

Technology Use Contract

As a family take a few minutes to write out your answers to each of the following questions. Then, together, see where there are similarities and differences. As the parent it is YOUR job to help your child navigate the physical and digital world. Their input is important so you know where they are coming from but that doesn't mean they make the rules.

What does privacy mean to you?

1. Define Privacy.
2. Give some examples of what information should be kept private and from whom?
3. How do you decide what to post, text, retweet, like, comment, say or share? (Understanding that you give up control to both companies and the people with whom you share).

Example: The coffee person at Starbucks doesn't need to know your favorite color is blue. The cousin of your clan leader doesn't need to know you have a dog named Pepper. Why?

PARENTS: What will you do if YOU see something you deem inappropriate on your child's account? Is there a difference if it is something your child posted vs. something a friend sent to him/her? What will be the protocol when you see these texts, comments, pictures, videos, etc.?

How do you keep yourself safe with:

1. Strangers:
2. Acquaintances:
3. Friends:

Not all strangers are dangerous and not all people who can harm you are strangers. The person your child is “mining with” or “following” on social media may be a child or adult, a good person or an unsafe person.

The rule about Strangers and Acquaintances is simple: You don't interact with them unless a trusted adult knows about it and has granted permission.

Other gamers or followers that you don't know in real life are not bad nor good, they are just plain strangers or acquaintances. Just because you may have played with them multiple times online or they posted a positive comment on your picture or video doesn't make them a friend. A friend of a friend is STILL a Stranger and/or Acquaintance – so the same rules apply. That word friend is saved for people who:

1. You have spent a long time getting to know
2. You have build trust over a period of time
3. Your parents know or know about them

Let's talk about trust for a moment. Trust is a process. It comes from setting boundaries with people and seeing if they respect those boundaries and prove they are trustworthy. Just because someone is nice to you does not make that person a friend. It takes TIME!

What apps may be downloaded and accounts created?

One of the best ways to approach this is to have the child ASK First! Then as the parent you can check out the app and age restrictions in the App Store or Google Play Store or at commonsensemedia.org. That way you can decide together if the app or account is right for your child/family.

How much screen-time is healthy for you?

Not everyday is the same, so rather than static rules that may not work for your busy household, you might want to have a more dynamic plan that can change as your daily plans change. To help decide how much screen-time is appropriate ask yourself these questions:

1. What all needs to be accomplished today?
2. Do we have time for gaming, T.V., Youtube, Social Media, or a Movie?
3. Is your life in balance?
4. Are you eating well, getting plenty of exercise and sleep?
5. Are you learning and retaining information?
6. Is your homework/studying being done in a reasonable amount of time?
7. Are you constantly fighting about screen-time and asking for 5 more minutes?
8. Do you have healthy relationships with your family and friends?
9. Do you spend more time moving around than you do sitting around?

PARENTS: Set your kids up for success with screen time. If they ASK FIRST for screen-time whether it is for school or fun you can respond by asking how much time they need. That way you can help set expectations that make sense.

Ergonomically speaking, to avoid repetitive stress injuries and maintain healthy posture you should:

1. Take frequent breaks from repetitive motion (whether it is typing, texting or gaming)

2. Spend more time **active** than sedentary
3. Position devices so you are ergonomically correct (avoid doing homework on your bed or with the device in your lap that causes strain on your neck).

Where will the devices be charged and stored when not in use?

Getting devices out of the bedroom improves quality of sleep and reduces the chances of over-use and exposure to inappropriate content.

In order to be the most successful while learning the environment must be free of distractions. Blocking websites that distract you or turning off Messages while working or studying WILL improve efficiency as it pertains to learning and recall.

Some music (usually music without lyrics) can help focus a student. However, you have to find the right music. Setting small goals while doing homework and studying is also important to be successful. If you turn your device into *Do Not Disturb* or *Airplane Mode* for a period of time while you are studying you will see results quickly.

While doing homework I will set myself up for success by:

How will you share your passwords with a trusted adult in the house?

This is not a matter of privacy but of personal safety. Every family member in the house (including adults) should write down all accounts, usernames and passwords and make them accessible to a trusted adult. If something was to ever happen to a member of the family, quick access to online accounts could save a life!

If you see something online that makes you feel uncomfortable (inappropriate content or inappropriate behavior including bullying) I (child) will:

PARENTS: In order to keep the lines of communication open, it is important to listen to your child and ask questions about what they saw and how it made them feel BEFORE you can work through what to do about it. Kids often hid things from their parents for 2 reasons:

1. Parents don't ask about their online lives
2. Kids are afraid parents will overreact and either take away the technology or make things worse.

PARENTS: If you child tells you about something they saw online, you will:

Technology Free Areas/Moments include:

This could be the dinner table, bedroom (always or only at bed-time) short car trips, while driving, during recitals or while watching sporting events... This rule should pertain to everyone in the home.

Technology Manners we will follow include:

Examples: Not texting while talking to someone face-to-face, Saying "excuse me" and walking away when you need to take a call or text someone, while hanging out with friends, paying attention to the friend rather than a mobile gaming app...

Name any bad habits you feel you may have with technology?

Child:

Parent:

How will you resolve those bad habits?

Child:

Parent:

Consequences for breach of contract include:

Make sure the consequence is directly related to the behavior. If the child continues to argue about needing 5 more minutes after you set the time expectation, at this time, it may not be the right game for them to play. If the child creates an account or downloads an app without permission, they may not yet be responsible enough to have the device unsupervised or at all! If the child lies or is disrespectful, think about what the consequence would be if it wasn't technology related and apply the same logic.