or school.

- **Training**: Conduct a phishing simulation with employees. Reward positive behavior and not to punish for mistakes. Consider providing small prizes to those who perform well and are engaged in activities. Remember to provide the correct answer and outline which tricks were used in the phishing attempt so employees can learn from them.

- **Handouts**: Distribute online safety materials and tip sheets. We provide plenty of non-proprietary materials available to download and print from staysafeonline.org.

- **Recap**: At the end of the month, send employees an email highlighting your activities, results, and successes. Recap best practices learned throughout the month.

AT HOME

- Share tip sheets and print resources from your toolkit and display them in areas where family members spend time online.

- Watch the new Secure Our World public service announcements, or animated videos, together as a family and discuss them after you view them.

- Hold a family "tech talk" and discuss how each family member can protect their devices, accounts, and personal information.

- Send an email to friends and family informing them that October is Cybersecurity Awareness Month and share helpful tips and resources, especially with vulnerable groups, such as seniors and teens.

- Create a culture of security in your family. Make it clear to all family members that they should feel comfortable sharing if they've clicked on a malicious link, downloaded something they shouldn't have, or have fallen for a scam, especially for kids and seniors. **9**

EDUCATE YOUR COMMUNITY

Even if you don't think of yourself as a teacher, you have something to share with your friends, neighbors, and other people in your community. Consider volunteering at a community center, senior center, school, library, or scout troop to teach others about the cyber basics. Here are some tips to help you prepare a "Cyber Basics" talk.

PLANNING IN ADVANCE

Reach out early to leaders in the community to pitch your presentation. If you want to give a talk during Cybersecurity Awareness Month, consider reaching out six months in advance. Sounds crazy? A lot of librarians, club leaders, and school administrators plan events very early, so you want to consider their schedules and be courteous of their planning.

AUDIENCE FOCUS

Get an understanding of the tech knowledge of your audience! Talk to the community leader that scheduled your presentation to understand how they use technology within the club/organization and how they might use it in their everyday lives.

TAKEAWAYS

Create a slide deck or supplemental material that people can take home with them. Have your presentation double as a learning guide after you leave. Give people resources where they can reach out for more help, especially if they have a cybersecurity incident. Make sure they know what help is available to them, and who they should contact (e.g. CISA, FTC, FBI). Your job is to give them some education, then leave them with resources, tips, and contacts.

EMPOWER AND EDUCATE

Do not use fear, uncertainty, or doubt to get your point across. Focus on simple, empowering, and friendly tips and language. Stay away from jargon and acronyms. Keep your talk informational without being condescending. Participants want to learn. Provide more in-depth explanations as needed.

FEEL IT OUT

Talk to a community leader to learn what their biggest concerns, fears, or issues are. Don't go on for 20 minutes about cloud security if what they really need is to understand what a phishing email looks like. Know your audience!

Check out NCA's Volunteer Toolkit and video series for more tips.

REQUEST A SPEAKER

REQUEST A CISA SPEAKER

To request a CISA speaker for your Cybersecurity Awareness Month event, fill out the CISA Speaker Request Form, and email it as an attachment to **CISA.Speakers@cisa.dhs.gov** no later than **August 30, 2024.**

Please be advised, due to the volume of submissions and high demand for speakers, your submission or request does not guarantee an acceptance.

REQUEST AN NCA PRESENTATION

This October, the National Cybersecurity Alliance is offering fun, interactive Cybersecurity Awareness Month presentations to organizations of all sizes. These informative talks will cover the "cyber basics" and enhance your organization's internal training and events for employees.

To schedule a talk, please visit our **form. Talks are available on a first come, first served basis.**

Learn more about this year's offerings from our speakers:

Oh, Behave! Cyber Behaviors Presentation
An interactive 30-45 minute (including time for Q&A) Cybersecurity Awareness Month presentation. This talk is based on our annual Oh Behave Report on Cybersecurity Attitudes and Behaviors, revealing insights about the public's attitudes and beliefs about security. With your audience participation, we'll compare what you think to our research participants and cut through the confusion to give you easy, practical advice and tips on how to keep yourself, your family, and your organization safe and secure.

Level Up Your Cyber Game: Trivia Game Show
A virtual, gamified presentation highlighting the month's key messages. This engaging 40-50 minute presentation (with time for audience Q&A) will feature trivia and poll questions, crowd participation via the Crowdpurr online engagement platform, and opportunities for co-hosting with the event organizing partner.

Think You're Hiding on the Internet? Consensual Doxxing Presentation
In this interactive webinar, we'll see if your information is as private and secure as you think it is! We take individual volunteers from your organization to be "consensually doxxed" by Internet-famous social media influencer Kristen Sotakoun AKA @notkahnjunior.

CONTACT US

THE CYBERSECURITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE SECURITY AGENCY

As America's Cyber Defense Agency and the National Coordinator for critical infrastructure resiliency and security, CISA leads the national effort to understand, manage, and reduce risk to the cyber and physical infrastructure that Americans rely on every hour of every day.

WEBSITE

cisa.gov

CONTACT

AwarenessCampaigns@cisa.dhs.gov

CONTACT YOUR CISA REGIONAL OFFICE BY VISITING
www.cisa.gov/about/regions

REPORT A CYBER ISSUE
report@cisa.dhs.gov or (888) 282-0870

THE NATIONAL CYBERSECURITY ALLIANCE (NCA)

The National Cybersecurity Alliance is a non-profit organization on a mission to create a more secure, interconnected world. We advocate for the safe use of all technology and educate everyone on how best to protect ourselves, our families, and our organizations from cybercrime. We create strong partnerships between governments and corporations to amplify our message and to foster a greater "digital" good.

WEBSITE

staysafeonline.org

CONTACT

info@staysafeonline.org