S.M.A.R.T. PARENTING TIPS FOR ONLINE SAFETY

S

Set-up: Devices/Accounts/Passwords

It is important for parents to know how to set up their children's devices for several reasons. Overall, knowing how to set up a device empowers parents to create a safe and healthy digital environment for their kids. It allows them to strike a balance between protecting their children and allowing them to explore the online world in a responsible and beneficial way. While knowing how to use parental controls and security features is essential, it goes beyond technical knowledge. Parents should also be familiar with current online trends, dangers, and age-appropriate content to effectively guide and advise their children on safe and responsible digital citizenship. Remember, technology evolves rapidly, so it is important for parents to stay informed and adapt their strategies as needed to ensure their children's continued safety and well-being in the digital world.

M

Monitor: Online Use/Connections

Monitoring your children's online use and connections isn't about spying, it's about striking a crucial balance between protecting them from potential harm and fostering their digital independence. Monitoring your children's online use and connections is an ongoing process, an investment in their safety, well-being, and digital citizenship. By striking the right balance and focusing on open communication, you can empower your children to navigate the online world safely and confidently.

A

Approve: Apps/Games

Parents' approval of their children's apps and games is crucial for several reasons and goes beyond simply saying "yes" or "no." It's about creating a safe and enriching digital environment that fosters safety, security, healthy development, trust and communication. Approving apps together creates opportunities for open communication about online activities. Discuss the reasons behind your decisions, explain potential risks, and set expectations for responsible use. This builds trust and strengthens parent-child relationships.

R

Restrict: Content/Permissions

It's incredibly important for parents to restrict their child's access to inappropriate content. It's about creating a safe and age-appropriate online environment where children can explore and learn while being protected from potential harm. Here are some helpful approaches:

· Open communication: Talk to your children about the dangers of inappropriate content and set clear expectations for their online behavior.
· Parental control tools: Utilize parental control features offered by devices and platforms to filter content, limit screen time, and monitor online activity.
· Age-appropriate resources: Choose websites, apps, and games specifically designed for children's age and developmental needs.

T

Talk: #StartTheConversation/Teach

Open and repeated conversations are your most powerful tool for online safety. By prioritizing open and repeated conversations about online safety, you can equip your children with the knowledge, skills, and confidence they need to navigate the digital world safely and responsibly. Think of it as an investment in their future, just like teaching them any other important life skill. Technology and online trends evolve rapidly, making it impossible for parents to know everything. Having ongoing conversations about online safety allows you to stay updated on the latest trends, apps, and challenges kids might face. You can adjust your guidance accordingly. Remember, these conversations don't have to be one-sided lectures. Here are some tips for making them more engaging and effective:

· Start early and adapt the conversation to your child's age and development.
· Make it a natural part of everyday life, not just a one-time event.
· Ask open-ended questions and actively listen to their concerns.
· Use real-life examples and relatable scenarios to illustrate your points.
· Focus on teaching them strategies for staying safe, not just scaring them.
· Be open to learning from them as well.

RESOURCES

S — SETUP

Devices:
Apple iPhone or iPad: support.apple.com/en-us/HT202033
Android Phone: support.google.com/android/answer/9417604?hl=en
Entertainment Software Rating Board:
esrb.org/tools-for-parents/family-gaming-guide/setting-up-a-child-account-and-using-parental-controls
Nintendo Switch: en-americas-support.nintendo.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/43021/~/getting-started-with-nintendo-switch
PlayStation: playstation.com/en-us/support/hardware/ps5-get-started-set-up
Xbox: support.xbox.com/en-US/help/hardware-network/getting-started-set-up/set-up-new-series-x-s

Password Protection:
Federal Trade Commission: consumer.ftc.gov/articles/creating-strong-passwords-and-other-ways-protect-your-accounts
Microsoft: microsoft.com/en-us/security/business/security-101/what-is-password-protection
MacOS: support.apple.com/guide/mac-help/understand-passwords-mchlp2555/mac

M — MONITOR

American Psychological Association: apa.org/topics/social-media-internet/social-media-parent-tips
Australian eSafety Commissioner: esafety.gov.au/parents/issues-and-advice/screen-time
KidsHealth: kidshealth.org/en/parents/monitor-media.html
Parents: parents.com/parentsirl/best-parental-monitoring-apps
StopBullying: stopbullying.gov/cyberbullying/digital-awareness-for-parents

A — APPROVE

Apple Family Sharing – Parental Control App: apple.com/family-sharing
Entertainment Software Rating Board - App for Rating Information: esrb.org/tools-for-parents/mobile-app
Entertainment Software Rating Board – Family Gaming Guide: esrb.org/tools-for-parents/family-gaming-guide
Google Family Link – Parental Control App: families.google/familylink

R — RESTRICT

Content Protections:
Google Families: families.google/intl/en_us/privacy-and-protections
Internet Matters: internetmatters.org/issues/inappropriate-content/protect-your-child

Parental Controls:
Apple Devices: support.apple.com/en-us/HT201304
Australian eSafety Commission: esafety.gov.au/parents/issues-and-advice/parental-controls
Common Sense Media: commonsensemedia.org/search/parental%20controls
Entertainment Software Rating Board: esrb.org/tools-for-parents/parental-controls
Google Families: families.google/intl/en_us/parental-controls
Google Safety Center: safety.google/families/parental-supervision

T — TALK

ICAC #StartTheConversation – Cyberbullying: icactaskforce.org/resource/RS00250779
ICAC #StartTheConversation – Teens and Screens: icactaskforce.org/resource/RS00250778
ICAC #StartTheConversation – Toddlers Tech: icactaskforce.org/resource/RS00250777
ICAC Sexting Tips for Parents & Youth: icactaskforce.org/resource/RS00048309
Thorn Parents: parents.thorn.org

ICAC — Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force Program

S.M.A.R.T.

PARENTING TIPS FOR ONLINE SAFETY

Set-up: Devices/Accounts/Passwords

Monitor: Online Use/Connections

Approve: Apps/Games

Restrict: Content/Permissions

Talk: #StartTheConversation/Teach

exploitation   grooming

scam   sextortion   financial sextortion

risky behavior   generative ai

sexting   privacy

To access more Internet safety resources, please scan the QR code here:

iCAC
Internet Crimes Against Children
Task Force Program

www.icactaskforce.org
info@icactaskforce.org