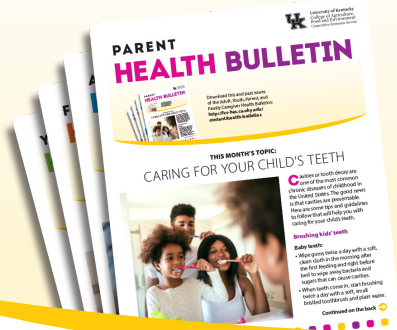


PARENT HEALTH BULLETIN

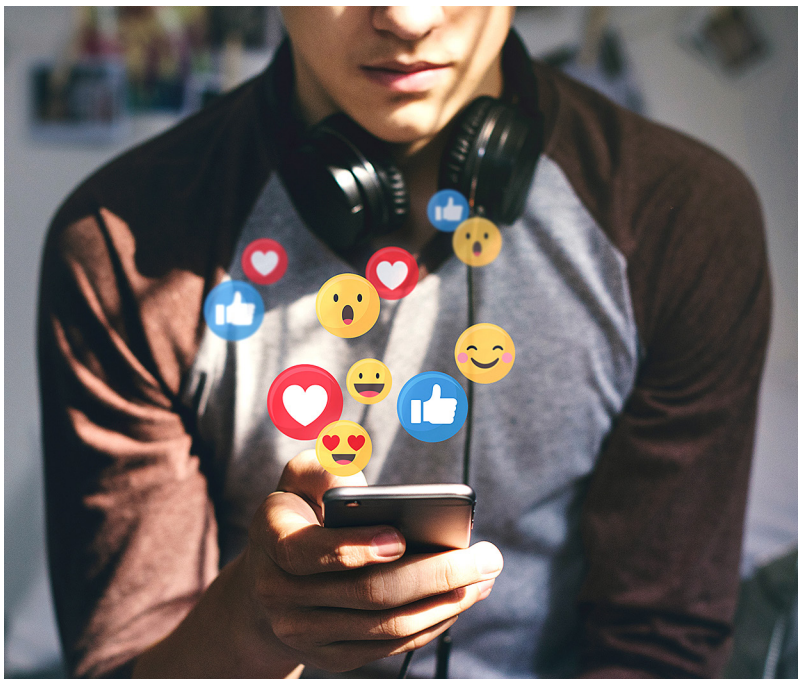


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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC

SETTING BOUNDARIES AROUND TECHNOLOGY



We live in a world that is seemingly connected by screens — and today's kids are growing up in it. It is essential to discuss technology as a family and teach children and teens how to use it safely and responsibly. As children age and have more opportunities to interact online and in virtual settings, we want them to be able to navigate it well.

Children need to know that once something is shared online — like a message, photo, or video — it might stay there forever. This means we need to think carefully before posting or sending anything. Set clear rules together about what is OK to share and what isn't. For example, you can say, "We don't

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Setting time limits on screens helps children find balance and protects their mental and physical health.

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send pictures of ourselves in pajamas or swimsuits,” or “Never share your name, address, or school online.”

It’s also key to help kids know who they can turn to when something doesn’t feel right. Help them identify trusted adults — such as parents, grandparents, teachers, or other grown-ups — who they feel safe talking to. Encourage them to speak up if they see something upsetting or confusing online. Let them know it’s always OK to say, “This made me feel weird,” or “Can we talk about this?” Tell kids that they will not get in trouble for reporting a person, video, or website that they see online. Instead, you want them to come to you or another adult if they see something bad or inappropriate.

Tips for setting screen time limits

Setting time limits on screens helps children find balance and protects their mental and physical health. Try these tips:

- Set a daily screen time rule, like “No more than one hour of tablet time on school nights.”
- Keep screens out of bedrooms at night. Try charging phones and tablets in the kitchen or another shared space.
- Use a timer or device settings to help kids know when screen time is over.
- Schedule screen-free times, like during family meals or one hour before bed.
- Encourage other fun activities — like playing outside, drawing, or reading a book.

Make sure the screen time rules apply to everyone in the family. Children are more likely to follow the rules if they see adults following them as well.

Create a family tech agreement

One great way to set boundaries is to create a family technology agreement. This is a list of rules everyone agrees to follow when using phones, tablets, computers, or TVs. You can write it together and even have everyone sign it.



Some ideas to include:

- I will always ask a parent before downloading a new app or game.
- I will never talk to strangers online or in a game.
- I will ask permission before posting pictures of others.
- I will not share my passwords with anyone except my parents.
- I will take breaks when asked and stop using screens when it’s time.
- I will come to a trusted adult if something online makes me feel scared or confused.

Place the agreement in a visible location, such as on the fridge or near the charging station. Review it every few months as your child grows and develops.

SOURCE:

https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/2025-05/25_0527_K2P_Have-the-Talk.pdf

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