



ELEMENTARY TECHNOLOGY

CONVERSATION GUIDE FOR PARENTS

THEY MIGHT NOT HAVE ASKED YET, but kids want to know when they'll be able to get their own phone, have their own social media profiles and interact with friends online. Start the conversation about technology now and begin setting clear expectations about when that could happen. Kids know they can get their license at 16, which gives them something to look forward to. Set expectations about when they can get their "technology license" too. Technology can be a positive experience as long as Mom and Dad stay informed and involved. We want to help you get the conversation started by giving you some words to say and not to say.

WHAT TO SAY

- "Google can be amazing, but it's very important that you don't ever Google without me."
 - "What do you think is the right age for a student to get a phone?"
 - "We have to be careful with Google. If we type in the wrong thing, we might end up somewhere we don't want to go."
 - "What kind of computer gadgets do your friends have?"
 - "Do any of your friends have their own phone yet?"
 - "When you get together with friends who have phones, do you ever create videos, text each other or do anything like that?"
 - "We're proud of the young man/lady you're becoming. Before long you'll be ready for your own phone. We think when you're (age you decide) you'll be ready to handle that kind of responsibility."
 - "Will you help me decide where to put the family computer? We have three choices—living room, kitchen or (name another open area of your house)?"
 - "We're here to help you learn how to use technology in a safe and fun way. That's why we have to know your passwords and what you're doing with your phone. As you get older, you'll gain more freedom. But for now, we're in this together."
 - "We're on the same team when it comes to technology. I trust you, but I'm not quite ready to trust the other 800 million people on the Internet. You can count on us to help you."
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WHAT NOT TO SAY

- "I didn't have a cell phone growing up. You'll survive without one."
 - "I can't believe your friends' parents already let them have a phone. That's terrible!"
 - "Kids your age shouldn't even be thinking about phones. That's crazy!"
 - "A phone? I don't even want to think about you having your own phone."
 - "We'll talk about it when I'm ready."
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You wanted your toddlers to use computer devices near you so they wouldn't hurt them. Now you want your kids to use computer devices near you so they don't hurt your kids. Stay informed. Stay involved. And keep the conversation going.
