SCREEN SANITY

When should I get my kid a phone?

A DRIVER'S ED APPROACH TO DEVICES

Cars and phones are more alike than you may think. They are shiny, powerful devices that can take us to amazing places we'd never be able to go to on our own. But they can also get us into accidents. The accidents in the online world range from "fender benders" (like a child realizing via social media that they weren't invited to a birthday party) to a "car being totaled" (pornography, sextortion, self-harm and more).

When you teach your kids to drive, you don't simply hand them the keys and wish them good luck. You prepare them to navigate risky situations and road hazards through driver's ed. Although there isn't a minimum age like 16 to step behind the screen, you can still take a similar "driver's education" approach in the digital world.

Coach From the Passenger Seat

With devices and apps, start with strong limits and release them slowly.

When it's time for something new, coach your kid from the passenger seat.

When they master one skill, give them something more complex to try.

Celebrate the moments your child shows responsibility, trustworthiness & maturity!

Smartphone Roadmap

There is a growing market of smartphone alternatives that allow your child to not only stay connected but experience independence and responsibility with less risk. Thanks to smartwatches and basic phones, your kid can practice in the digital equivalent of a parking lot and side streets before they hit the highway.

SMARTWATCHES
· Texting and calling to a limited list of contacts
· Some feature GPS tracking, video calls and music
· No internet or social media

BASIC PHONES
· Often look like smartphones
· Texting, calling & "kid-friendly" apps
· Most feature music and a camera
· No or limited internet
· No social media

Scan here for more information

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