



Choose your family's tech **ADVENTURE**



Create a digital agreement that works for your family

A clear, one-page digital agreement is a simple way to start the conversation about your family's online safety and wellbeing.



Print it, fill it out with your family's tech rules and guidelines, then place it on the fridge or somewhere everyone can see it.

Choose your own tech adventure

To help you on your quest towards building safer online experiences, we've prepared this choose-your-adventure guidebook.

Turn to the "chapter" which best fits your child's age (or ages), and you'll find **everything you need to start filling out your agreement together** – including challenges to highlight, safety settings to talk through, and expert recommendations for balanced tech use.



First steps

Kids aged 4-8

Turn to page 3



Into the wild

Kids aged 9-11

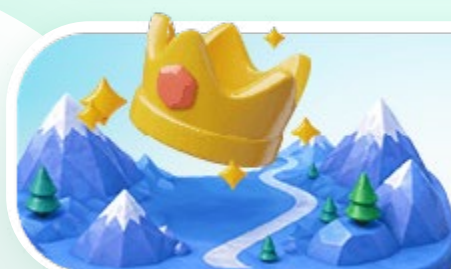
Turn to page 7



Challenging paths

Teens aged 12-14

Turn to page 11



The hero's journey

Teens aged 15+

Turn to page 15

To make sure your child feels involved, we speak directly to them in every chapter. Your next step is to read through this guide and get the family talking about their tech use.

Want to jump straight into creating your digital agreement?
Turn to [page 19](#) to start filling it out.

First steps

4-8 year olds



At this age, you're naturally curious and enthusiastic, and this is truly a time to explore the world through new eyes. But some skills and instincts that help us explore more safely come with experience and learning.

This part of the journey is all about building healthy digital habits, setting safety rules, and establishing trust as a family.

What the experts say

Before we agree on our rules, let's look at what safe technology use looks like for younger children. These recommendations will help guide our conversation:

- 1. Quality over quantity:** Focus on slow-paced, educational, or creative content. Avoid fast-paced media with rapid flashes or loud noises.
- 2. Tech as a tool:** Technology is a resource for learning, play, and entertainment, rather than a reward or way to stay "quiet".
- 3. Balance is key:** Tech shouldn't replace the things that help us grow, like playing outside, reading books, and getting lots of sleep. To prioritize healthy sleep routines, experts recommend winding down from tech at least 2 hours before bedtime.
- 4. Leading by example:** We look up to the adults around us, who'll show us the right way to use tech. We should play games or watch things as a family as much as possible – time spent alone on a device should be minimal.

Recommendations:

Under 5s

Daily screen time limit:
30 minutes

Time to switch off:
6:30PM

5-8s

Daily screen time limit:
1 hour

Time to disconnect:
7:00PM

Challenges to navigate

A quick note for parents: this section is best read by you first, so you can decide how to start the conversation with your child.



Inappropriate content:

Children may encounter unsuitable media – often highly stimulating, low-quality videos which can impact focus and mood.



Online bullying and toxic behavior:

Kids may not understand how online behavior affects others and may imitate things like shouting or bad language without realizing the impact.



Digital footprint:

They may not know that content can be saved or shared. Parental sharing (“sharenting”) of photos or videos can also create safety risks.



Excessive screen time:

Regulating screen time can be difficult – especially with video feeds and games – impacting mood, sleep, behavior, exercise, and family time.



Grooming and online predators:

Risks often come from open platforms (like in-game chat) or shared devices, and kids may not recognize inappropriate behavior.



Privacy:

Online spaces can blur the line between public and private, and kids may share personal information without understanding the consequences.



Misinformation:

They may believe what they see on screens and repeat it without understanding.



Gen AI and chatbots:

Some games and apps use AI characters that talk back, which young kids may mistake for real relationships.

Rules to agree on

It's time to fill out our digital agreement!
Let's decide:

- **Which devices can be used, and where**
(favor shared devices and spaces with an adult nearby, and avoid having devices in bedrooms overnight)
- **When screens should be off**
(such as during meals and before bed)
- **What we should do if something online confuses us, feels scary, or makes us feel uncomfortable**
- **What to do if an app or game asks for money, photos, or personal information**
- **What to do if an app or game asks questions or talks back to us**
- **Who we can chat with online, and how**
(known friends or family only on approved platforms)



Quick tip:

Turn to [page 20](#) to see an example of a completed agreement!

Family safety settings

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p> Use tablets and consoles in common areas, like the living room – never behind closed doors.</p> | <p> Switch on safe search filters on browsers to keep inappropriate or scary content away.</p> |
| <p> Set clear times when devices can't be used (like mealtimes), and use a central place where devices go to "sleep" at night so they don't interfere with rest.</p> | <p> Check age ratings together before using a new game or app, and show an adult how it works to make sure it's right for us.</p> |
| <p> Remove access to inappropriate apps such as social media, AI, and games that allow chat.</p> | <p> Lock purchases so new (paid) games and in-app spending can only happen with a parent's help.</p> |

Turn to [page 19](#) to create your digital agreement now!

Ready for the **next chapter?**

I can:

- ☐ Turn off my device calmly when screen time's up
- ☐ Ask a parent or other adult before clicking on something new
- ☐ Tell a parent or other adult if something online makes me uncomfortable
- ☐ Create a list of offline activities for when screen time is up
- ☐ Explain one of our tech rules in my own way
- ☐ List several examples of private and personal information (e.g., home address or passwords) and know they shouldn't be shared with others



"If I can check off these healthy habits, it means I'm right on track!"



Into the wild

9-11 year olds



At this age, you've built up some experience in the online world and you're now ready to continue your adventure – exploring new devices and different ways to use them.

As a family, you'll need to work together to make sense of the things you may encounter in an expanding online world, and to set healthy boundaries around screen time and content.

What the experts say

Before we agree on our rules, let's look at what healthy tech use looks like for preteens. These recommendations will help guide our conversation:

1. **Quality over quantity:** Favor apps and content that are age-appropriate, and help you learn and create, over those that keep you mindlessly scrolling and racking up screen time.
2. **Tech as a tool:** Devices should be used for learning, connecting, and entertainment – but they shouldn't take up all your time or attention. Think about *why* you're using them, not just how long.
3. **Balance is key:** Tech use should fit alongside the things that help you grow –like hobbies, sports, friendships, family time, and getting enough sleep. To prioritize healthy sleep routines, experts recommend winding down from tech at least 2 hours before bedtime.
4. **Growing independence, with guidance:** While you have more freedom to use technology, trusted adults should be around for support or when something doesn't feel right.
5. **Be kind online:** When connecting with friends and family, communicate with respect – your online actions matter just as much as your real-world ones.

Recommendations:

9 year olds

Daily screen time limit:
1 hour

Time to switch off:
7PM

10-11s

Daily screen time limit:
2 hours

Time to disconnect:
7:45PM

Challenges to navigate

A quick note for parents: this section is best read by you first, so you can decide how to start the conversation with your child.



Inappropriate content:

Children may encounter unsuitable media accidentally or be sent it by friends. As curiosity grows, they may occasionally search for mature content.



Online bullying and toxic behavior:

Harmful online behaviors may show up more as kids – lacking full awareness of consequences – are influenced by peer pressure and a desire to fit in or look “cool.”



Digital footprint:

They may share personal or family information without understanding the risks, and often don't grasp the lasting impact of what they post.



Excessive screen time:

Self-regulating screen time is still a challenge – impacting mood, sleep, behavior, exercise, and family time.



Grooming and online predators:

Risks often come from in-game chats and when using devices late at night. Kids may not recognize inappropriate behavior or know what to do when they feel uncomfortable.



Privacy:

Pre-teens may still struggle to understand that personal information shouldn't be shared – either publicly or even in private chats.



Misinformation:

Curiosity is rising, and they're consuming a wider range of content, but critical thinking skills are still developing.



Gen AI and chatbots:

They may become interested in AI platforms and come across them accidentally or through others – they may not understand that they're interacting with programs, not people.

Rules to agree on

It's time to fill out our digital agreement!
Let's decide:

- **Which devices can be used, and where**
(favor shared devices and spaces with an adult nearby)
- **When screens should be off**
(such as during meals and before bed)
- **What you should do if something online confuses you or makes you feel uncomfortable**
- **What to do if an app or game asks for money, photos, or personal information**
- **What to do if an app or game asks questions or talks back to you**
- **Who can you talk to online**
- **What to do if something feels scary or strange**
- **Who to go to if something doesn't feel right**



Quick tip:

Turn to [page 20](#) to see an example of a completed agreement!

Family safety settings

- Use tablets and consoles in common areas**, like the living room – never behind closed doors.
- Set clear times when devices can't be used** (like mealtimes), and use a central place where devices go to “sleep” at night so they don't interfere with rest.
- Remove access to inappropriate apps** such as social media, AI, and games that allow chat.
- Switch on safe search filters** on browsers to keep inappropriate or scary content away.
- Check age ratings together** before using a new game or app, and show an adult how it works to make sure it's right for us.
- Lock purchases** so new (paid) games and in-app spending can only happen with a parent's help.

Turn to [page 19](#) to create your digital agreement now!

Ready for the next chapter?

I can:

- ☐ Be trusted to take physical care of my devices
- ☐ Turn off my device calmly when screen time's up
- ☐ Manage my own screen time at least some of the time
- ☐ Ask an adult before downloading a new app or making an in-app purchase
- ☐ Recognize when I'm being advertised to online
- ☐ Understand, on a basic level, what AI bots do and how they work
- ☐ Tell an adult if something online makes me uncomfortable
- ☐ Identify a couple of the ways strangers try to befriend people online (e.g., offering gift cards, by complimenting them)
- ☐ Explain one of our tech rules and why it's important
- ☐ Show some basic cybersecurity skills, e.g., I know what strong passwords look like and why they are important.



"If I can check off these healthy habits, I'm doing a great job at building foundations!"



Challenging paths

12-14 year olds



Well beyond the beginner stages now, you're building experience and picking up a few healthy tech habits along the way. You're likely spending more time online and may even have your own smartphone, opening the door to tougher, more complex challenges.

Setting healthy boundaries around screen time is still vital, but now you'll have conversations about more serious risks and start developing values that drive your behavior online.

What the experts say

Before we agree on our rules, let's look at what healthy tech use looks like for this age group. These recommendations will help guide our conversation:

1. **Quality over quantity:** Choose content that's age-appropriate, meaningful, and adds something positive to your day. Be aware that some apps and games are designed to keep you online for as long as possible.
2. **Tech as a tool:** Tech can help you learn, connect with others, be creative, and relax. But it should be something you use with intention, not something that controls your attention.
3. **Balance is key:** Screen time should fit alongside the things that support your wellbeing, like sleep, exercise, schoolwork, hobbies, family time, and spending time with friends offline. To prioritize healthy sleep routines, experts recommend winding down from tech at least 2 hours before bedtime.
4. **Growing independence, with guidance:** Although you have more freedom online, adults are still there to help you make safe and responsible choices. Staying open about your online experiences helps build trust and keeps you supported.
5. **Be responsible online:** Whether on messenger apps or social media, remember to treat others with respect and kindness. Think carefully before posting, sharing, or messaging – once something is online, it can be hard to take back.

Recommendations:

12-13s

Daily screen time limit:
2 hours

Time to switch off:
7:45PM

14 year olds

Daily screen time limit:
2.5 hours

Time to disconnect:
8:15PM

Challenges to navigate



Inappropriate content:

Social media and messaging apps can expose you to problematic content – friends may share mature posts, algorithms can show graphic material, or strangers might request intimate photos.



Online bullying and toxic behavior:

Negative online behaviors, like offensive language, can feel normalized on gaming and social apps. Peers may bully others to assert dominance, pressuring others to adopt similar toxic behavior.



Digital footprint:

Even when you understand public vs. private information, oversharing can still happen when you want to connect or build trust online, or when you feel pressured to share more than intended.



Excessive screen time:

Self-regulating screen time is hard with social media, gaming, and schoolwork all happening online. You might be repeatedly fed risky content, like diet posts, which can harm wellbeing.



Grooming and online predators:

Risks often begin on gaming platforms before moving to social or messaging apps. Late-night device use can increase vulnerability. Conversations about inappropriate online relationships are still important.



Privacy:

You may be tech-savvy about scams and data sharing, but ensure you enable privacy settings on your platforms and never share sensitive information like passwords or your home address.



Misinformation:

With advances in AI and growing influencer content, it's harder to identify trustworthy sources. As you use social media, question what you see – especially content about mental and physical health.



Gen AI and chatbots:

You may already use AI for school, fun, or advice. Remember it's a program, not a person, and set boundaries to avoid over-reliance that can become risky.



Rules to agree on

It's time to fill out your digital agreement! Here's what you can decide together:

- **Which devices can be used, and where**
(favor shared devices and spaces with an adult nearby, and avoid having devices in bedrooms overnight)
- **When screens should be off**
(such as during meals and before bed)
- **What you should do if something online confuses you or makes you feel uncomfortable**
- **What to do if an app or game asks for money, photos, or personal information**
- **What to do if an app or game asks questions or talks back to you**
- **Who you can chat with online**
- **How to respond if someone – a stranger or a known person – asks for personal or intimate information**
- **What to do if something feels strange or wrong**
- **Who to go to if something doesn't feel right**

Quick tip:

Turn to [page 20](#) to see an example of a completed agreement!

Family safety settings

- Use tablets and consoles in common areas**, like the living room – avoid having devices in bedrooms overnight.
- Set clear times when devices can't be used** (like bedtimes and mealtimes), and use a central place where devices go to “sleep” at night so they don't interfere with rest.
- Block inappropriate and dangerous apps** such as social media, AI, and games that allow chats with strangers.
- Switch on safe search filters** on browsers to keep inappropriate content away.
- Check age ratings together** before using a new game or app, and showing an adult how it works to make sure it's right for us.
- Lock purchases** so new (paid) games and in-app spending can only happen with a parent's help.

Turn to [page 19](#) to create your digital agreement now!

Ready for the **next chapter**?

I can:

- ☐ Be trusted to take physical care of the devices I use
- ☐ Manage my own screen time most of the time
- ☐ Ask an adult before downloading a new app or making an in-app purchase
- ☐ Recognize advertising and influencer-backed recommendations
- ☐ Show understanding of how AI bots work and what they should be used for
- ☐ Tell an adult if something online makes me uncomfortable
- ☐ Set up privacy settings that we've agreed on on my apps
- ☐ Report incidents like cyberbullying on my apps
- ☐ Explain any of our tech rules and why they're important
- ☐ Demonstrate essential cybersafety practices, like creating strong passwords, not sharing personal information about myself or others, and recognizing spammy emails and links.



"If I can check off these healthy habits, I'm on my way to becoming a responsible digital citizen!"



The hero's journey

15+ years old



You've come far, and built valuable digital wellbeing skills along the way. When challenges come, you usually handle them swiftly and confidently – but the game is lifelong, and there'll always be tests and opportunities to learn.

Your need for independence is growing, and, quite understandably, you don't want to be talked down to when it comes to tech and rules. But families still need to work together to share wisdom, perspective, and support.

What the experts say

Before we agree on our rules, let's look at what healthy tech use looks like for teens. These recommendations will help guide our conversation:

- 1. Quality over quantity:** Choose content that's age-appropriate, meaningful, and adds something positive to your day. Be aware that some apps and games are designed to keep you online for as long as possible.
- 2. Tech as a tool:** Devices can be used for learning, expression, creativity, connection, and entertainment – aim to use them intentionally, rather than something you instinctively reach for out of boredom.
- 3. Balance is key:** Screen time should be one part of a healthy and fulfilling life, and not get in the way of sleep, study, exercise, hobbies, work, relationships, and getting out into nature. To prioritize healthy sleep routines, experts recommend winding down from tech at least 2 hours before bedtime.
- 4. Independence with responsibility:** Remember that what you say, share, and do online has real-world consequences, even if you can't see them. Treat others with the kind of respect you want yourself, and think carefully before posting, messaging, or sharing content.
- 5. Know when to switch off:** It's important to notice when tech is negatively affecting your focus, mood, confidence, or sleep. Setting boundaries and taking breaks helps you stay in control of your online life, instead of letting it control you.

Recommendations:

15–18s

Daily screen time limit:
2.5 hours

Time to disconnect:
8:15PM

Challenges to navigate



Inappropriate content:

As you use more platforms and apps, it can be hard to completely avoid mature content.



Digital footprint:

Although you understand public vs. private information, mistakes can happen and oversharing is still a possibility. Being mindful of digital footprints is crucial as you prepare for university or the job market.



Grooming and online predators:

Risks often begin on gaming platforms, community spaces like Discord, and social media. Late-night use increases vulnerability, and strangers posing as peers may use compliments as a hook.



Misinformation:

You're more aware than most of online trends and you might get news from social media. While you can question content effectively, AI is making it harder for everyone to tell what's real.



Online bullying and toxic behavior:

Seeing negative behavior online is common at this age, as both the need to belong and assert independence can lead to toxic actions. You may also see people misusing AI tools, like deepfake or nudify apps.



Excessive screen time:

Teens often report struggling to manage screen time. Platform design and the pressure to stay connected make it hard for many of us to step away.



Privacy:

Although we might be more tech-savvy about scams, data sharing, and privacy settings, peer pressure can still lead us to share information we shouldn't.



Gen AI and chatbots:

Teens are active users of AI chatbots like ChatGPT – but overreliance can become a concern as your school and social lives become more demanding and complex.



Rules to agree on

It's time to fill out your digital agreement! Here's what you can decide together:

- **Which devices can be used, and where**
(e.g., keeping some device use in shared spaces and considering if devices should be removed from bedrooms at night)
- **When screens should be off**
(such as during meals and before bed)
- **What to do if something or someone online upsets you, threatens you, or makes you feel uncomfortable**
- **What to do if an app or game asks for money, photos, or personal information**
- **How to keep AI use safe, responsible, and positive** (e.g., how should we use AI tools for schoolwork, if at all, and when not to rely on AI – for example, for giving relationship advice)
- **What to do if someone unknown contacts you**
- **What to do if someone shows predatory behavior**
(such as requesting personal information or photos, and pressuring to meet up in real life)
- **Who to go to when something feels wrong during a digital interaction**
- **How to report incidents online on each of the platforms used**

Quick tip:

Turn to [page 20](#) to see an example of a completed agreement!

Family safety settings

- 🏠 **Use tablets and consoles in common areas**, like the living room – avoid having devices in bedrooms overnight.
- 🕒 **Set clear times when devices can't be used** (like bedtimes and mealtimes), and use a central place where devices go to "sleep" at night so they don't interfere with rest.
- 🚫 **Block inappropriate and distracting appss** such as social media and gambling platforms.
- 🛡️ **Switch on safe search filters** on browsers to keep adult content away.
- 👤 **Check age ratings together** before using a new game or app, and showing an adult how it works to make sure it's right for us.
- 💳 **Lock purchases** so new (paid) games and in-app spending can only happen with a parent's help.

Turn to [page 19](#) to create your digital agreement now!

Continuing the journey...

Now you have everything you need to create a digital agreement that's fair for you and the whole family. You can use it to build these **6 core digital wellbeing habits**, to help you grow into a tech-responsible adult.



1. **Self-awareness of screen time.** Knowing when screen time is too much and managing it with regular screen-free periods and tech-free hobbies.
2. **Understanding online risks.** Awareness of the full range of online safety risks and understanding where and how they can occur
3. **Recognition of influencer marketing.** Understanding how influencer culture works and knowing when we're being sold to online.
4. **Responsible AI use.** Understanding how large language models work, the differences between AI chatbots and companion bots, and the ethical implications of using these tools.
5. **Critical thinking.** Knowing how to find trusted sources, verify AI responses, and think critically about news and information on social media.
6. **Cybersecurity skills.** Using strong passwords for banking and other important online accounts, and being able to spot scams

Family name: _____

Digital Agreement

The devices we use

→ Write down all tablets, consoles, phones, or other devices in your home.

What we love to do online

→ Each family member writes their favorite online activities so you can prioritize positive tech use.

Our screen-free zones

→ Spaces where we focus on rest and family time, e.g., dining room, bedrooms.

Our tech-free times

→ Moments to disconnect, e.g., mealtimes, 1 hour before bed.

People we can go to if something isn't right

→ Trusted adults who'll listen without judgment.

Family safety settings we'll use

→ Agree on 3 rules you can manage with parental control tools like Qustodio, e.g., daily screen time limits, blocked apps.

To help build safe and healthy digital habits, we also promise to...

→ Write more rules that you all agree on: check the example agreement if you get stuck!

Our family promise

→ Everyone signs here to support each other in following this agreement.

Name: _____	Date: _____
Name: _____	Date: _____
Name: _____	Date: _____
Name: _____	Date: _____
Name: _____	Date: _____

Family name: The Smiths'

Digital Agreement

The devices we use

Dad: Phone, laptop, desktop

Mom: Phone, laptop, Kindle

Kate: Phone, tablet, desktop Kate is 12

Jamie: Phone, Switch, laptop Jamie is 14

→ Write down all tablets, consoles, phones, or other devices in your home.

What we love to do online

Mom: Listening to podcasts

Dad: Going on discussion forums

Kate: Talking to my friends

Jamie: Watching YouTube videos

→ Each family member writes their favorite online activities so you can prioritize positive tech use.

Our screen-free zones

The kitchen table

Our bedrooms

In the car

→ Spaces where we focus on rest and family time, e.g., dining room, bedrooms.

Our tech-free times

On the school/work run

Family meals

On Sundays

→ Moments to disconnect, e.g., mealtimes, 1 hour before bed.

People we can go to if something isn't right

Mom and dad, aunt Steph, our teachers

→ Trusted adults who'll listen without judgment.

Family safety settings we'll use

Kate: { 1. Daily screen time: 2 hours

2. Switch off time: 7:45pm

3. Block apps rated 13+, AI, social media, and Snapchat

Jamie: { 1. Daily screen time: 2.5 hours

2. Switch off time: 8:15pm

3. Block apps rated 15+, AI bot apps, and Discord

→ Agree on 3 rules you can manage with parental control tools like Qustodio, e.g., daily screen time limits, blocked apps.

To help build safe and healthy digital habits, we also promise to...

Never download a new app or game without asking first

Ask permission before taking or sharing someone's photo or video

Not share passwords or personal information with anyone online

Co-view social media content (e.g., TikToks) until we decide independent viewing is safe and appropriate

Not use devices solo and behind closed doors unless it's for learning

→ Write more rules that you all agree on: check the example agreement if you get stuck!

Our family promise

Name: Dad

Date: 03/20/2026

Name: Mom

Date: 03/20/2026

Name: Kate

Date: 03/20/2026

Name: Jamie

Date: 03/20/2026

Name: _____

Date: _____

→ Everyone signs here to support each other in following this agreement.

Make your agreement **stick**

Tools can help you turn agreed rules into habits.
If you use **Qustodio**, you can:



-  Set **daily time limits across devices** to make screen time recommendations easily achievable
-  Set **daily time limits for apps like AI and social media** to improve focus and reduce mindless scrolling
-  Make digital experiences age-appropriate by **blocking apps and websites** individually, or by category
-  Use **Routines** to schedule different sets of rules throughout the day (e.g., block devices at mealtimes and bedtime)
-  Use **Smart alerts** to drive meaningful conversations about online safety and digital independence.