

"Cultivating Digital Awareness: Conscious Parenting in a Tech-Heavy World"

Topics for Reflection and Discussion

1. Screen Time and Its Impact

- What are the physical and psychological impacts of excessive screen time on young children? How do you manage and limit this without creating power struggles?
- How do you balance educational screen time (e.g., schoolwork, learning apps) with recreational screen time?

2. Empowerment vs. Control

- How can we strike a balance between empowering our children with digital skills and knowledge while maintaining necessary boundaries for their safety?
- What are examples of conversations you can have with your child about navigating online spaces responsibly?
- How do you model digital awareness in your own life for your children?
- In what ways can we guide our children through their digital experiences without resorting to "helicopter parenting" (over-monitoring) or "bulldozer parenting" (removing all obstacles)?
- How do you help your child make responsible decisions online without taking away their independence?
- What strategies can you use to encourage self-regulation in your child's screen time habits?

3. Understanding Digital Risks

- What are some inherent risks of digital platforms, even those that appear safe (e.g., popular children's games, YouTube Kids, etc.)? How can you protect your child while allowing them to explore these spaces?
- How do you assess the safety and appropriateness of new apps, games, or social platforms your child is interested in?
- How do you explain online privacy, digital footprints, and the concept of "forever data" to young children in an age-appropriate way?

4. Boundaries and Communication

- How can you establish and enforce boundaries around technology use without creating a sense of deprivation or resentment?
- What are some digital "family rules" that promote balance, safety, and enjoyment for both parents and children?
- How do you handle discussions about online friendships, especially with people your child has never met in person?

5. Online Games and Hidden Dangers

- Many online games appear harmless but have hidden dangers like in-game purchases, exposure to strangers, or inappropriate content. What measures do you take to protect your children from these risks?

- How can you teach your child to recognize red flags in online games and platforms (e.g., bullying, unsolicited messages, content warnings)?

6. Open Dialogue and Trust

- How can you create an open dialogue with your children about their online experiences, encouraging them to come to you if something feels wrong or unsafe?
- How do you build a relationship of trust so your child feels comfortable talking to you about uncomfortable online situations?

7. Digital Literacy as a Lifelong Skill

- How can you foster digital literacy in your child, teaching them to be critical thinkers about the media and information they consume?
- What resources or activities can help your child become a savvy digital citizen while staying safe?

8. Future-Proofing Your Parenting Approach

- As technology rapidly evolves, how do you stay informed about new trends, risks, and opportunities in the digital world that may affect your child?
- What can you do to future-proof your parenting style to adapt to new challenges while still empowering your child?

Expert Advice

- Youtubekids- Even kids programming and channels can track the user, sell data
- Smart TV collects programming, what we watch, sells the information, uses it for advertisements
- Roblox - turn off the chat and no voice chat, the game itself is not made for children, it's an open source platform, and users can be targeted for ads, and you have to set the safety controls. If you use a chat, then use a server that blocks language. Contact the game developer within Roblox to find out what language (like "What's your age?") they block. If the game page doesn't have developer contact info or doesn't get back to you, then don't let your kid play on that game.
- Minecraft is like Roblox. There are private rooms that are theoretically safer. Know the name of the game and the server. Popular and big ones are likely gathering and selling data. Smaller ones better get back to you when you contact them.
- Always watch or play with them. Video games, phones, tablets, and even TV unsupervised can expose your child.
- Kidoodle as a TV app is safe

Caregiver Experiences

- Tech positive vs. tech negative language webinar from My Reflection Matters (Chantalle has info)

- Consider the effects of tech positive vs. tech negative and/org a household rule of total abstinence
- ["Raising Humans in a Digital World: Helping Kids Build a Healthy Relationship with Technology"](#)
- Setting boundaries with our children around tech is the same as setting boundaries for anything: As parents, think about the limits before your child has a chance to start testing them. Set limits around duration, time of day or setting, and your hard no's.
- "With great power comes great responsibility"
- Emphasizing trust: connectivity with people we know and trust is a benefit, and connecting with people we don't know can be dangerous