Be Internet Awesome.

Smart
Alert
Strong
Kind
Brave

Family Guide

Be Internet Awesome.

Dear Parent or Guardian,

We first created the Be Internet Awesome curriculum for educators. Teaching digital safety and citizenship is a crucial component of today's classroom, but home will always be the foundation of any child's learning, and healthy online habits are no different.

Technology moves fast, and staying ahead of the curve can be a challenge in itself. We've created this guide for families to make it easier to incorporate and practice good digital habits in your everyday lives. Packed with good stuff, this guide will help you and your kids discuss, learn, and think together about the five areas of Internet awesomeness:

Smart, Share with Care
Alert, Don't Fall for Fake
Strong, Secure Your Secrets
Kind, It's Cool to Be Kind
Brave, When in Doubt, Talk It Out

Each of these areas is a key component of the Be Internet Awesome program used in more and more schools across the country and world. If your kids are learning with Be Internet Awesome at school, this guide will help you follow along and reinforce what they're learning in the classroom.

For example, Interland, Be Internet Awesome's interactive online game, can be played at home just as well. In fact, your kids might enjoy showing you how it's played, or even playing it with you!

We've created this guide to be an independent resource for helping your family learn about online safety and citizenship. In addition to Interland games for each of the five lessons, you'll find vocabulary and talking points to use for family discussions and activities that will help you lay a strong foundation for safe, successful use of the Internet.

Enjoy exploring Be Internet Awesome for families together!

Sincerely,
The Be Internet Awesome team
and the Internauts 💙

Google

Share with Care

Information travels fast online, and without some careful consideration, we can find ourselves in situations that may have lasting consequences.

The solution? Learning how and what to share with people we know and people we really don't know.

Goals

- ✓ **Understanding** what kinds of information are okay to be shared and what should be kept private — or just within your family.

- ✓ **Talking** as a family about what your kids can do when they wonder what to share and who to share it with.

- ✓ **Learning** how to see privacy from different perspectives.

Before You Start

Our online privacy depends a lot on what we do and don't share about ourselves and our families online — especially on social media. A really important skill for kids to have is knowing what is and isn't okay to share. It's a skill we all develop with practice, and the best place to start is at home.

Part of that skill-building is thinking about the two types of sharing that all families have: internal (what you share with family members only) and external (what you share with people outside the family).

Sharing with the family:

Lots of families share devices with their kids — to look up information, talk with a far-away grandparent, make a purchase, play a game, or watch a video when a parent is busy. But it's important to understand what's being shared when you share a device.

If it's your device, you're also allowing your child to use the settings, contacts, passwords and credit card information on it, and some of that may not be appropriate for them to see, use or share. Kids might use parents' devices to download apps and sign up for things that parents aren't so sure about. Also, it's a good idea to think about whether you want to establish the habit of password sharing among family members (because it's a good idea not to share passwords with other people). At the end of the day, we want you to be able to use this guide to help you make informed choices that work for your family.

Sharing outside the family:

Our online lives mirror our everyday ones: there's personal and family information that people outside the family don't really need to know. This is not just about passwords and addresses, it includes information — like when and where you're going on vacation or who's having the next baby in the family.

You can probably think of more, but just to get you started, check out the vocabulary for this lesson and then dive into our four privacy scenarios. Practice with your family so everybody can contribute to what is (and isn't) cool to share.

Vocabulary

Online privacy

A broad term that usually means the ability to control what information you share about yourself online and who can see and share it.

Digital footprint
(or digital presence)

Your digital footprint is all the information about you that appears online. This can mean anything from photos, audio, videos, and texts to "likes" and comments you post on friends' profiles. Just as your footsteps leave prints on the ground while you walk, what you post online leaves a trail as well.

Reputation

The ideas, opinions, impressions, or beliefs that other people have about you; something that you can't be totally sure about but that you usually want to be positive or good.

Personal information

Information that identifies a specific person. For example, your name, street address, phone number, Social Security number, email address, etc., are called personal (or sensitive) information. Really think carefully before sharing this kind of information online.

Oversharing

Sharing too much online — usually this is about sharing too much personal information or just too much about yourself in a certain situation or conversation online.

Settings

This is the area in any digital product, app, website, etc., where you can define or adjust what you share and how your account is handled — including your privacy settings.

Family Activity

Scenario 1

Privacy scenarios: What would you do?

Your kids are really excited about a trip you've planned to visit their grandparents, and you are too. One of them used your smartphone to post about the trip on your social media profile — when you're going and where, posting photos and "tagging" everyone, including the grandparents — in the post. Do you…

• Tell them to delete the post because it's unwise to post vacation dates and locations in social media because they're basically "telling the world" that no one will be home during that time?
• Ask them if they received permission from their grandparents if it's okay to post those photos and tag them in social media?
• Remind them always to ask permission of anyone they photograph and talk about online before posting something about them?
• Tell them they can always come and ask you if they're not sure if it's okay to share something online?

Guidance for parents: All of these are good things to talk about as a family. You're probably already telling your kids that it's not a good idea to notify the world that nobody's home, but it's also important for kids to realize that everyone has a different comfort level around what gets shared publicly about them.

Scenario 2

Your sister has just announced to the family that she's pregnant, and your kids are thrilled they're going to have a little cousin. Your oldest tells you he posted a photo of their aunt and uncle with the news that they're going to have a baby, but you hear this only after you get a text from your sister: "Hey, how do Mom and Dad know I'm pregnant? I didn't tell them yet!". Do you…

• Talk with your kids about how having a baby is wonderful, but also very personal information…you know they're excited, but it's up to the person who's pregnant to decide when, how, and with whom they'll share the news?
• Tell your son (and all your kids) that you know he didn't mean any harm, but he needs to take the post down immediately and call the aunt to apologize for posting something about her without her permission?

• Talk as a family about the different kinds of information that are okay to share on social media and discuss what's appropriate: within your immediate family, with other relatives, with friends, with everybody.

Guidance for parents: Just having these discussions when appropriate situations arise is beneficial; you don't have to rush to cover it all at once. These talks should not be overwhelming. These lessons aren't very different than the ones most families teach their kids about respecting privacy — one of the goals of this guide is to show how those lessons apply to technology use as well.

Scenario 3

You're fixing dinner, and your 5th grader tells you she has finished all her homework and is "dying to play this game" that all her friends say she's just got to try. She begs you to let her download the app on your tablet and play until dinner. Some things to consider:

• You've established solid ground rules about her using your tablet, including no changing passwords, calling contacts, or downloading apps without your permission. She's never been dishonest with you about what she wants to do on your tablet, so you tell her she can download and play the game.
• You're not sure all the games her friends play are right for her, so you tell her she can download the game, but she has to wait till after dinner so you can check it out and make sure it's appropriate for her to play.
• You feel it's okay for her to download the game, but your family has decided to establish smart sharing habits, so you're not sharing passwords — even with each other. So you tell her to bring you your tablet so you can unlock it for her.
• She knows your password but you want to read up on the game so you tell her to wait until after dinner. You trust her to find something else to do until then.

Guidance for parents: Which of these is best is entirely up to your family and the "house rules" you have established for keeping online experiences safe and devices secure. If you haven't yet set policies about passwords, device sharing, app downloading, and game play, maybe trying one of these will help set the foundations for "house rules" of your own.

Scenario 4

Your daughter comes to you and tells you that there's a girl at school who posted something in social media about her best friend that was true, but it was a secret, and the post really embarrassed her. Your daughter said she felt really sad for her friend. Do you:

• Talk about this situation the next time the whole family's together and ask what each family member feels "privacy" means, both online and offline? Why is it important to respect other people's privacy as much as our own?

• Ask your daughter if she wants to see if her friend would like her to ask the other girl to take the post down and tell her why she's asking (and of course ask your daughter if she feels comfortable doing that)?

• Try both of the above?

Guidance for parents: There are many important life lessons that can be learned in social media. Just as in real life, discussing negative situations as a family and working out the next steps together can turn them into opportunities for children to learn meaningful lessons.

Be Internet Smart

Mindful Mountain

OK. You're armed with information and up to speed with sharing. But before you go off and take on the whole Internet, let's put some of that good knowledge to the test, shall we? The mountainous town center of Interland, where everyone mingles and crosses paths, is a great place to show off your new skills.

But you must be very intentional about what you share and with whom. Information travels at the speed of light…and there's an oversharer among the Internauts, you know.

Open a web browser on your desktop or mobile device, and visit **g.co/MindfulMountain**

Don't Fall for Fake

It's important to help kids become aware that what they see online isn't always true, real, or reliable.

Figuring out what's real and what's fake is vital to online safety and citizenship.

Goals

✓ **Understanding** that just because something is online doesn't mean it's true.

✓ **Learning** how online search works and why it's important to use critical thinking when searching the Web for information and other content.

✓ **Thinking** about the value of search results, websites, and other sources of information and be alert to misinformation, "fake news" and manipulation.

Before You Start

Online search is a vital part of daily life. And it naturally becomes a part of family life, too — long before kids start school. Learning to think critically about search results and how search engines work is one of the most basic and useful skills families can learn together.

What is "search"?

| Search   🔍 |

Searching the web allows people to look for information online by using a search engine that organizes the information, making it easier and faster to find. Most modern devices have the ability to search, but they don't have the ability to tell us what's true, untrue, or reliable — human intelligence is still the best tech around to do that. Still, it does take a bit of training to develop your internet "reality check" muscles. Check out the activity after the vocab section — it'll help your family become savvy online searchers!

Vocabulary

Search engine

A program that searches for and identifies information in a database that corresponds to a user's query.

Web crawler

Also called a "bot" — a program that runs within search engine software that constantly "crawls" the internet to organize or "index" the content on all the sites and databases it visits in order to respond to your queries in the search box.

Virtual assistant

Just like a web crawler, virtual assistants retrieve information from search databases, user info, and other websites to help make life a little easier by automatically answering questions, following commands (like giving directions to your new friend's house), or doing simple tasks (like playing a song).

Search results

The list of websites and other resources presented on the search engine page in response to what one searched for.

Safe search

A feature parents can turn on to filter content they find inappropriate out of searches; it can be enabled or disabled at any time.

Misinformation

False, fake, misleading, or inaccurate information.

Disinformation

Misinformation (see above) that is deliberately intended to mislead or deceive people, including propaganda from a political opponent or another government.

Verifiable

Something that can be proven or shown to be true or correct.

Deceptive

False; an action or message designed to fool, trick, or mislead someone.

Manipulation

A person or people controlling or influencing another person or situation unfairly, dishonestly, or as a threat. Manipulation can also mean information, data, or images that have been edited or presented out of context to make you believe something that isn't true.

Family Activity

Becoming smart web searchers

- As a family, sit down together with a tablet or computer (a mobile phone could work too — it just may be harder for everybody see the screen together) and go to your favorite search engine home page.
- Check if the safe search feature is turned on. (It's usually found in your search engine's "settings" or "preferences".)
- Pick a topic your child is interested in (a pro athlete, their favorite cause, actor or musical artist, a much-loved film or author, etc.) and type it in the search box.

- Click on a variety of results, both from the results that appear at the top and from the ones that are found several pages deeper. Ask how they feel about results that come from results near the top vs. results they find deeper in. Do they trust one more than another? Why or why not?

- Are there any results that you or your kids aren't clicking? Why? (Are they "sponsored" or ads? Why would/wouldn't you click on them? Are there sources you avoid? Why?)

- Talk about the source and quality of the information, the "About" page on the site, etc.

- Here are a few examples of questions you could ask each other: If you searched for a celebrity artist or athlete, is the content positive (and so maybe the site of a sponsor or fan)? If the information is negative or critical, can you find out more about the source of the criticism? (An "About Us" page, information about the site owner's background or credentials?) Whether positive or negative, can you tell if these sources actually know what they're talking about, or just sharing an opinion? If it's a news site, is it a well-known one you feel you can trust? If not, you might want to do a search on it to see if people feel it tries to present information in a balanced way.

- As a family, you can certainly think up your own questions — questions are good! Thinking critically about what we find in online searches is the foundation of digital literacy and a key first step in staying safe online.

Be Internet Alert

Reality River

Now that you've learned how to stay alert online, put your skills to the test. The river that runs through Interland flows with fact and fiction. But things are not always as they seem. To cross the rapids, use your best judgment.

Open a web browser on your desktop or mobile device, and visit **g.co/RealityRiver**

Secure Your Secrets

The security of your information, accounts, and devices is just as important as your privacy. Strong passwords and the commitment not to share them are vital to protecting your family's devices, identities, reputations, and relationships.

Goals

✅ **Understanding** why digital security matters and how to make it happen.

✅ **Learning** how to create strong passwords.

Before You Start

Did you know that in 2017, the top two passwords people used were "123456" and "password"? Passwords protect our personal safety, devices, identities, reputations, and relationships, and weak ones make it easy for criminals to get our information. One of the most fundamental things we can teach our kids is how to create strong passwords.

The best tips for making and keeping our passwords strong are to:

- Make them memorable but avoid using personal information like birthdays or pets' names.
- Use a mix of uppercase letters, lowercase letters, symbols, and numbers.
- R3pl@ce le++ers wit# sYmb0ls & n^mb3rs 1ike Thi$ (this has a dual advantage: it keeps the password itself easy to remember while making it harder for a program to crack)
- Eight or more characters — the longer the better.
- Switch 'em up — don't use the same password on a bunch of different sites and devices, but you can create different variations of the same password for different accounts.
- Always use screen locks on your devices.
- Consider using a password manager: an app or tool that keeps track of your passwords in case you forget one or two (most current browsers have a security feature that will do this for you).

Vocabulary

Security

Protecting people's devices and the software and information on them.

Password or passcode

A secret combination of letters, numbers, and symbols used to access to something. It may take different forms; for example, you may have a four-digit number-only code that you use to lock your phone or tablet, or a more complex password for your email, social media, or bank account. In general, you should make your passwords as complex as you can while still being able to remember them.

Two-step verification

(Also called two-factor verification and two-step authentication)

A security process that requires not only a password and username but also something that you — and only you — physically have in order to make it harder for potential intruders to gain access to (or steal) a person's data or identity. An example would be an account that requires you to input a time-sensitive code it sends your phone or email after you've entered your password.

Encryption

A process that helps protect information (like the messages you send online) by scrambling the data and making it difficult to decode.

Complexity

The goal when creating a secure password. A password is considered complex when it has a mix of numbers, special characters (like "$" or "&"), and both lower- and uppercase letters. Length (number of characters) also increases complexity.

Hacker

A person who uses computers to gain unauthorized access to other people's or organizations' devices and data.

Family Activity

Create a strong password together

A note before you start the following activity:
This is an exercise for the whole family, but we recommend that you make the password a pretend one. Why? Because it's a good idea to get used to the idea that passwords are not to be shared. Period. Not with BFFs, first cousins, or even immediate family members. They're personal.

They safeguard permissions for some people (like parents) and not for others (like kids). They also protect you from others pranking you,

impersonating you, using your device to embarrass you, or creating fake profiles about you.

1. Think of a fun phrase or an event that you can remember. It could be your family's favorite film, a children's book, when and from what high school one of your kids may graduate from, etc.

   Example: Ethan T Rex will graduate from George Washington School in 2023.

2. Use the first letter from some or all the words in the phrase or title.

   Example: ETRexwgfGWashingtoni23

3. Change some of the letters into numbers and some into symbols

   Example: 3TRexwgfGWash1ngton!23

4. Make some of the letters uppercase and some lowercase

   Example: 3TREXwgfgWash1ngton!23

There you go! You've created a super strong password together.

Next: Everybody commit to making their passwords rock-solid, reviewing them regularly, and not sharing them with anyone. If you share devices, decide who "owns" which device (and its password). When someone wants to use a device that isn't "theirs", they need to ask the owner to unlock it.

Be Internet Strong

Tower of Treasure

Now that you've learned how to safeguard your information, let's see if you've got what it takes to be strong online. Mayday! The Tower of Treasure is unlocked, leaving the Internaut's valuables (like contact info and private messages) at high risk!

Outrun the hacker and build a fortress with strong passwords to secure your secrets once and for all.

Open a web browser on your desktop or mobile device, and visit **g.co/TowerOfTreasure**

It's Cool to Be Kind

The Internet is a remarkable communication tool, and you need look no further than...well, the Internet, to see that it can be (and is) used to spread inspiring and uplifting information, or shocking and hateful commentary and opinions. Unfortunately, the Internet itself makes no distinction between kindness or cruelty.

That's where you come in. Families are powerful influencers of their children, and they can help them "take the high road" by exemplifying the concept of "treating others as you'd want to be treated", supporting their friends, and defusing drama and cyberbullying.

Goals

✓ **Defining** what positive behavior means in your family.

✓ **Understanding** what positivity looks like and how to express it online and through devices.

✓ **Identifying** situations where it's better to wait to communicate face-to-face than to text or post online — and when to ask a parent or older sibling for help.

Before You Start

When somebody messes up (and this is surprisingly easy to do online — even unintentionally), family members are more likely than anyone to understand, forgive, and help each other learn from mistakes. So there's no better place to start putting online respect, kindness, and positivity into effect than within your family. Families can help when someone's being unkind (sometimes just by listening). They can also encourage each other to be "upstanders": people who support and advocate for people who are the targets of cruel or malicious behavior.

If you haven't already, have a discussion on what kinds of actions and behavior are important — *talk about how your family treats people*. Think about what that looks like digitally: texts, posts, comments, photos, and videos.

To help with that, we've got some vocabulary words to help you understand positive/negative behavior and we've built an activity to help demonstrate the impact of texts and other digital messages that we all type and send off pretty darn quickly.

Vocabulary

Bullying

Purposefully mean behavior that is usually repeated. The person being targeted often has a hard time defending themselves.

Cyberbullying

Bullying that happens online or through using digital devices. Cyberbullying includes sending, posting, or sharing negative, harmful, false, or mean content as well as sharing personal or private information about someone else causing embarrassment or humiliation.

Harassment

A more general term than bullying that can take many forms — pestering, annoying, intimidating, teasing, etc. — and can happen online too.

Conflict

An argument or disagreement that isn't necessarily repeated.

"Drama"

A colloquial term, used more by students than adults referring to a broad set of behaviors: from peers' attention-seeking and gossip-spreading, to general ongoing conflict between two or more students, to serious conflict that's physically harmful or emotionally distressing. It differs from bullying in that a power imbalance does not typically exist in this type of conflict — involved parties typically play both the victim and aggressor at different times. This does not mean that the behavior is harmless, or will not escalate. "Drama" between students can "blow over", or resolve itself over time, or may require external intervention.

Aggressor

The person doing the harassing or bullying; though sometimes called the "bully"

Target

The person being bullied, harassed, or victimized

Bystander

A witness to harassment or bullying who recognizes the situation but does not intervene, either by choice or fear of retaliation.

Upstander

A witness to harassment or bullying who supports the target privately or publicly, sometimes including trying to stop and/or report the incident they witnessed.

Block

Ending all interaction with another person online, preventing them from accessing your profile, sending you messages, seeing your posts, etc., without notifying them. This effectively stops online contact (through that specific channel) from the bully, but may not end the harassment itself; bullies can post about kids even if the person being bullied is ignoring it.

Mute

Less "final" than blocking, muting is a way to stop seeing another person's posts, comments, etc., in your social media feeds when that communication gets annoying — without notifying that person or being muted from their feed (If someone continues to bully you, it's probably better to just block them altogether).

Trolling

Posting or commenting online in a way that is deliberately cruel, offensive, or provocative.

Report abuse

Using a social media service's online tools or system to report harassment, bullying, threats, and other harmful content that typically violates the service's terms of service or community standards.

Family Activity

No. 1: Minding your tone

The tone of a text or post is the spirit of it — the feeling a person gets when receiving it, good or bad. Because parents and kids text, use messenger apps, and DM (direct message) each other all the time and know each other so well, they don't always think about how a text comes across. With people we know, texting is just another way to have a conversation or connect. But when people don't know each other so well, a text or emoji can sometimes be interpreted very differently from the way it was intended. So here's a simple activity to get everybody thinking about that:

1. Get two or more of the phones in your family and open up your text messages (or a messaging app everybody uses), and start a conversation between two family members. It could be about a real or made up situation — something you're going to do this weekend, something that happened at school, someone who asked for a family member's help, etc.
2. Read the conversation out loud in a specific tone of voice — happy, sad, angry, etc.
3. Talk about what you noticed while listening to them read. How did you feel when you heard it? What do you think someone outside your family would think or feel? How could those texts been worded differently? You'll probably come up with other questions, so have at it. :)
4. Next, have two different family members try having a text conversation with a different tone from the first one: maybe an angry or sad one. Read that out loud and talk about how it came across to everybody while listening to it.

No. 2: What kids can do about social negativity

Here are some talking points (and questions) for a parent-child conversation about the social scene at school. See which ones work for your family.

- Are kids pretty nice to each other at school?
- Have you ever seen someone being mean to somebody a bunch of times, or for a long time?
- Do you know the kids involved?
- Would you tell me if they were being mean to you? (If no, why not?)
- If the meanness was happening to someone else, how did the situation make you feel?

- What did you do about it?
- Is it happening online? I've heard you can mute or block them — would that be helpful? If not, would you tell me why? If so, could you show me how you'd do that?
- (If you didn't do anything,) do you wish you did do something?
- What do you think you'd do if it happens again?
- Do you feel like that would help you if you were being bullied?
- Do you feel you could help someone by being kind or just listening?
- You know, if someone who sees meanness online shares it with other people, that can make things worse, right?
- Would you feel comfortable helping a friend being hurt online?
- How would you do that? Call out the behavior (never the person, right?)? Post something kind about the person being hurt? Text or DM them saying they have your support? Text or DM other students and ask them to support the person online or privately?

Sometimes, being an upstander just means being a friend to someone who's been bullied — listening to them, sending love and positivity, or just being there for them.

Be Internet Kind

Kind Kingdom

Vibes of all kinds are contagious, for better or for worse. In the sunniest corner of town, aggressors are running wild, spreading negativity everywhere.

Block and report the aggressors to stop their takeover and be kind to other Internauts to restore peace to this land!

Open a web browser on your desktop or mobile device, and visit **g.co/KindKingdom**

When in Doubt, Talk It Out

It's important for kids to understand that they're not on their own when they see inappropriate content or behavior online that makes them feel uncomfortable — especially if it's hurtful to them or someone they care about.

They should never hesitate to get help from you or another family member they trust. It's also good for them to know there are different ways to be brave and take action, including talking things out offline and using online reporting tools.

Goals

✅ **Encouraging** kids to ask for help when things get negative or they feel uncomfortable, helping them see that supporting others and asking for help to make things better are brave things to do.

✅ **Considering** whether a situation calls for talking things out offline and face to face, reporting the abuse online, or both.

✅ **Understanding** the options for getting help, both on- and offline.

Before You Start

As a family, it can be helpful to set up an Internet help protocol or plan. It doesn't have to be complicated — just an activity for getting everybody thinking about why and how to ask for help when things get ugly online. A few helpful tips:

• Define your values with your family. One way to do it could look like this: *"In our family, we treat people with _____ both online and offline"* (fill in the blank with the words that are appropriate for your family's values and norms of behavior — *"respect"*, *"kindness"* or *"dignity"*)

• Keep communication lines open and firmly establish home as a safe place to talk about what happens at school and online.

• Communicate frequently about family policies or rules about the value and priority of different kinds of technology use — for communication, entertainment, work, play, socializing, etc.

• Discuss family attitudes and policies about what is and isn't acceptable usage of devices and media, and when.

Vocabulary

Protocol

An "official" plan to follow — for the purposes of this guide, it's your family's steps for what kids can do when they encounter something online that makes them feel uncomfortable.

Trust

Strong belief that something or someone is reliable or truthful.

Brave

Courageous — and not necessarily fearless, because people are especially brave when they're scared or nervous but ask for help or take positive action anyway.

Reporting abuse

In this guide, we use this term to refer to reporting problems in social media apps and services, most of which have tools or systems for doing so.

Family Activity

No. 1: Establishing your family's Internet help protocol

Sit down together and read the following scenarios out loud (if anyone thinks of other ones, feel free to include those too). After each one, there are 3 blanks and 3 boxes you can choose to check. As a family, select whether to report the problem online, talk directly to a family member, or both. If you're not sure, discuss it together — your family may have differing views, and it's a great way to practice how to approach digital dilemmas as a family. If you checked the box for reporting to a family member — fill in the blank with people's names, in order of priority. For example, if a parent or guardian is number one, write their name or nickname. If they're not available, write who will take their place in number two. Same for the third blank.

There isn't a "right" response or set of responses to any of these — this activity is meant to help crystallize and commit to a plan that's right for your family. Having a clear plan of action written down, even informally, helps to eliminate doubt and promote positive communication early.

Situation 1: Someone at your child's school posts a lot of mean comments about one of their friends. She thinks she knows who it is, but is not sure. What box would you all check, who should go in the blanks, and — if you're not in agreement — discuss this issue and what to do.

☐ Report the problem online _____
☐ Talk directly to a family member _____
☐ Both _____

Situation 2: Kids: One of you stumble upon some super inappropriate photos online. What do you do? Parents: What would you want them to do?

☐ Report the problem online _____
☐ Talk directly to a family member _____
☐ Both _____

Situation 3: A cousin posts a big group photo of everybody at a family reunion, and one of your family members hates the way he looks in it. Would you ask for help or report it?

Go deeper: If "yes" to either, who and how?

☐ Report the problem online _____
☐ Talk directly to a family member _____
☐ Both _____

Situation 4: One of the kids is watching a cartoon video and suddenly there's some weird content. It's definitely not appropriate for kids and they become uncomfortable. After deciding what's best to do, discuss what could be done in the future to reduce or prevent unpleasant "surprises" like this.

☐ Report the problem online _____
☐ Talk directly to a family member _____
☐ Both _____

Situation 5: One of you is playing an online game with friends and someone none of the players know starts chatting with them. They're not being mean, just nobody knows them. Decide what to do. Report them? Talk with another family member?

☐ Report the problem online _____
☐ Talk directly to a family member _____
☐ Both _____

Take it to the next level: Should the player in your family ignore the person? Talk nicely with the newcomer as a group to get a feel for who they are (why/why not)?

Situation 6: One of the kids notices that a student at their school made a comment online saying they're going to fight with another student in the lunchroom the next day. Discuss as a family what they should do.

☐ Report the problem online _____
☐ Talk directly to a family member _____
☐ Both _____

No. 2: Reporting problems online

As a family, sit down together with a phone, tablet, laptop, or desktop computer in a way that everyone can see the screen.

Open your favorite social media apps or sites using two or more family members' accounts, and figure out together how to report problems in those apps.

Sometimes kids know their way around an app better than their parents, and it can be both interesting and fun to let them demonstrate and pass on some of their social media smarts to you! If somebody thinks of something else they want to know how to do, this is a great time for everybody to do some learning about the technology they use together.

Now, what's next?

Wow. That's a whole lot of Internet awesomeness to create together!

We hope you had fun trying some of these ideas and activities. If you want more, or to hear some different voices and views, check out some of our additional resources.

Most importantly, have fun exploring what works for your family, as you all grow the skills of being **Smart**, **Alert**, **Strong**, **Kind**, and **Brave** on and off the Internet.

Further resources for families

Google Family Link
bit.ly/googlefamilylink

Google Digital Wellbeing
bit.ly/googledigitalwellbeing

Good Digital Parenting at FOSI
bit.ly/gooddigitalparenting

Connect Safely
connectsafely.org

iKeepSafe
ikeepsafe.org

Family Resources at National PTA
bit.ly/familyresourcesPTA

**"Savvy Searching"
(from Google for Education)**
bit.ly/savvysearchingYouTube

Connected Parenting
bit.ly/ConnectedParentingArticle

Family Link Guide for Families

A guide to setting digital ground rules for your family.

In today's world, digital devices are everywhere — and they're always demanding some sort of attention — if we let them. For families, understanding and creating digital ground rules at home is an important step in educating children about their relationship with technology. But for many children or teens, this can feel like a "power play" on the part of their parents — an exercise in control. It doesn't have to be this way.

By making it into a conversation, you can help your child understand why these rules are important. The topics below focus on features available via Family Link, but discussions about technology use can be helpful for any parent. Family Link is an app that helps parents stay in the loop as their child begins using an Android device. Parents can use Family Link on their Android*, iPhone, or Chromebook devices.

*For the child's device, Family Link runs on Android devices running version 7.0 (Nougat) and higher. Devices running Android versions 5.0 and 6.0 (Lollipop and Marshmallow) may also be able to run Family Link. Family Link also works on select Chromebook devices.

Visit **families.google.com/familylink/device-compatibility** and our Help Center for more details.

Help guide your child to good content

Wouldn't it be nice to know how much time your kid is spending in that educational app vs. the apps they download? Family Link offers tools for parents, such as daily, weekly, and monthly app usage reports, so you'll have a good idea about how your child is spending time on their device.

Content restrictions and app approvals

When a child accesses the Google Play Store, they can browse games, movies, shows, books, and more. Additionally, Family Link enables parents to:

• Restrict the types of content visible based on ratings
• Require approval to download content (free or paid)
• Review an app's information when a download is requested to find out whether it contains ads, in-app purchases, or permissions you might care about

Talk with your child about the different content ratings that exist (such as "E for Everyone" vs. "Teen") to explain why these restrictions exist for different age levels, and help them understand what kind of content you think is appropriate for them.

App activity reports

It's much easier to have a talk with your children about technology if you know what they love to do with their devices. Is your child a chatter? A gamer? An avid reader? Talk to your child about which apps and games they enjoy the most, and see where they spend the most time with Family Link's app activity reports. These reports provide a breakdown of how much time your child spends on each app on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis.

Hide apps

You might decide the right amount of screen time for your child depends on what they're watching, playing, or learning. If activity reports show your child is using a specific app too much (like their favorite new game), you can temporarily hide it from their device. Discuss with your child whether or not they feel the amount of time they're using it is healthy, and explain to them why you're asking them to take a break. None of their app history (such as game progress or high scores) will be deleted — the app will simply be hidden until you decide to make it available to your child again.

When discussing apps with your kids, talk to them about which apps and games they enjoy the most. It's a great opportunity to get to know what they are interested in, while also making sure they balance their usage of these apps appropriately with things like school, chores, or just playing outside.

Keep an eye on screen time

Deciding how much time your child should spend using their device is up to you, but there are ways Family Link can help you set limits.

Screen time limits

Family Link lets you set daily screen time permissions for your child's Android device. This is a great opportunity to take a moment with your child and discuss what might be a reasonable amount of time to spend on devices each day, and agree to limits that work for each of you. Both parents and children can see how much screen time is available, making it possible for parents to take an active role in managing their child's technology use, or for your child to be proactive in managing it themselves.

Set bedtime

When it's time for bed, it's important to minimize distractions to help your child get a good night's sleep. Family Link allows parents to set a device "bedtime" during the hours that their child is supposed to be resting. From having the energy to do their best on the soccer field or the focus needed to ace a test, it's important that children understand the mental and physical benefits of a device-free bedtime. You could also use it as an opportunity to explain to your child why you make the effort to "cool off" from your own devices when getting ready for bed, too.

Remotely lock a child's device

When it's time to do homework or sit down for family dinner, parents are able to lock their child's device with the Family Link app. It's a great chance to have a discussion and decide as a family when it's okay to use devices, and when they should be off and out of reach. Being able to lock a device remotely, in real-time, provides parents with opportunities to explain their actions and reinforce family decisions, allowing for mentorship and supervision to happen simultaneously.

See where they are

If you have older kids or teens, you might have had an experience where you're standing in the living room and you ask yourself, "Where's my kid?" Usually, they are just being quiet in their room, or you forgot they were across the street with their friends. Still, it's nice to know that if they are carrying their device and it's on, you can use Family Link to help locate your child.

Turn on device location

Talk to your children about why it's helpful for you to see their device's location.

Adjust settings as your child grows older

As your child grows older, you can change many of their account and device settings within Family Link. Have a conversation with your child about these changes, and how they help prepare them to manage their own accounts and device use in the future.

Make a Family Commitment

While Family Link can help you stay in the loop as your child explores, it's also helpful to give kids the information they need to be smart, confident explorers online. Be Internet Awesome is a program that teaches digital safety and citizenship for kids. Consider starting a conversation with your child about these topics by signing the Be Internet Awesome pledge together. You can also direct your kids to play Interland, a free, web based game that reinforces the topics of building strong passwords, being kind online, avoiding phishing and scams, and being mindful of one's online reputation. They can link directly to Interland from "Tips for Families", located in the menu of the Family Link app.