

FAMILY GUIDE TO

Mobile Safety

How to keep your children
safe and connected in
today's mobile world



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Is Your Child Ready for a Mobile Phone?

MOBILE PHONES ARE PART OF OUR LIVES.

They're powerful tools, and more and more children are using them. For parents, the challenge is to make sure their children can handle the responsibility and understand the risks the technology brings.

Is your child ready for a cell phone?

There is no ideal age to give a child a cell phone. The right age depends on the child. Here are some points to consider:

- Has your child accepted responsibility for privileges such as a pet or an expensive toy? If

so, your child may be ready for a cell phone.

- Does your child need a cell phone for safety reasons? If so, it may be time. If your child wants a cell phone for social reasons, it might be best to wait.



Average age kids receive their first mobile phone.*

- Does your child know how to budget an allowance? If so, your child might be ready to handle limits on text messages, minutes, and apps.

- Does your child display good manners in public? If so, your child might be ready to use a cell phone with courtesy and consideration toward others.

It's OK to say "not yet." If your child wants a cell phone but isn't ready, consider setting some goals for him to achieve as a way of earning a phone.



22%

of kids say they've been bullied via text message.*

Basic cell phone or smartphone?

Many kids start with an inexpensive cell phone and work their way toward a smartphone as they prove to their parents that they can handle the added responsibility. If you want your child to have a mobile phone only for safety reasons, a no-frills cell phone is probably fine.

A child who has a hard time with limits on TV and computer time may not be ready for the many apps available for a smartphone.

Research the cost of the phone and the plan when determining whether a smartphone is right for your child. An older child might be able to earn money to pay for part of the smartphone bill.

Consider insuring your child's smartphone, especially if your child has a history of losing things. Make sure your child knows how the insurance policy works and what the deductible is. ●

*Source: GfK study commissioned by AT&T involving 1,000 parents and 500 children ages 8 to 17.

Mobile Phone Features

Kids use smartphones for more than making calls and searching for online content. If you decide your child is ready for a smartphone, consider the many features that are available and determine which are right for your family.

- **Texting:** It's how kids communicate, but even adults struggle with the distraction of texting. Can your child resist constantly checking for texts?

- **Photos and videos:** Kids love taking photos and videos of themselves and their friends. They can instantly post photos on Facebook or text them to all their friends. Is your child mature enough to know which photos and videos are appropriate to share?

- **Social networking:** Facebook, Tumblr, Instagram, Twitter. The social networking sites your child enjoys at home will now be accessible via smartphone anytime, any day.

- **GPS technology:** Many families love knowing where their children are thanks to GPS technology. But kids need instructions on how to avoid revealing their location to strangers.

- **Games:** If your child loves video games, the smartphone could become more of a gaming system than a phone.

- **Movies, TV shows, music, and other media:** It's getting easier to download movies, television shows, and music, providing instant access to all kinds of entertainment.



1 out of 4 kids who have a mobile phone have a **smartphone**.*

TEACHING KIDS HOW TO

Behave ONLINE

DID YOU EVER NOTICE THAT PEOPLE OFTEN are ruder and less civil online than they would be in person? Teaching children that you should treat people online the same as you would in person is an important lesson. This concept is called digital citizenship. Digital citizenship means helping children understand that the standards of behavior when you are speaking with someone online or through texting are the same as when you are talking to someone face-to-face.

Teaching digital citizenship requires an ongoing conversation between parents and children. Parents must teach children to make smart choices and behave responsibly while they are using digital technology.

It's not unusual for children to use new applications and try new technologies before parents do. That's one reason it's so important for parents to teach their children how to behave responsibly online. If children understand the basics of responsible online behavior, they can apply those standards no matter how the technology changes. And whether or not you're up on the technology, you are still your child's best teacher for behaving responsibly.

What is a good digital citizen?

- Acting the same online as you do in person.
- Being respectful of others.
- Not copying something that isn't yours.
- Staying safe from cybercriminals.
- Protecting personal information and maintaining online privacy.

As a parent, where do you start?

- Understand how your child uses technology to connect and socialize with his friends.
- Get comfortable with technology by using the same tools as your child.
- Set rules to follow, with consequences, when using digital tools.
- Let your child practice, and provide help along the way.



90% of kids think it's OK for parents to set rules about mobile phone use.*

*Source: GfK study commissioned by AT&T involving 1,000 parents and 500 children ages 8 to 17.



Digital Code of Conduct

- Don't give out or post your personal information.
- Give everything the "grandma test" before texting or posting to a social network: Would you want your grandmother to see it?
- Treat others online as you would treat them in person.
- Stand up for others. Don't tolerate bullying.
- Avoid plagiarism and copyright infringement.
- Keep your password a secret.
- Delete suspicious emails.
- Ignore contact from strangers online.
- Check with a parent or another trusted adult before downloading or clicking on anything.

Keeping your child safe online, whether via a mobile device or home computer:

- Set limits on use.
- Become familiar with the sites your child visits.
- Know your child's online friends.
- Know your child's passwords.
- Keep security software up to date.
- Reinforce that the same rules apply whether your child is using a home computer or a mobile device. 📞

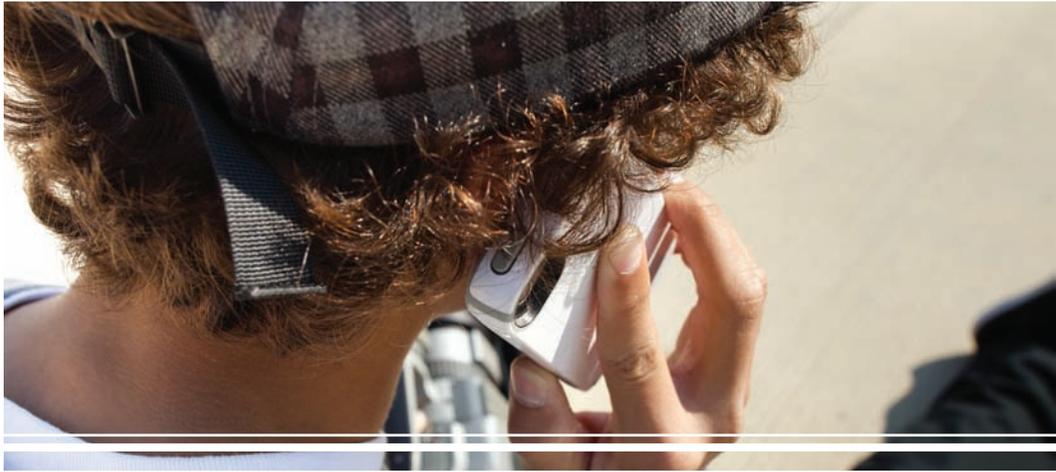


out of
kids say their parents set
rules for mobile phone use.*

Parental Controls

As a parent, you have power when it comes to mobile phone safety. Educating your child is the most important thing you can do. You can also access tools from your service provider or app store. For example, you can look for tools that help to:

- Block calls and text messages.
- Prevent text messages or phone calls during certain times of day.
- Restrict website browsing during certain times of day.
- Know where your kids are at any time.



Establishing Ground Rules

No matter what type of cell phone you choose for your child, it's important to establish rules and consequences.

HERE ARE SOME CONSIDERATIONS:

- Make it clear to your child what the phone is for. Maybe it's just for safety and for calling parents, in which case your child will only use the phone occasionally.
- If your child is older and allowed to use the phone to socialize with friends, set limits on how much time your child can spend on the cell phone. There are tools available to let you restrict the number of texts and set time restrictions for using the phone.
- Let your child know when it's OK to use the phone. Maybe she can spend 30 minutes texting friends after homework is completed or on weekend mornings.
- Check the rules for cell phone use at school. Decide whether it's worth it for your child to take the cell phone to school. For younger kids, it might be better to leave the phone at home. For older kids, make sure they know the school rules and consequences. Using their phone to cheat on a quiz, for example, can result in severe punishment.
- Decide what you'll do if your child's phone

is lost or stolen. Make sure your child knows who will pay the insurance deductible or be responsible for a replacement.

- Establish real consequences for violations of home and school cell phone rules. Having a mobile phone is a privilege, not a right. Be sure your child knows of the consequences if the rules are broken.

Cell phone safety rules:

- Do not give out personal information, including date of birth, full name, address, school, or phone number.
- Do not share passwords with anyone other than parents.
- Do not text photos that reveal your location or other private information, such as the name of your school.
- Do not lend your phone to someone you don't know.
- Tell your parents about calls or texts you get from someone you don't know, as well as anything related to your phone that makes you feel uncomfortable. 📞



Mobile Safety Family Agreement

Use this agreement as an opportunity to talk about how your family uses mobile technology. It's designed to help parents establish guidelines and expectations so that kids and parents can get on the same page about mobile safety and responsibility. For a downloadable version of this agreement, go to www.att.com/familyagreement.

I will stay safe:

- I will not give out any personal information, including my birthday, last name, address, school, photo, or phone number.
- I will tell my parents if anything happens while I use my mobile phone that makes me feel upset, sad, or unsafe.
- I will not share my password with anyone other than my parents, not even my best friend.
- I will not change my password without telling my parents.
- I will talk to my parents before creating a social networking profile.
- I will set privacy controls when posting information to social networking sites.
- I will tell my parents about creepy messages from people I don't know.

I will be a good digital citizen:

- I agree not to bully anyone online or on my mobile phone by sending pictures or sharing videos without the permission of each person in the photo or video. I will not spread gossip, set up fake profiles, or say cruel things about people.
- I agree not to use technology to cheat on schoolwork.

CHILD

PARENT

WHAT'S WITH All the Texting?

IT'S HARD FOR ADULTS TO GRASP HOW MUCH kids text. A 2010 Nielsen study found that teens text more than they talk on the phone, averaging an astounding 3,146 text messages per month.

Texting can be an easy and quick way to communicate with your child about details like where she is and when she'll be home. On the other hand, careless texting can result in hurt feelings, broken friendships, and damaged reputations.

If your child has a phone that allows texting, you can set limits on the number of texts he is allowed each billing cycle. Also, it's important to model good texting etiquette and safety practices. Don't text while having a conversation with your child, watching a school event, or especially while driving.

Not all kids can handle having a cell phone that allows texting. If your child wants to text all the time instead of having in-person conversations, reading books, and playing outdoors, consider returning to a basic cell phone.

Here are some guidelines to discuss when teaching your child about texting:

- Don't text something you wouldn't say in front of your parents or post on a billboard for the world to see. Texts can be forwarded to others and taken out of context.
- Think before you hit send. Once you send a text, you can't reel it back in.
- Never text while driving, and never ride with anyone who texts while driving; it's very dangerous.



- Never send a text from someone else's phone.
- Never use sexually explicit language, and never send a sexually explicit photo of yourself or a photo that could be misinterpreted as sexual or racy. This is called sexting, and it's never OK—it is even illegal in some places.
- Never send a photo of someone that could cause that person embarrassment.
- Never send texts that intimidate or bully another person.
- Don't text while having a face-to-face conversation or eating a meal with others.
- Don't keep checking your phone for texts while talking to a friend, family member, or anyone else. 📱



of kids report that they have ridden with someone who was texting and driving.*

*Source: GfK study commissioned by AT&T involving 1,000 parents and 500 children ages 8 to 17.



Apps: Where To Start?

APPS CAN BE POWERFUL ADD-ONS TO ANY smartphone. Apps are simply small software applications, and they allow access to all kinds of content, including services, games, and books. Apps are supposed to make your life easier and more fun, but the number of apps can be overwhelming and costly. Some are child-appropriate and others are not.

Here are some tips when considering apps for your child's smartphone:

- **Don't judge an app by its title.** Lots of apps have similar names. Make sure you know what you're downloading. Research user reviews.
- **Check the connections.** Some apps may allow kids to play games with people they don't know. Turn off these multiplayer options.
- **Be alert for ads.** Look for apps that don't have ads. These apps might be more expensive, but it may be worth the price to avoid exposing your child to inappropriate advertisements.
- **Do the shopping for your child.** Features of adult apps are often displayed next to the ones for kids, including user comments that might not be age-appropriate. Find out what your child thinks

he wants or needs, and spend time searching for the best app.

- **Research thoroughly.** Often the creator of an app recommends the age range and describes its features. Do your own research by reading user reviews and downloading a free preview.

- **Watch the price.** The cost of apps can vary widely. Make sure your child is using the apps you download. She may think she needs apps to help with studying, manage her money, and keep track of her activities, but she might find the time spent using them is not worth the effort. If you allow your child to play games on her phone, consider how many games she has time to play.

- **Set limits.** If your child has games and other apps intended for fun, set limits on use.

- **Other apps.** If you're wondering whether there's an app for that, then chances are there is. You and your child can download apps to help with homework and to keep the family organized. Your child can learn to manage money by tracking spending. Work together to decide which apps are worthwhile and which ones will just become another distraction. 🍎



Safe and Smart Cell Phone Checklist

Our checklist will help you navigate the process of buying your child's first mobile phone.

Choosing a phone

- Determine why your child is getting a cell phone. Is it just for safety and communicating with parents? Or is it also for socializing?
- Choose a basic cell phone if your child will only use it to call parents.
- Consider a smartphone if you believe your child is ready for the responsibility that comes with the social features.
- Research plans and find the best one for your family.
- Consider insuring your child's smartphone.
- Explain the insurance policy to your child, and make it clear who would pay the deductible.
- Make sure the phone has antivirus protection.

Learning about safety features

- Set parental controls, such as purchase blocking, call blocking, monthly limits on texts, and monthly limits for premium purchases. Manage your kids' access to the web by turning on content filters to block sites with mature content and shutting off search capabilities. (Available on basic and messaging phones only.)
- Familiarize yourself with your child's phone and then go over the features with him, discussing how to use each feature appropriately.
- Work with your child to set a password and discuss the importance of never sharing the password or changing it without letting a parent know.

Setting the rules

- Spell out ground rules. When is it OK for your child to text? When is it OK to use a smartphone at school?
- Make sure your child understands the consequences of using the smartphone in a careless, inconsiderate, or inappropriate way.
- Talk to your child about digital citizenship, including proper manners when texting and talking on a cell phone.
- Talk to your child about social media, and remind her of the importance of not revealing her location via Facebook. Help your child set up any social media profile, and make sure you know the passwords.
- Sign a mobile safety agreement with your child.
- Talk to your child about apps, and help him find ones that are appropriate.
- Teach your child not to download anything or open attachments without your supervision.
- Model responsible cell phone etiquette and safety habits.
- Never text while driving.



AT&T *Mobile Safety*

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The freedom they want.
The control you need.

Stay connected. Stay safe.

Equip your kids for life in a mobile world with AT&T Mobile Safety. An online resource featuring articles on protecting private information. Tips for preventing cyber bullying. Even free apps that curb texting behind the wheel. Find the peace of mind you deserve at att.com/familysafety.