TECH TIP #8: MY CHILD GOT A NEW DEVICE - HOW SHOULD I SET IT UP?

Parent Question: *"My child got a new device over winter break. How do I set it up for safety?"*

If your child just received a new tablet, phone, or laptop, let's get it up for safety while it's still early. Good digital habits begin on day one.

Here's a **Tech Setup Guide** for parents:

- **Create a family rule** to keep all devices out of the bedrooms overnight. (See Tech Tip #5)
- **Create a strong password** for their account and turn on **two-factor authentication** to keep safe from hackers.
- Use **free parental control apps** to block downloads, set screen time limits and prevent access to unsafe content.
  - On your **iPhone**, go to Settings > **Screen Time**
  - On your **Android** phone, download **Google Family Link** or go to Settings > **Digital Wellness**
  - Use these apps to:
    - Turn off location sharing or only allow it when needed. Talk to your child about privacy and what is (and isn't) okay to share online. (See Tech Tip #7)
    - Set bedtimes for devices so screens power down at night. No screens in the bedroom means better sleep and less late-night scrolling! (See Tech Tip #5)
    - Limit app store access (block downloads) so your child needs your permission to download anything new.
- **Check settings for in-app purchases and ad tracking.** Some games or platforms include chat features that may need to be turned off or monitored. Turn off notifications for non-essential apps to reduce distraction and improve digital health.

Now is the time to set up and use the **Family Tech Agreement**. This Agreement is where you can list your expectations, talk about screen time limits and schedule regular **screen breaks** for kids to move their body, rest their eyes, and play offline. (See Tech Tip #1) Kids need your help to create time to move, rest their eyes, play outside and even time to just be bored.

You'll be surprised by how creative they can be!

Common Sense Media offers clear, step-by-step guides for setting up parental controls on specific devices.

www.commonsensemedia.org/articles/parents-ultimate-guide-to-parental-controls

💬 Family Conversation Starter

Did you know it's good for your eyes to take a break from screens every 20 minutes? Just lift up your eyes and look into the distance to give them some exercise.

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

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