

safe + healthy online habits

With so much of everyday life spent in front of screens, we all need to develop safe and healthy online habits. Take a moment to go through each of the five areas below. Then take time to talk with your family members, both young and old, on how to use technology responsibly.

1. EMPOWERMENT | take charge of technology

Manage Notifications

*Limit what grabs your attention and how many times you can be interrupted.
To keep from being interrupted, turn on Do Not Disturb mode or put your phone away so you can be fully present with family and at work.*

Filter

*Control what you view. This may mean unfollowing toxic accounts on social media.
For kids, use family apps ([Google Family Link](#), [Qustodio](#), [Bark](#)) that help monitor their activity and keep content age-appropriate. Help your teens select positive social influences online.*

Trusted Sources

*View shared links with caution on social media.
Instead, search for trusted sources of information.*

2. EFFICIENCY | make it work for you

Digital Assistant

*Use your devices to make your life easier and more organized.
You can set alarms and reminders, create shared family calendars and shopping lists.
Be the boss of your phone, not a slave to it.*

Connections

Whether it's a weekly video call with Grandma or an interest-based online group, take advantage of the positive connections technology offers.

3. SAFETY | learn how to protect yourself

Watch For Scams

Carefully check email addresses and website urls to watch for [scams](#).

Check Before Downloading

Only download files from trusted sites.

Guard Your Info

Don't give out any personal information through email, over text, or on an insecure or unknown website.

4. BALANCE | give yourself time and space

Take Breaks

Put devices down at mealtimes, for family conversations, and to be present in the moment.

Boundaries

Guard your time and heart by watching your online activity and limiting your time with devices and screens.

5. REPRESENT | if you're a Christ-follower, represent Him

Show Respect

Remember that the person on the other side of the screen has been made by a God who loves them just as much as He loves you.

Avoid Online Arguments

Instead, talk to people in person about controversial topics and listen to their stories.

A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.

PROVERBS 15|1

God, help me use technology well. I want technology to complement and enrich my life. I don't want it to control or overwhelm me. Please help me keep my focus on what's truly important as I seek to follow you. Amen.