



15-17
years old

Digital Safety
Basics

Rules for Mobile Phones at School

Every day, teens head to class with hundreds of dollars' worth of tablets, music players and mobile devices tucked in their backpacks. But if you wouldn't let your kids go to school with that much cash, ask yourself: Do these devices belong in school?

It's easy to see the educational potential. Kids may read more books on the e-readers and discover educational apps without even realizing that they're learning, but, bringing the devices to school brings up issues.

- ▶ **What if it's stolen?**

- ▶ **What if kids use them to cheat on tests?**

- ▶ **What if they distract your child and others from learning?**

- ▶ **What if kids flaunt them as status symbols?**

Unless your school has policies about personal electronics, you're on your own trying to establish some guidelines. Without ground rules, there's a strong possibility that the electronic bells and whistles will interfere with your teen's studies.



*Stay
connected.
Stay safe.*





Rules for Mobile Phones at School (cont.)

FOLLOW THESE SUGGESTED STRATEGIES TO ALLOW YOUR TEENS TO REAP THE BENEFITS OF DEVICES WHILE AVOIDING POTENTIAL PITFALLS:

- ▶ **Decide whether it's worth the risk.** If an expensive device is lost, damaged or stolen, you could be out big bucks. Your school might provide a safe, locked place to keep devices. If it doesn't, and your kid is the kind who loses her homework on the way to the bus, it may be better to keep it at home.

- ▶ **Determine why your kid wants to bring the device to school.** Today's teens are brand-conscious, especially when it comes to tech, and they like showing off their "toys." If you find out a device is being used for tech one-upmanship, talk to your teen about it.

- ▶ **Ask whether your child's school has any rules about personal electronics.** Some schools allow them at certain times during the day. If yours does, make sure your teen can follow the rules and use the device responsibly. Set up consequences if he doesn't.

- ▶ **Discuss responsible ownership.** These devices can hold a lot of personal information, so make sure your kid understands the need to keep them secure by not sharing passwords or downloading copyrighted material. Also, make sure that teens remember to respect others' creative work by not plagiarizing.