Simplifying Web Page Addresses

Have you ever wanted to share a webpage with a student, parent or teacher, but knew the address was way too long for you to write down and them to type in?   Perhaps as a principal you want to focus on Safe and Drug-Free Schools at your next PTA meeting so you provide some reading materials from the US Dept. of Education's website.   You can ask your parents to copy down this email address http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/edpicks.jhtml?src=ep OR you can simply shorten the URL, by using several different free services such as Tinyurl or bit.ly!

Bit.ly and tinyur.com can be used to shorten the size of any URL in only a couple of steps! For instance, if you were the principal wanting to share this resource, all you would do is simply copy the webpage from the address bar, then navigate to one of these services, we will use Tinyurl in this case at tinyurl.com, paste in the URL, type in a name for this URL which will be part of the web address. I will use *doe-safe* in this case. You can also leave this field blank and the service will automatically create a randomized URL for you. Whichever method you decide, the last thing you do is click on Make tinyURL! Now you are ready to use this new URL and let your site principals know they can find resources regarding safe and drug free tools at tinyurl.com/doe-safe. If we copy and paste this new Tinyurl into a web browser we will be redirected to the Safe and Drug Free resources web page.

With Bitly or bit.ly you do have even more options. You can login and get access to all your shortened URLs you created including the number of visits to the address. Perhaps you want to know the number of people who actually accessed the site.

Once you become an avid user of these services, you may find it beneficial to install a special bookmark in your web browser that when clicked on, will automatically create a shortened URL and direct you to the service's site for copying and pasting in emails, word documents, or spreadsheets. Note, these URLs are short randomized ones. You can still customize if you wish. To obtain these bookmarks, simply navigate to TinyURL scroll down to the middle of the screen and just drag and drop this Tinyurl link to your bookmark bar. At Bitly just look to the right of the page and drag and drop the bookmark listed there, just like this. You now can be on any site, click on the Bitly bookmarklet, and copy and paste the link.

Use this service for articles, specific Google searches, direct links to your district's test results, and many more web pages you want to share; maybe in newsletters, meetings, or over the telephone. If you have any questions about these services, feel free to email me.

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