TECH TIP #6: "DON'T CLICK THAT!" TEACHING KIDS TO SPOT ONLINE SCAMS AND STAY SAFE

Parent question:
"My child will click on anything. I'm worried they'll fall for a scam or download something dangerous."

You're not overreacting. Kids today are growing up in a world filled with pop-ups, fake messages, phishing texts, and "too good to be true" offers. And scammers are getting smarter about targeting kids.
It's important to teach kids skepticism so they will pause and ask questions before they click.

Common Scams Targeting Kids

- "You've won a free iPhone!" (Spoiler: you haven't.)
- Fake messages from "friends" asking for gift cards or account info
- In-app or in-game offers that lead to real charges
- Clickbait videos that lead to sketchy websites
- Scammy pop-ups pretending to be security warnings

What Parents Can Do

1. Encourage healthy skepticism.

Teach your child to ask:

- Who sent this?
- Does this sound too good to be true?
- What would a trusted adult say about this?

2. Make "Don't Click" a default habit.

- If they're unsure, teach them to stop and ask for help before clicking or responding.

3. Lock down in-app purchases and downloads.

- Use parental controls and app store settings (Google Family Link and Apple Screen TIme) to block app downloads and block purchases or require approval.

4. Talk about online trust.

- Just because something looks official or says "limited time only" doesn't make it real.

5. Create a family rule:

- "No entering info online without a parent's OK."

You're teaching lifelong healthy tech habits.

💬 Family Conversation Starter

Have you ever seen a weird pop-up or suspicious message?

What did you do?

Click here to read previous newsletters
https://www.centerforonlinesafety.com/tech-tips

To learn more about free parental controls, click here

https://consumer.ftc.gov/articles/how-use-parental-controls-keep-your-kid-safer-online

Questions or topic suggestions? Email us at info@centerforonlinesafety.com

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