

Parent Guide: Start Your Mobile Parenting Journey



Determine when your child is ready for their first phone.

There are a lot of benefits for kids to be wirelessly connected in today's digital age, including education, staying in touch with family members and safety. Only you can decide when the right time is for your child to have their first phone or device, and when that time comes, there are many resources available to help guide your mobile parenting journey.



Talk to your wireless provider about the best devices and plans.

When your child is ready for their first flip phone, smart watch, tablet or smartphone, your wireless provider can be a helpful source of information about the devices and plans that can best fit your child's age and maturity level as well as your family's connectivity needs. Your provider may also have specific tools and tips for digital parenting.



Enable parental controls on the device.

Built-in device features can help parents reinforce family rules, restrict app downloads or in-app purchases, monitor how much time is being spent on the device and block access to adult content. When starting off with a new device, consider what level of functionality your child needs and enable the parental control settings to match those needs.



Set family rules and ask your child to agree to them.

It's just as important for parents to set clear expectations for wireless device use as it is for kids to agree to the rules and understand the consequences if the rules are broken. Create rules that align with your family values for when, where and how your child is allowed to use their new device and agree on the rules as a family.



Work with your child to develop good digital habits.

Like teaching your child how to ride a bike or drive a car, developing safe, healthy digital habits is a process that parents should navigate together with their kids. Start slowly with defined boundaries and build to allowing less restrictions and more independence as your child shows they are ready for new responsibilities. Parents can also help encourage good digital habits by setting the right example with their own wireless use.