PARENTS' GUIDE TO SMARTPHONE SAFETY

SMART OR SCARY?

Smartphones are essentially little computers, so you might be a little worried when handing one over to your child. Take some time to understand the risks and implement a few safeguards so that you can help your child use smartphones safely.

THE RISKS

- **CYBERBULLYING**
  With the constant connectivity of smartphones, your child may be more susceptible to cyberbullying or have more opportunities to cyberbully others.

- **GEOLOCATION**
  A GPS-enabled smartphone can reveal your child's location through online posts and uploaded photos.

- **INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT**
  With smartphones, your child has mobile access to content you may consider inappropriate, such as pornography or violent videos.

- **SEXTING**
  Your child may use the Internet and social apps to send, receive, or forward revealing photos.

- **VIRUSES & MALWARE**
  Just like a computer, a smartphone is vulnerable to security attacks if your child accesses unsecured websites and apps.

5 WAYS TO BE SMARTER THAN THE SMARTPHONE!

1. Be a parent and a resource.
   Establish clear guidelines, including time limits and consequences for inappropriate behavior, but be open so your child will come to you with any problems.

2. Set up password protection.
   This will keep everyone but you and your child from accessing personal information stored on the phone.

3. Update the operating system.
   New versions often contain important security fixes.

4. Approve apps before they are downloaded.
   Make sure you understand their capabilities and approve their content.

5. Understand location services.
   GPS features are useful when using maps, but you'll want to disable location-tagging when your child posts anything online.

For more resources visit NetSmartz.org/ TipSheets

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THE FOLLOWING CHECKLIST CAN HELP YOU TAKE STEPS TO KEEP YOURSELF SAFER ONLINE.

O **CHECK YOUR COMMENTS AND IMAGES.**
Have you posted anything inappropriate or illegal, like threats, nudity, alcohol, or drugs?

O **TALK TO YOUR FRIENDS ABOUT WHAT'S OK TO POST.**
Agree that you won't post embarrassing or hurtful comments or images of each other. Be clear that you'll delete – or if needed, report – any posts that are inappropriate, illegal, or threatening or could get you in trouble.

O **REVIEW YOUR ACCOUNT SETTINGS.**
Go through each option slowly. Always ask yourself – *what* is on my profile and *who* can see it?

O **KNOW YOUR FRIENDS, CONTACTS, AND FOLLOWERS.**
These are the people who can see, share, and comment on what you post so you want to be sure you can trust them. Block and report anyone who makes harassing, threatening, or inappropriate comments.

O **KEEP AN EYE ON 3RD PARTY APPS.**
Some of these apps will give companies access to your personal information. Always read the fine print before deciding to add one.

O **DON'T FORGET MOBILE.**
When you use mobile devices like smartphones and tablets to post something or check in, you could also be sharing your location. Check your settings to make sure you're only sharing what you want to.

O **REPORT.**
You have the right to be safe online. If anyone cyberbullies you, make a report to the website or app. If anyone shares or asks you to share sexual messages or images, make a report to **www.CyberTipline.com.**

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PROTECTING YOUR KIDS
ONLINE

TAKE CHARGE

Set some ground rules.

Establish basic guidelines like when your kids can go online, what sites they can visit, and how many texts they can send a month, so everyone is on the same page.

Research before you buy.

Did you know that handheld games can connect to the Internet or that many laptops have built-in webcams? Understand what technology you're bringing into your home.

Don't just sit there– REPORT!

If your kids are dealing with cyberbullies or potential predators, report them to the website, cell phone service, law enforcement, or www.cybertipline.com.

MONITOR

Supervise Internet use.

If you can see what your kids are doing, they're less likely to get in trouble.

Safeguards ≠ Safe Kids.

Installing CIA-level monitoring software on your kids' computers does not guarantee they'll be safe online. Technology can't replace your time and attention as a parent or guardian.

Don't go overboard.

It's smart to keep an eye on your kids' social networking profiles, but it's never cool when you post embarrassing messages or pictures to their page.

COMMUNICATE

Talk to your kids; they're not as mysterious as you think.

Your kids might not tell you everything, but that doesn't mean you shouldn't ask. Get involved so you're not the last to know.
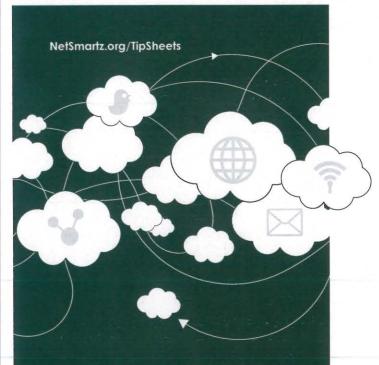
Challenge them to a duel.

If you have kids who like to play video or computer games, ask if you can play, too. When you respect their interests, they're more likely to respect your rules.

Don't pull the plug.

Taking away your kids' Internet access because they've done something wrong doesn't solve the problem. Talk to them about protecting themselves and respecting others online.

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Protecting your KIDS on social media

Online social media services aren't new, but many of us are still learning how to use them without getting into trouble – especially children and teens. Use these tips to help your kids safely use any social media service from networking to image posting sites.

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For more resources visit **NetSmartz.org**

Do you know...

What they're posting?
Check comments and images for personal information, like phone numbers and addresses, as well as inappropriate and illegal content such as hateful or threatening speech and nudity. Delete anything you think is too much information.

How they access social media?
Mobile devices, like cell phones and tablets, let children access social media apps away from adult supervision. Children may post content and even share their locations. Review app settings to help them keep information – like their location – private.

Who they're talking to?
Your child's online contact lists and followers may include people you don't know, or even people your child only knows online. Even if you don't know the contact, make sure you know what images, messages, and other content they're sharing.

What account settings they're using?
This is where you can control who has access to your child's information. Each social media service has a different setup, so take a look at each one your child uses. Always ask yourself – *what* is on the profile and *who* can see it?

Who has access to their information?
Most social media services have ads and applications from 3rd parties, like games and fan pages. If children click on these or add them to their profiles, they are allowing access to their personal information. Have a discussion about what's OK to add and what's not.

Where to report?
If anyone talks to your child about sex, shares or asks them to share sexual images, or is a victim of sexual exploitation, make a report to the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children® at **www.CyberTipline.com** or **1-800-THE-LOST®**.

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TECH TIPS

Want to learn how to check your child's browser history, use Facebook's privacy settings or report cyberbullying on Twitter? Check out these websites for information and how-to videos so you can be as tech savvy as your child.

INSTRUCTIONAL VIDEOS AND GUIDES

- **www.howcast.com/categories/2-tech**
  Videos include "How to Use Twitter," "How to Use Facebook" and "How to Use an iPhone."

- **www.fosi.org/good-digital-parenting**
  Information and tips for parents about specific websites and apps.

WEBSITE HELP CENTERS

- **www.facebook.com/help**
  Learn how to manage your child's account and report problems.

- **support.twitter.com**
  Find out how to use Twitter and protect your child's privacy.

- **https://support.google.com/youtube**
  Read about YouTube's safety policies and how to report inappropriate content.

- **www.google.com/safetycenter**
  Browse through videos and articles for advice on using Google's safety tools and how to manage your family's safety online.

- **help.instagram.com**
  Learn about the basics of this popular app and get tips for parents.

- **https://support.snapchat.com**
  Understand how to use the app and what to do if your child is using it inappropriately.

- **https://kikinteractive.zendesk.com**
  Read about the app and how to report problems.

- **https://support.skype.com**
  Browse articles about securing your child's account and managing their privacy settings.

- **www.tumblr.com/help**
  Learn about this blogging platform and how to manage your child's account settings.

- **https://help.pinterest.com**
  Find out how to use Pinterest and secure your child's account.

- **help.meetme.com**
  Get answers to your questions about controlling who sees your child's profile and how to report problems.

- **help.disney.com/clubpenguin**
  Read about this popular game's rules and safety features.

Didn't find the answer to your question?
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