



TECHNOLOGY

MIDDLE SCHOOL CONVERSATION GUIDE FOR PARENTS

YOUR 6TH GRADER MIGHT SEEM TECH SAVVY, BUT THEY'RE NOT LIFE SAVVY YET. They might want complete freedom online, but they're not ready for it. Don't make privacy something you're taking away from them, but rather something you're working toward as a team. Be clear about it and to the best of your ability, paint the picture that both of you have the same goal—an awesome experience with technology. We want to help you keep the conversation going by giving you some words to say and not to say.

WHAT TO SAY

- "This is new for both of us, but we're in this together and I want technology to be fun."
 - "We're going to be talking about this a lot over the years. I want you to be able to ask me anything about your phone, apps, websites—any form of technology—and I want to be able to ask you anything too."
 - "Will you show me how to set up my own Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, etc.? I want us to be able to follow each other. But I promise not to comment on your pictures. Haha!"
 - "Some phone plans have limits on how much data you can use and how many text messages you can send. Let's talk about yours so you can avoid ever going over them."
 - "Let me show you where your phone will charge at night from _____ (time it begins charging) to _____ (time your child can have it)."
 - "Do you know that everything you put online, post, text or Tweet is public? Nothing online is private."
 - "Have you run into any jerks online lately? Read or seen anything that made you feel bad or uncomfortable?"
 - "Technology is a great way to talk to people but not about people."
 - "What kind of apps do your friends have? I want to follow them too." (Tip: Moms can follow all friends but it's best that dads only follow the guy friends.)
 - "Treating others the way you want to be treated goes for technology too. Don't post or say anything that you wouldn't want said or posted about you."
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WHAT NOT TO SAY

- "Now that you have a phone, you can stop pestering me about it."
 - "I don't care what you do with it, you just better not break it."
 - "As long as you keep your grades up, I don't care what you do with your phone."
 - "You're smarter than I am about that stuff. You'll figure it out by yourself."
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Your student is entering the much bigger world of technology. They're now connected to people and information at the touch of a finger. This can be a super-fun time for your family or a disaster. Stay informed. Stay involved. And keep the conversation going.
