

TOP 10 TIPS

1. START EARLY AND KEEP TALKING

Many kids are given their first tablet or internet connected device before they can fully comprehend the power in their hands. Your parenting will need to change with the technology so research the latest trends and stay on top.

2. RESPECT AGE RATINGS

Don't lie for your child when they want to join a social network, download an app, or purchase a game. These age ratings are in place to protect your child from inappropriate content.

3. SET RULES

Set up written ground rules for usage times and keep devices under your watchful eye as often as possible. Keep the family computer in the open (or screens facing common areas) and a central charging station for all portable devices to be parked at night.

4. USE CONTROLS

Many new devices, computers and WiFi routers come with parental controls already built-in that are easy to set-up but are often overlooked during the initial setup. You can control access times and set website category blocking.

5. TEACH PASSWORDS AND PRIVACY

Help your children password protect all mobile devices and online accounts. Teach them why creating strong passwords is important, how to create them, and never to share them.

6. ENGAGE AND LEARN TOGETHER

Children are likely online more often than you. Use this to your advantage to engage with them and learn together. Password protect downloading privileges and communicate boundaries. Talk about reputation and risk.

7. MONITOR AND COMMUNICATE

Communicate what is an acceptable, respectable (to themselves and others) online post and take a peek as often as possible. Social network posts and pictures will be available to future employers and colleges.

8. PROTECT THEIR IDENTITY AND LOCATION

Remind your child not to share any type of personal information online like age, school, address, phone number, last name, or anything personally identifiable. Disable photo geotagging and talk about strangers together.

9. EXPLAIN SEXTING

Especially once they reach teen years, ensure they know the legal implications and they understand that once a picture has left their hands, it is out there forever, affecting their future, reputation, and relationships.

10. PROTECT, UPDATE, AND BACKUP

Your internet browser, operating system, anti-virus, and programs should be updated regularly. Use an external or cloud based backup system to save photos and documents in the event that anything happens to your device.