

INTERNET SAFETY NIGHT



Mobile Kids Tip Sheet

© Say Hello to Your Mobile Kid

Use these tips and key discussion points for talking with your child about mobile technology.

Wants and needs

Be realistic about the technology your child really needs. Your child may tell you everyone has an iPhone, but a traditional cell phone will probably do the trick. Consider prepaid phone options to get your child started.

Mobile phones and GPS technology

Kids can easily give away critical information about themselves by using a location-sharing service on their phones. If your child is using one, check his contacts list to make sure you approve of the friends who have access to his location. Many mobile apps also use the geolocation feature to deliver ads through the mobile apps for products or stores that are nearby. You can turn off location sharing for each app. Or, if the idea of geotagging makes you uncomfortable, turn it off for the entire phone.

GPS technology and photos

Lots of people don't know that the GPS feature can add tags to photos. An innocent photo taken while at the mall and uploaded to Facebook can reveal your child's location.

Texting

Remind your child that every text he sends is out there in the world and he no longer has control over it. A good rule of thumb: If you wouldn't say it in front of your whole school, don't text it.

- **Don't hit send when angry:** Tell your child it is OK to get upset or even mad at friends, but it's not OK to text when you are feeling that way. This is when you can say something you'll regret. Teach your child to pause before sending a message and ask, "Is it really a good idea to send this?"

- **A note about security:** Some kids don't even set a basic password for their phones, making it incredibly easy for someone to grab their phone and send out a quick (mischievous or malicious) text.

Sexting

Have a conversation with your child about sexting and explain that a person can be in serious trouble—and even face criminal charges—just for passing along an inappropriate photo.

- Remind your child never to take an inappropriate photo of himself, no matter who is pressuring him to do so, and text it to anyone. A true friend would never ask him to do this.

Smartphones and filtering content

These devices might fit in your child's pocket or backpack, but you should really have the same rules for these devices that you have for the main computer in your house. Make sure you set the same parameters and parental controls.

- With Apple phones, you can set restrictions, but they don't apply to the Safari browser on that phone. You can download an app such as Mobicip to replace Safari with a kid-friendly browser.
- For Android phones, products like Trend Micro's Mobile Security can filter the browser environment.

Tablets, iPads, e-readers

Adapt your same parental controls to these platforms. Even with e-readers like the Kindle Fire, your child can easily get on the Internet and download apps and games.

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