Apply your values online

Help your child understand that the behaviour and values you expect from them in other areas also apply online. For example, if kindness is something that you expect, emphasise the importance of being kind with people on social networks.

Respond to their needs

As your child grows older they will need greater responsibility and freedom when it comes to using technology. Each child will be different, so it can help to tailor your response accordingly. Reward trust and responsibility, but be prepared to re-impose reasonable limits if your child breaks your agreement.

Develop your child's resilience

Developing resilience online is about helping your child to deal well with any challenges and to bounce back from any mistakes they might make. The best way to do this is to create an environment in which they feel free to talk to you about anything they encounter online and where they can learn from their mistakes.

And finally...

Let your child know that you will love them whatever and that no problem – online or off – is too big for you to overcome together.

Helping you to be an even better mum or dad

For more information and tips on 'family life', visit **www.careforthefamily.org.uk**. You might like to:

- **Attend** a local *parenting course* www.careforthefamily.org.uk/courses

- **Read** *Raising Children in a Digital Age* by Bex Lewis www.careforthefamily.org.uk/shop

- **Listen** to our regular *Parentalk Podcast* www.careforthefamily.org.uk/courses/parentalk-2/the-parentalk-podcast-for-the-primary-years

Top Tips
For Parents

Raising Children in a Digital Age

Care for the Family

Parenting your child around screen time and online behaviour doesn't have to be daunting. In fact, it is likely to involve many of the approaches and skills that we use in other areas of parenting.

Here are some tips on helping your child use technology positively and safely.

Take a balanced view

There can be two temptations as a parent when it comes to technology: one is to see it as negative and ban it completely, and the second is to ignore the dangers and bury your head in the sand. Neither approach will equip your child effectively. Like most things in life, technology can be used for good or for bad, and as a parent you can help your child to be aware of the difference. With you as their guide they can learn to overcome the challenges and make good choices in the way they interact online.

Be a good role model

It starts with you. Your child will learn more from what you do than from what you say. This applies as much to using devices and online behaviour as it does to any other area of life. It can help to think about how and when you use technology, and the example you are setting.

Keep learning

Technology is constantly changing, so it is a good idea to keep yourself up to date with what your child is using and how it works. Become familiar with the social networks, apps and games that they are using. Be curious and ask your child and other young people that you know to explain something you don't understand or are unsure about.

Create tech-free times

It is important to have quality time as a family where you are interacting without the distractions of devices. Set aside times in the week when you can all relate face-to-face and without screens – perhaps during a family night or over a meal together.

Get involved

It helps to show an interest in what your child is interested in. Spend time using technology together whether playing a game, creating something together or helping them find information. Get to know what they are doing online and the friends that they are making.

Agree limits

Giving your child boundaries helps them feel safe and secure – this applies as much regarding online activity as in other areas. When your child is younger they will need greater limits, but these can be re-negotiated as they become older and more independent. Think about limits in regards to areas such as time allowed on screens, appropriate content, budget, behaviour online, sharing private information and access to certain sites or games. Consider forming a Family Internet Agreement and discuss consequences for breaking any rules. It is also worth creating a united front with any other adults involved in your child's life.

Equip children to make good choices

It is important to help your child understand how to respond appropriately when you are not there looking over their shoulder. Talk through various scenarios with them, and help them to protect their privacy and reputation online.