

Family Media Agreement 7-12

I will...

stay safe.

- I know that there are scams online that I can avoid. Therefore, unless I am filling out a trusted form with my family's permission, I will not give out my private or financial information.
- I will read the privacy policies of any social network sites or apps that I want to use, and I will pay attention to the types of information these companies can collect about me.
- I know that I have a choice in the kinds of relationships I have online. I will stop talking to anyone who makes me feel pressured or uncomfortable, or acts inappropriately toward me.

think first.

- I will model kind behavior online. I will not bully, humiliate, or upset anyone online or with my phone – whether through sharing photos, videos, or screenshots, spreading rumors or gossip, or setting up fake profiles – and I will stand up to those who do.
- I know that the photos and videos I post, and everything that I write about myself and others online, can be saved and shared without my knowing. Therefore, I will not post anything online that I wouldn't want my family, teachers, college admissions officers, or future employers to see.
- When I use, reference, or share someone else's creative work online, I will give proper credit to the author or artist. I also know that I have a right to receive credit for any original work that I share online.

stay balanced.

- I know that not everything I read, hear, or see online is true. I will consider whether a source is credible. As an author, I will also contribute information thoughtfully and honestly.
- I will be open with my family about how I spend my time with media and show them that I use it responsibly.
- I will be mindful of how much time I spend in front of screens, and I will continue to enjoy the other activities – and people – in my life.

Our Contract

This contract outlines my family's expectations for how I use my device at home. We agreed upon the following:

Where, When, & How Long

We talked about what it means to use the device appropriately and respectfully at home. We agree to:

Checking In

We talked about how we, as a family, will stay involved in how the device is used and what it is used for. We agree to:

Privacy Settings

We talked about what kinds of accounts I'll have and how I can best protect my private information. We agree to:

Care and Maintenance

We talked about what it means to take care of devices and what might happen if it's broken, stolen or lost. We agree to:

Communicating Responsibly Online

We talked about the different ways I might communicate with other people using my device, and what safe, responsible and respectful communication looks like. We agree to:

Student signature

Parent/Caregiver signature

Suggested Contract Guidelines

Things to keep in mind...

Before creating a family contract about electronic devices, talk about how the device will be used at home. The suggested guidelines below may assist in keeping you and your child on the same page. Then, use the space provided on the back to customize form to outline your agreed-upon expectations. Where, When, & How Long?

- Decide where you're comfortable having your child use the device. Can they only use it in family spaces, like a family room or kitchen? Can they bring it into their bedroom or the bathroom? Can they use it at the dinner table?
- Consider the difference between using a device for homework and using it for entertainment.
- Talk about what it means to "balance" time spent with technology, media, and other activities. What are some steps your family can take to balance screen time with face-to-face time? Do you want to make the dinner table a device-free zone, in which no family member (not even the adults) may use a cell phone, tablet, or computer? Do you want to set a curfew for when devices need to be shut off?

Checking In

- Explain that as the parent or caregiver, part of your job is to guide them. Identify ways to maintain open, honest communication with your children about their device.
- Discuss how you'll monitor the device. Do you want to check up on your child's activity? If so, how? Will you ask your child to give you access to emails, texts, and IMs? Will you review his or her search history (which can be deleted) from time to time?
- Talk with your child about the kinds of apps they'll be using and accounts they'll have. Ask them to show you their favorites, as well as the ones they use most. How do they work? What's so cool about them? How do these tools support their learning?

Privacy Settings

- Practice creating a strong password together. Use at least eight characters (mixing letters, numbers, and symbols) and avoid including any private information such as names, addresses, birth dates, etc. Remember to have your child write down usernames and passwords and keep the information stored in a safe place.
- Discuss the importance of not sharing passwords with others, and decide whether parents should be an exception to the rule. One idea is to have children create their own passwords but then keep them accessible to parents in a sealed envelope for emergencies.
- Review privacy policies and privacy settings together. Make sure your children understand what private and personal information companies may or may not be collecting. Decide how public or private an audience you all are comfortable with when it comes to sharing and posting.

Care & Maintenance

- Discuss what you consider to be responsible care and maintenance of what are often expensive tools. Where will the device be stored and charged at home? Why is it important to treat the device gently and not tossed about or left on the floor, etc.?
- Outline the responsibility factor. Discuss what will happen and who's responsible if the device gets stolen, lost, or broken — even if by accident.

Communicating Responsibly Online

- Talk about the difference between using the device to communicate with others for school-related work and using it for hanging out or goofing off with friends.
- Discuss your family rules for social networking and messaging — with people they know, sort of know, or don't know at all. What does it mean to be respectful to and respected by others? What does that look like? Use this as a springboard for a discussion about cyberbullying, privacy, and safety.