

10 Tips for Healthy Family Tech Use



Whether kids are using Wi-Fi at the library, logging on to the family laptop, or browsing apps on your smartphone, these tips will help them feel safe and supported online.

1. Talk about the benefits of technology

Technology can help kids and adults develop healthy habits and communicate with loved ones. Discuss the ways that apps and programs can be helpful for your family.

2. Set age-appropriate boundaries

Establish clear guidelines about how and when kids can use technology. For example, “Check with a family adult before accepting a friend or follower request on social media.”

3. Model healthy behaviors

It’s never too early (or too late) to start modeling healthy technology use. Try scheduling family screen times and family screen break times, so that you’re using technology together even with separate devices.

4. Preview new technology

Does your child want to use a new app? Try it yourself first. Preview the content, including the source and privacy settings, before you decide whether to create an account for your child.

5. Make a safety plan

Make sure kids know to alert a trusted adult if:

- Someone online wants to meet in person.
- An interaction or experience feels unsafe.
- Your child feels pressured to do something.
- They witness bullying or threats.

6. Maintain open lines of communication

Ask open questions about the content and people your kids interact with online. Listen to their answers and avoid responding with criticism to build trust and understanding.



7. Identify quality content together

As kids get older, help them develop autonomy, decision-making skills, and critical thinking by talking about how they can discern whether information is accurate and from a trustworthy source.

8. Protect children with safety settings

Settings and timers on apps, electronic devices, internet browsers, operating systems, and subscriptions can provide layers of protection and help prevent children from accessing age-inappropriate content.

9. Silence notifications

Turn off or set limits on app notifications to help maintain boundaries, feel present, reduce stress, and improve focus.

10. Enjoy offline, low-tech activities too

Balance screen use with offline time. For example, prepare a recipe you find online, then turn off your devices for family mealtime.

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