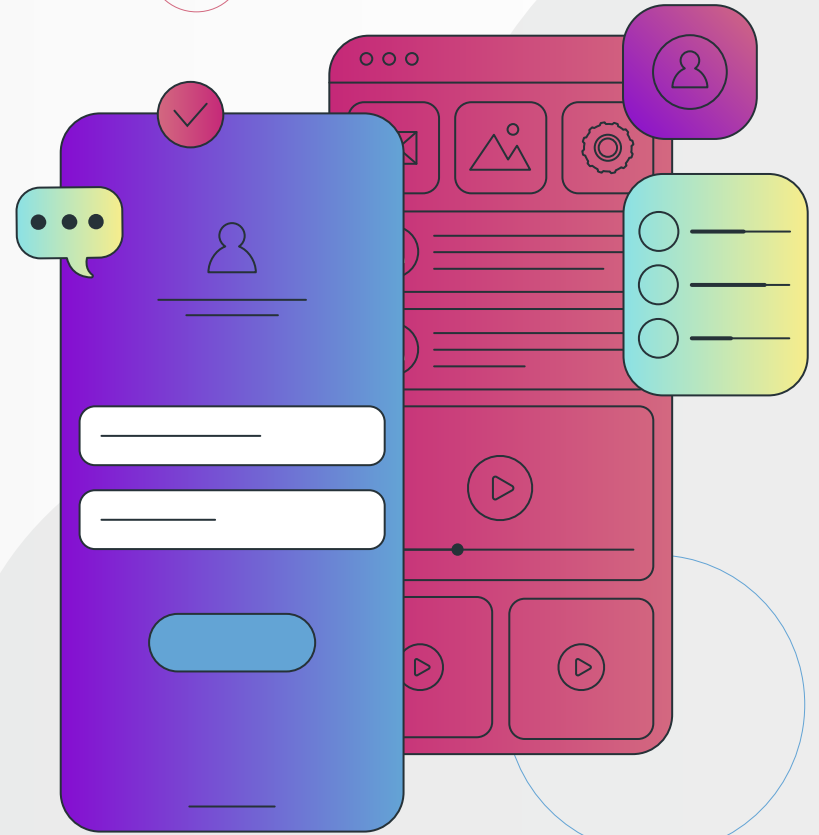


A Parent's Guide to

SETTING TECHNOLOGY BOUNDARIES



Presentation Link:
<https://bit.ly/30XALrw>





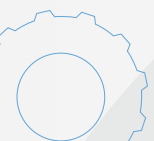
Why Set Technology Boundaries?



“Technology can be highly addictive, particularly for children and teens. In therapy sessions with me, many of them admit that they **want** to put their screen down but **they just can’t**, thereby forcing parents to become the dictators of screen time.”

“Kids crave structure, consistency, and leadership from parents. So rather than go to war over screen time, I recommend establishing a family culture around technology by sitting down and creating a Family Screen Time Contract.”

-Sean Grover, Licensed Clinical Social Worker



What Makes a Good Family Media Contract?

1. **Time Limits:** When technology can and can't be used (tech-free times or zones, before bedtime, etc.). Set time limits for each form of media.
2. **Appropriate Content:** Discuss video game ratings, downloading apps, appropriate and inappropriate sites, images, and posts.
3. **Rules About Sharing:** Discuss the difference between personal/public and private information, sharing location, images (yourself and others), and information on social media.
4. **Consequences:** Create specific consequences and vary them depending on each contract item.



Time Limits



The Mayo Clinic recommends the following screen time guidelines for kids 5+:

- Prioritize unplugged, unstructured playtime.
- Create tech-free zones or times. Examples: Mealtime or one night a week.
- Set and enforce daily or weekly screen time limits and curfews. Eliminate screens one hour before bedtime.
- Discourage use of media entertainment during homework.
- Consider using apps that control the length of time a child can use a device. Examples: [Qustodio](#), [FamiSafe](#), [OurPact](#), [Freedom](#), [Screen Time](#), and [Bark](#).
- Require your kids to charge their devices outside of their bedrooms at night.
- Keep screens out of your child's bedroom.
- Limit your own screen time.
- Eliminate background TV.

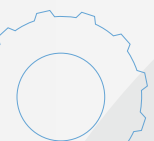
Appropriate Content

- Get involved in your children's interests. Watch an episode of their favorite YouTuber or favorite Netflix series **with** them. Play a video game **with** them.
- Need to know if a video game, app, website, or show is a good fit for your child? These sites are designed to do just that:
 - [E-AIMS Model](#) by ZERO TO THREE. This guide helps parents choose content for kids age 2-6.
 - [Common Sense Media](#) provides parents with 3 reviews/month (more requires a subscription) on all forms of media.
 - [Protect Young Eyes](#) contains reviews for apps and parental control devices.



Rules About Sharing



- Make sure your child knows the difference between personal/public information and private information.
 - Check computer browser security settings (usually found in the Tools or Settings menu).
 - Check privacy and location settings on all apps.
 - Make sure your child is only friending people they “know know” on social media. Privacy settings won’t matter if they are allowing everyone to see or share their posts.
- 

Consequences

Be ready. Your child will probably **not** follow the family media contract at some point. When this happens, take the time to **discuss** what happened and reinforce why the family media contract was created in the first place. If a consequence is necessary, keep these guidelines in mind:

- Involve your child in selecting the consequences.
- Review the consequences regularly to see if adjustments need to be made.
- Ensure the consequences are not too harsh and that you will be able to follow through with them.
- The same consequence may not fit each “infraction”.
- You might need to create different consequences for each child.



Family Media Contract Examples



[Common Sense Media: Family Media Agreement](#)

[Panda Security: General Family Media Contract](#)

[To My 13-Year-Old, An iPhone Contact](#)



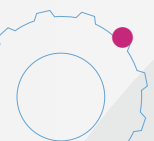
*These contracts serve a **starting points** for your family. Understand that changes **should** be made to these examples so they best meet the needs of **your** family.





Ensuring Your Family Media Contract Works

The success of a family media contract depends on you:

- Do not create a contract **for** your family, create it **with** your family.
 - What works for one family, may not work for your family.
 - Be ready and willing to **listen** to your kids.
 - You must **model** the behavior you wish to see from your kids. If no phones are allowed at the dinner table, that goes for parents, too.
 - Be willing to **make changes** to the contract, especially as your kids get older.
 - Understand that **exceptions** might need to be made. Acknowledge why an exception is being made and why it will not become the norm.
 - **Follow through** on consequences.
 - Don't forget to discuss and create **incentives** for following the contract.
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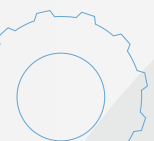
Questions or Comments?

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