

FAMILY ONLINE RULES

MediaSmarts' research has shown that kids with household rules about Internet use are less likely to do things like post their contact information, visit gambling sites, seek out online pornography and talk to strangers online. Having a family agreement or set of rules for using the Internet is also a great way for parents and kids to work together on how to be safe, wise and responsible online.

With younger children, it makes sense for you to set the rules and explain them. As kids get older and explore more of the online world, you can discuss new rules together.

The most important rule is that if anything ever happens online that makes your children scared, worried or uncomfortable, they should come to you or to another adult they trust.

Rules shouldn't be all about punishment or what your kids *can't* do. Instead, they should be a way to share your values and give kids guidance about how to deal with online issues. Older kids are also a lot more likely to follow rules if they've been involved in making them. Check out our video on setting household rules here: tiny.cc/settingrules

Here are some ideas to help you get started:

- I will never share any personal information about myself, such as my age, where I live, and where I go to school.
- I will always be careful about sharing information about myself and others
- I will not visit any websites or download any apps that I think my parents or guardians would not approve of.
- I will work with my parents or guardians to block out things I don't want to see online.
- I will check the Safety Centre and privacy settings of any app or game with my parents or guardians before signing up or using it.
- I won't share my passwords with anyone (except my parents or a trusted adult) - not even my best friend.
- I will always check my privacy settings and go over them with my parents or guardians.
- I will tell my parents or guardians if someone online ever asks me to meet in person, asks me to contact them privately, or sends me something upsetting
- I will NOT arrange to meet a friend I have made on the Internet unless a parent or an adult that I trust goes with me.
- I will ask my parents or guardians before downloading anything, opening attachments or following any links that I don't know are safe.
- I will always remember that there are other people on the other side of the screen whose feelings can be hurt by what I say and do.
- I will not be mean or cruel to anyone online, even if someone else is mean to me first.
- If someone is ever mean to me online, I will talk to someone I trust about it, and remember that it's not my fault.

- If I see someone else being mean or cruel to someone online, I will ask them privately how I can help.
- If I ever get mad while I'm online, I will let myself cool down before I say or do anything. If I am mad at someone I know offline, I will try to work things out face-to-face.
- I will not share anything online that belongs to someone else without their permission.
- I will not upload or tag photos of other people without their permission.
- I will never pressure anyone to share anything with me that they don't want to.
- I will always think about how other people might feel before I share something online. I will never share anything that might embarrass someone or hurt their feelings.
- I will give other people credit when I use their ideas or copy parts of their documents from the internet in my homework or other projects.
- I will not buy things online unless I have my parents' or guardians' permission.
- I will only use one screen device at a time.
- I will put away screen devices when I'm spending time with another person, and only take them out for a specific purpose.
- I will only use devices at the times and places my parents or guardians said are okay.