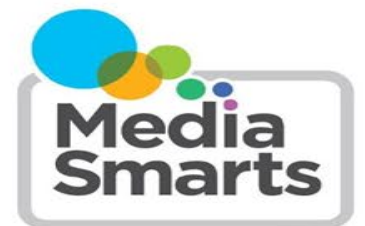




# **Moving On: Digital Empowerment and Literacy Skills for Survivors**

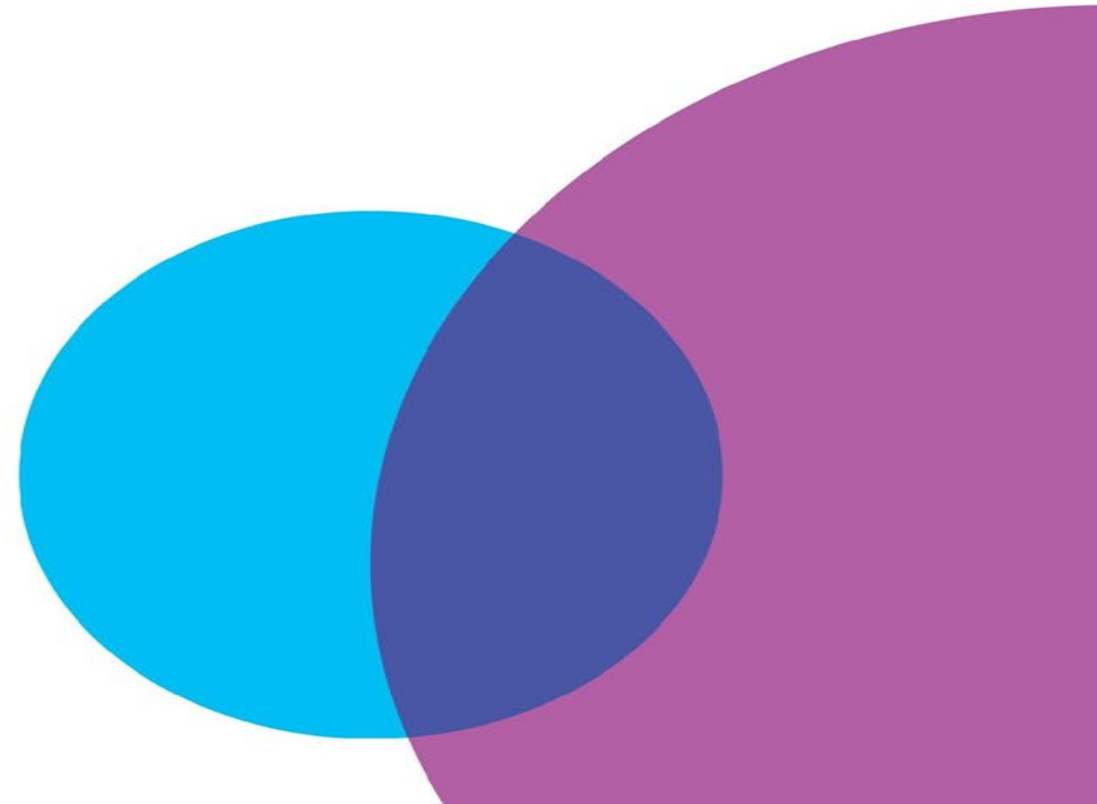


# About MediaSmarts

- Canadian not-for-profit charitable organization for digital and media literacy.
- We've been developing programs and resources for homes, schools and communities for over 20 years.
- Our vision is for everyone in Canada to have the skills and knowledge to critically engage with all media.
- We achieve this through:
  - Research and policy
  - Public awareness and engagement
  - Education

# MOVING ON

- Four-year intervention research project
- Goal: to adapt, deliver, and evaluate digital media literacy resources for practitioners in the violence against women (VAW) sector and survivors of family violence
  - Specifically, those who have experienced or are experiencing technology-facilitated violence and abuse (TFVA)
- TFVA is a form of abuse or controlling behaviour involving the use of technology to coerce, stalk, surveil or harass another person



# Research with Survivors and Practitioners



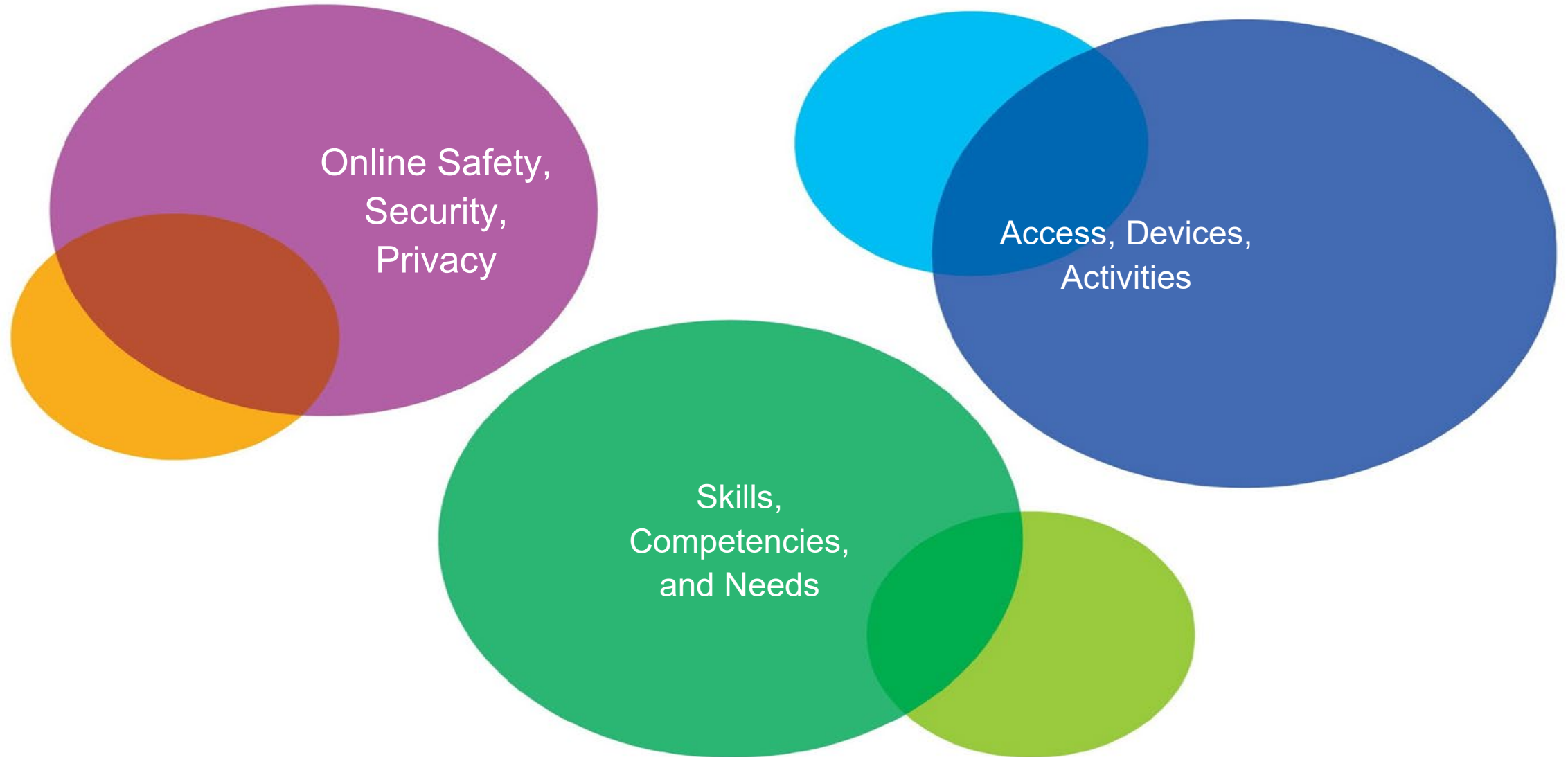
# NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

- Conducted February – March 2023
- Foundation for adapting/developing program content
- 7 focus groups with 17 VAW practitioners and 24 survivors of TFVA across Canada
- Questions related to participants' specific needs and concerns when it comes to addressing and preventing TFVA

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# FINDINGS & ANALYSIS

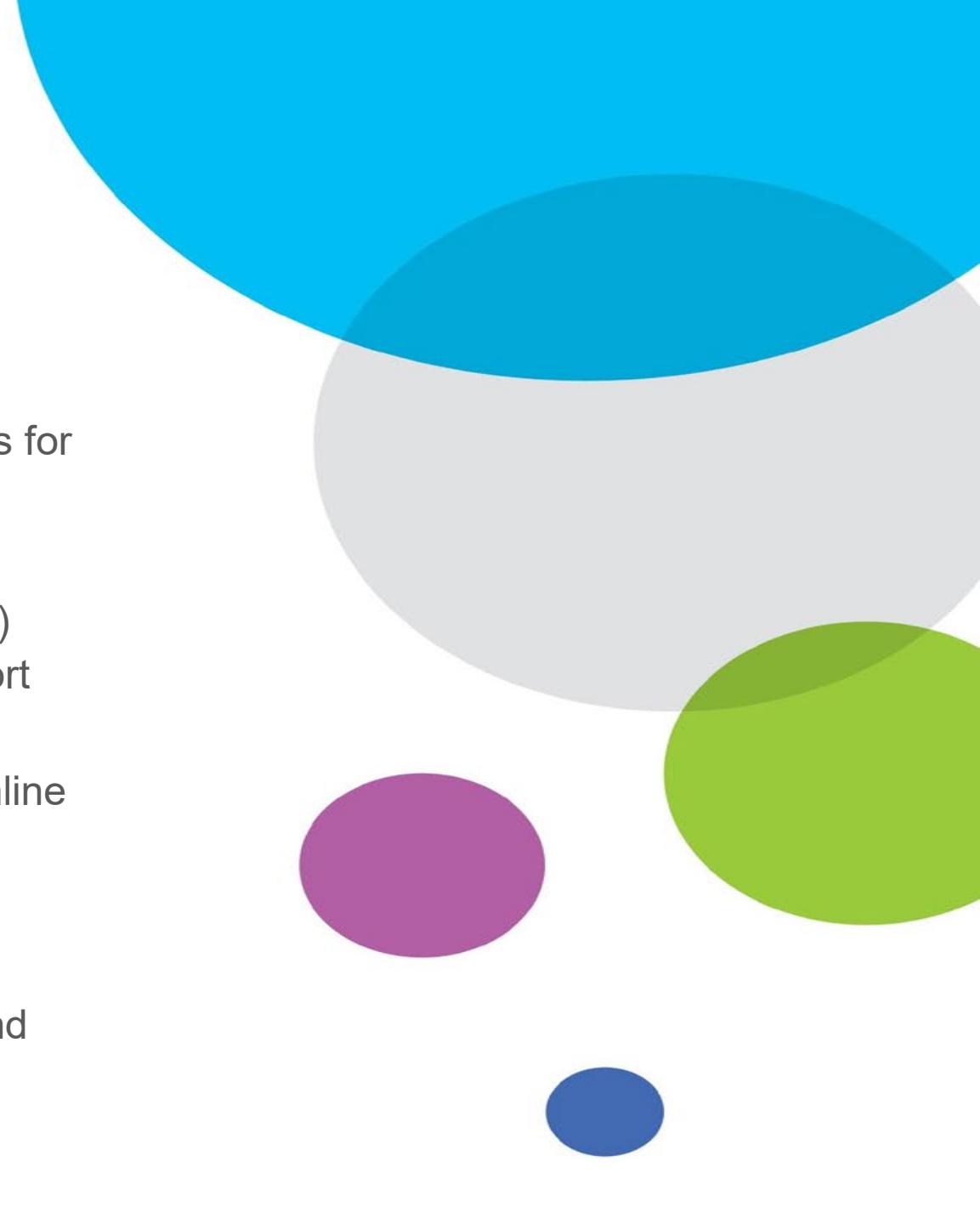
# Key Themes



# NEED FOR MORE DIGITAL MEDIA LITERACY

Wide range of digital media literacy needs for both survivors and practitioners:

- Digital triage (support in times of crisis) but also **digital empowerment** (support for long-term online engagement)
- Basic training on using devices and online resources
- Participating safely and authentically online
- Specific skills: e.g., online shopping and avoiding scams





# IMPACTS OF TRAUMA AND VIOLENCE

- Complex axis of impact: practitioners are unsure of how to reassure survivors because it is difficult to determine how much of survivors worries reflect realistic possibilities vs trauma from their experiences
- Keeping up with best practices in online safety is a “full-time job” for frontline workers, who are not experts in digital technology

# INTERSECTIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Digital media literacy levels impacted by age, immigration status, language, and other intersections of experience (including the trauma and violence survivors have faced)
- Need for services and supports in languages other than English
- Older adults feeling vulnerable to online scams

# THE NEED FOR NON-LEGAL SOLUTIONS

- Survivors feel unsupported by law enforcement and the legal system
- Need to support frontline workers, and empower survivors to engage in technology in ways that support healing and solidarity



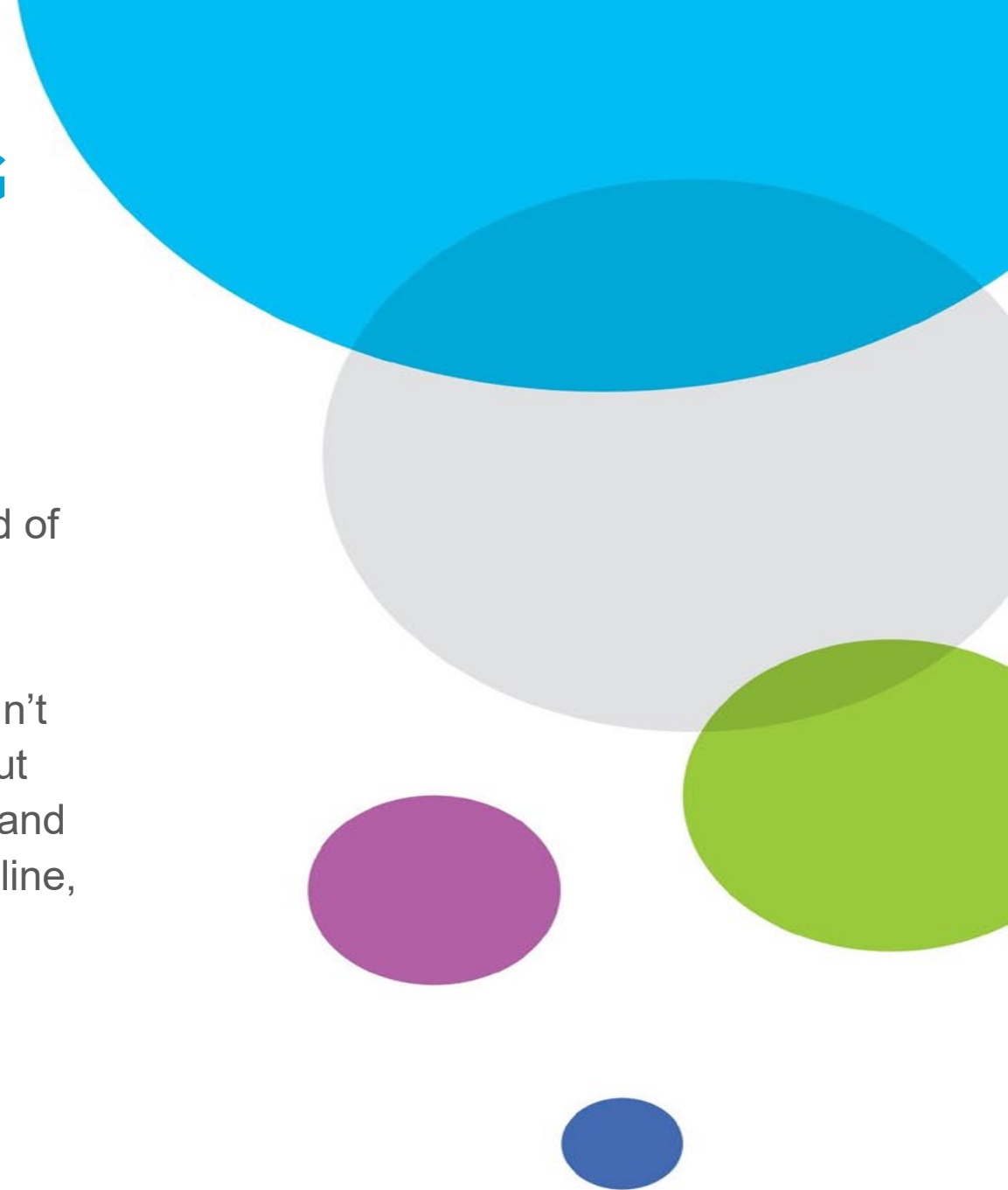
# THE NEED FOR NON-LEGAL SOLUTIONS

*“...we don’t get that protection from law enforcement. Or I never did. It’s always like even when you call them, they won’t.” (survivor participant)*

*“But the man seems, even in the legal process, they get protected. They are protected. They get to say whatever they want about the women.” (survivor participant)*

# SAFETY VS. SILENCING

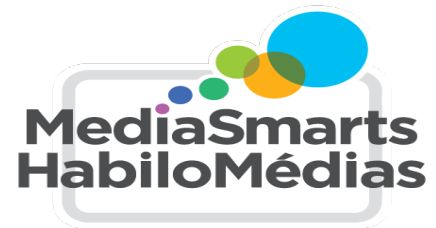
- Safety is often conflated with silencing e.g., victim blaming attitudes such as telling survivors to stay offline or get rid of their devices
- Survivors felt frustrated that they couldn't reap the benefits of being online without taking what they felt were risks above and beyond what other users take to be online, which left them feeling isolated



# Next Steps

- MODELSS Digital Literacy Program
- Digital Triage Content
  - Important online safety and well-being information for survivors in crisis and their families
- Digital Prevention and Resilience Content
  - Series of workshops to educate and empower survivors and practitioners to participate confidently and safely online

Thank you for  
attending!



[mediasmarts.ca](http://mediasmarts.ca)  
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