# Help Kids Balance Their Media Lives

common sense education®

From phones and tablets to streaming movies and YouTube, tech and media are everywhere. Kids love easy access to shows, games, and information. Parents and caregivers love that kids can learn on the go (and stay busy when dinner's cooking). But it's easy to overdo it when the phone never stops pinging and the next episode plays automatically. Families can keep media and tech use in check by following a few simple practices.

## Check out these 5 tips ↪

**1**   *Create screen-free times and zones.*

Help kids take breaks from tech by limiting screen time in bedrooms, during study time, or at the dinner table.

**2**   *Try parental controls.*

Set content limits that make sense for your family. Alongside conversations about healthy media habits, use features such as content filtering, privacy settings, and time limits offered by the apps and platforms your family uses to help manage access and exposure to media.

**3**   *Establish clear family rules.*

Decide together what kind of media and tech is OK -- and when it's OK to use it. A family media plan can help get everyone on the same page.

**4**   *Watch and play together.*

Choose quality, age-appropriate media to enjoy with your kids. Visit commonsensemedia.org to find shows, games, and more.

**5**   *Help kids identify healthy behaviors.*

Practice talking about feelings -- both physical and emotional -- during screen and non-screen activities.

**MEDIA BALANCE & WELL-BEING**

We find balance in our digital lives.

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# Help Boost Kids' Safety, Privacy, and Security

When kids start to go online, whether they're playing multiplayer games, using educational apps, or just following their curiosity on Google, it's important that they understand the basics of online privacy and safety. With some general guidelines around what information is and isn't OK to share, and some help from parents when they're unsure, kids can have fun and learn a lot in the digital world.

## Check out these 5 tips ↪

**1** *Discuss personal vs. private info.*

Talk about the difference between what's OK to share online (favorite color) and what's not (home address).

**2** *Use privacy settings.*

Together, go through the settings on all new apps to make sure you both know what information your kids are sharing. Especially in the beginning, it's better to share very little.

**3** *Avoid location tracking.*

Location-aware apps can be super helpful. But apps that use a device's location to help people find your kid or offer them ads for nearby businesses should be used with caution. Turn them off if you can.

**4** *Power up passwords.*

Work together with kids to help them come up with complex passwords. Think outside the dictionary. Use phrases and special characters that make passwords hard to guess but easy to remember. Remind kids to keep passwords private and change them regularly.

**5** *Skip quizzes.*

Help kids identify and avoid clickbait, quizzes, special offers, and anything that asks for personal or private information. This helps keep information secure and devices safe.

**PRIVACY & SECURITY**
*We care about everyone's privacy.*

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