Unit 8: Topics in Computer Science

Activity 2 :Ethical Practices

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1. The first ethical issue related to computer science that I am researching, is how computer viruses affect the world morally or legally. Researching people’s ideas and comments about creating and spreading computer viruses, they seem to agree with me that whoever does this does have bad morals because viruses do hurt people. Researching the legalities on creating and spreading computer viruses, I found that it is illegal in both the USA and Canada to damage data within a computer system which is used or operated by the government.

The second ethical issue related to computers that I am researching is sharing music. It is being said by mass amounts of people on the internet that sharing music is morally wrong because you are taking someone’s hard work and stealing it. Music downloaders are ok to download music as long as it is used for private use only. However, making a copy of the music and sending it to your peers is currently an open question in Canadian law.

2. There are a few items in the ACM that I think are really important. The first item I choose is 3.6 from ACM because everyone had opportunities opened for them and you should open opportunities for others because it is only fair. The other item I choose is 1.2 Avoid harm from others, from ACM because as simple as it sounds harming others is bad.

3. My school uses some strategies to encourage ethical computer practices by putting messages at the top of our lessons and then they go and make a whole activity about it to encourage us. I think the policies are a good idea because some students may have not known about them and they could really change their lives. The only problem I have seen is that with the activity about these policies the questions were vague and should have been more descriptive.