

Social Media Guidelines for Parents, Caregivers, Educators and Coaches

(Courtesy of [Cindy Pierce](#) - 2023)

Screen time suggestions:

- Establish “no-phone zones” and unplugged time for both kids and adults (in the car, at the table, in your bedroom, etc.).
- Limit double screening (like watching a show and checking social media at the same time).
- Consider allowing kids screen time in common areas only, rather than in their room.

Teach the responsibilities of phone ownership:

- Have kids pay at least part of monthly fees.
- For younger kids (middle school age), start a social media account together and ease them into independence.
- Make a contract, including clear consequences, and hold kids accountable.
- Establish telephone conversation etiquette before they get a cell phone.
- Use filters and privacy settings, but recognize that these can provide a false sense of security.
- Establish limits. Permissions need to be granted.

Ask questions and have challenging conversations:

- What social media behavior annoys you?
- What do you like, and what *don't* you like, about how people post or comment on Instagram? SnapChat? Tik Tok?
- What's good about group chats, and what isn't? What works well and what doesn't?
- How much texting is too much? How do you handle it? When is texting inappropriate?
- Has anyone ever shared your texts or photos without permission?
- What have you found surprising when you meet someone you follow in person?
- What happened on your phone today that was interesting? Boring? Funny? Irritating?
- Where have you seen people using social media platforms to create community or to push for meaningful change?
- What influencers do you respect and admire? What do you like about what they say and how they connect with their followers?

Model digital citizenship:

- Balance time online and off; be available and present. Kids feel ignored when adults are on devices.
- Discuss and model solitude and time in your own mind.
- Avoid the “multitasking myth”; consider your own tendency to make yourself busy.
- Think before asking Siri! Model brain work.
- Tell children about a time you had to complete a task or resolve something offline or without technology resources.
- “Walk the talk” by using your own social media and online behavior as a lens.
- Ask permission to post photos of your kids.