

Back-to-School Survival Series

RAISING DIGITAL-SMART STUDENTS

A Parent's Guide to Building Safe & Healthy Technology Habits

Technology Is Part of Today's Classroom. From online homework and classroom communication to educational apps and virtual collaboration, technology plays an important role in today's learning environment.

As a new school year begins, it's the perfect time to refresh your family's digital habits. Setting expectations early can help children build healthy technology routines, protect their privacy, and use digital tools responsibly—both inside and outside the classroom.

Remember, every family is different. Use these tips as a starting point and adjust them to fit your child's age, maturity, and your household values.

Create Healthy Device Habits

A few simple routines can make a big difference throughout the school year.

- Consider establishing family expectations such as:
- Devices stay out of bedrooms overnight.
- Homework comes before entertainment.
- Meals are screen-free whenever possible.
- Devices charge in a shared family space.
- Screen-free time is built into each day.

Quick Tip: Children are more likely to follow digital rules when parents model the same habits.

Teach Smart Online Safety

Help your child build lifelong digital skills by talking about:

- Creating strong passwords
- Never sharing passwords with friends
- Recognizing phishing emails and suspicious links
- Logging out of shared devices
- Protecting personal information online

Quick Tip: Consider using a reputable password manager to help your family create and store unique passwords securely.

Using AI Responsibly for School

Artificial intelligence is becoming a common tool in education—and when used appropriately, it can support learning. Talk with your child about using AI as a learning partner—not a shortcut.

Great Uses for AI

- Explaining difficult concepts
- Creating study guides
- Brainstorming ideas
- Practicing vocabulary
- Generating quiz questions
- Checking grammar and spelling

Not So Great Uses

- Copying essays or homework
- Submitting AI-generated work as your own
- Using AI instead of learning the material

Build Good Digital Citizenship

Encourage your child to think before they post, comment, or share.

Ask questions like:

- Would I say this face-to-face?
- Is this kind?
- Is this true?
- Would I be comfortable if a teacher or grandparent saw this?
- Does this protect my privacy and someone else's?

These conversations help children develop respectful online habits that will benefit them for years to come.

Know the Red Flags

Keep communication open so your child feels comfortable coming to you if something doesn't seem right.

Watch for signs such as:

- Unusual secrecy around devices
- Sudden changes in mood after being online
- Messages from unknown individuals
- Requests to move conversations to another app
- Pressure to share personal information or photos

The goal isn't to monitor every click—it's to create an environment where your child knows they can ask for help without fear of getting in trouble.

Helpful Tools for Families

Many families find these types of tools useful:

- Screen time management
- Family location sharing
- Password managers
- Content filtering
- Homework planners
- Shared family calendars

Choose the tools that best fit your family's needs and comfort level.

Start the Conversation

Instead of waiting for a problem, make digital safety an ongoing conversation.

Try asking:

- What's something interesting you learned online today?
- Has anyone ever made you uncomfortable while gaming or chatting?
- What would you do if someone asked for personal information?
- Who could you talk to if something online didn't feel right?

Open-ended conversations help build trust and confidence.

The 5-Minute Win

Take a few minutes today to sit down with your child and review one device together. Update passwords if needed, check privacy settings, and talk about one online safety expectation for the school year. Small conversations now can build confidence and trust for the future.

Concierge Pro Tip

Technology changes quickly, and choosing the right tools can feel overwhelming. Your Restore the Day concierge can research parental control options, compare educational apps, help you find age-appropriate devices, or locate online tutoring and digital learning resources—saving you time while helping your family make informed decisions.

How Your Concierge Can Help

Your Restore the Day concierge can assist with:

- Comparing parental control apps and family safety tools
- Researching age-appropriate educational apps
- Finding online tutoring and homework resources
- Comparing laptops, tablets, and accessories for students
- Locating local technology classes or coding programs
- Researching internet safety resources for families
- Helping you find digital organization tools for a smoother school year

Technology is always evolving—but with open communication, healthy habits, and the right resources, your family can start the school year feeling informed, prepared, and confident.

Coming Next in the Back-to-School Survival Series...

Dress Them for Less - Smart ways to buy and sell kids clothes

Don't Forget This! - 25 Things Parents Often Miss Packing for School