Your **Quick Guide** to Creating a Family Technology Plan

A step-by-step guide for creating a plan to manage technology in your home.

BetterScreenTime

How to Get Started

- Schedule time to talk to your spouse about the role technology will play in your home. Realize that you may not always agree, but do your best to work it out together so you can be on the same page when you have these conversations with your kids.

- If you aren't married, think about the role you want technology to play in your home before starting the discussions with your kid(s).

- If divorced, do your best to talk to your ex-spouse about why you want to work with your child(ren) and help them set healthy boundaries with technology.

- During discussions: remember to listen more than you talk and encourage lots of dialogue by asking open-ended questions.

Discussion #1: Technology as a Tool

We talked about using technology as a tool and listed uses that were "thumbs up" and "thumbs down." We drew two columns on a giant paper pad. At the top of one column, we drew a thumbs up, and on the top of the other column, a thumbs down. We let the kids do most of the talking as we listed positive and negative uses of technology.

Discussion #1: Technology as a Tool

Here are a few ideas to get the conversation started:

- How is a personal device like a tool?
- Why do you use technology?
- Why do you like technology?
- What do you like to do on a computer, tablet, or cell phone?
- Can tools be used improperly (or in the wrong way)?
- What are some negative or bad things we need to watch out for?
- Is there anything that you worry about when using technology?
- How can we use technology as a tool that helps us?

Discussion #2: Forming a Family Technology Plan

Now it's time to develop a family technology plan that details the where, when, and what of screen use for your family.

Remember that this is a work in progress and you don't need to know all of the details of where, when, and what by the end of the discussion. Some ideas will come to you as you experiment and try out different strategies over the course of a few months.

You can use the Family Tech Plan Template included here (or giant poster paper) to write down ideas as you talk. Kids love being the scribe!

Discussion #2: Forming a Family Technology Plan

Here are a few ideas to get the conversation started:

- Why might it be important to have a Family Technology Plan?
- How can we create healthy boundaries with technology so we make sure we use it as a tool?

WHERE?

- Where in our house should we use our devices?
- What will our rules be for when we are in the car? (Short distance vs. long road trips)
- What about at school, friends' homes, or other public places?

Discussion #2: Forming a Family Technology Plan

WHEN?

- What are some times of day we should focus on each other and put our devices away?
- Are there certain days or weeks when we could take a break from technology and focus on each other, friends, or extended family?
- How about times of the year?

WHAT?

- What are some of your favorite places to visit online or games you like to play?
- What are other great ways to use our devices that can benefit ourselves and others?

Discussion #2: Forming a Family Technology Plan

HOW LONG?

- How much screen time does it take before we start to feel irritable or grumpy?
- How much time should we spend on a device when we are consuming?
- How much time is reasonable if we are creating something?
- What should a positive consequence be if we get off of our device when the timer goes off?
- What is a negative consequence if we don't get off when we are supposed to?

Discussion #2: Forming a Family Technology Plan

NEXT ACTIONS:

- Consider what you will change as a result of this discussion.
- Plan how to best support and help one another follow your family technology plan.
- Write your where, when, what, and how long on a piece of paper. Click here to use our Google Doc template if you'd like. Just click on 'File,' make a copy, and edit away!

**POST YOUR FAMILY TECHNOLOGY PLAN
IN A VISIBLE LOCATION!**

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