



Cyber-Smart Kids: Cyber Tips Every Parent Needs

A quick-reference guide for raising kids in a digital world—without panic.

Prevention Tips

Before you panic over the latest headline or scary story, pause. Start with awareness, not fear. Take time to learn what apps, games, and platforms your kids are actually using. Context matters more than clickbait. Stay curious, ask questions, and open the conversation before jumping to conclusions.

Keep Communication Open

- Talk early and often about online behavior and expectations
- Normalize coming to you when something feels “off”
- Avoid shaming—kids shut down when they feel judged

Know the Games They Play

- Ask why your child likes a game—not just what they’re playing
- Learn how chat, friends, skins, and in-game purchases work
- Use parental controls, but don’t rely on them alone

Build Basic Cyber Hygiene

- Use strong passwords and multi-factor authentication when available
- Keep devices and software updated
- Teach kids not to click on unknown links or share personal information

Talk About AI & Images


- Explain that AI can create realistic images and messages that aren’t real
- Remind kids that images can be manipulated and shared without consent
- Emphasize: never share images you wouldn’t want shared publicly

Actions to Take if Concern Arises

The goal isn’t to prevent every mistake. It’s to respond quickly, calmly, and confidently when something goes wrong.

1. Disconnect from the internet and turn off the wi-fi
2. Document what’s going on with screenshots and descriptions
3. Access logged-in accounts and change passwords
4. Run health and virus software programs
5. Reboot device
6. Report if the issue involves fraud, identity theft, or serious cybercrime
7. Discuss situation with your child and brainstorm what could have been done better

If a Gaming Account Is Compromised

 Gaming platforms are social spaces. If an account is hacked or misused, act quickly – especially if chat or payment methods are involved.

1. Secure the Account

- Change the password immediately.
- Turn on multi-factor authentication (MFA).
- Log out of all devices.
- Remove unfamiliar linked accounts.

Use only official recovery tools from platforms like Epic Games, Roblox Corporation, Sony Interactive Entertainment (PlayStation Network), or Microsoft (Xbox).

2. Check for Financial Activity

- Review purchase history.
- Check linked credit cards or PayPal accounts.
- Report unauthorized charges immediately.

Consider removing stored payment methods going forward.

3. Review Messages & Friends

- Look for messages your child didn't send.
- Check for new or unfamiliar friends.
- Block and report suspicious users.
- Screenshot before deleting anything.

4. Talk About What Happened


Many breaches start with:

- "Free skins" or game currency
- Fake tournament invites
- Suspicious links
- Requests to "borrow" an account

Stay calm. Focus on problem-solving, not blame.

Remember: The goal isn't to ban gaming.

Trusted Resources

 The goal isn't to prevent every mistake. It's to respond quickly, calmly, and confidently when something goes wrong.

- **Common Sense Media** – Age-based reviews of apps, games, media, and AI tools.
- **ConnectSafely** – Practical guidance on social media, gaming, AI, and digital well-being.
- **National Center for Missing & Exploited Children** – Resources on exploitation prevention and reporting concerns.
- **FBI Internet Crime Complaint Center** – Report cybercrime, scams, and online threats.
- **CyberSafeKids** – Child-friendly cyber safety education for families.
- **Family Online Safety Institute** – Guides to parental controls, gaming, and digital citizenship.
- **NetSmartz** – Age-appropriate online safety tools and conversation starters.
- **American Academy of Pediatrics / HealthyChildren** – Medical guidance on screen use and digital balance.
- **Take It Down** – Free tool to help minors remove explicit images shared online.



Stay curious, not clueless – listen to the **Mothers of Boys Survival Guide** podcast for calm, practical parenting support. Find episodes at mothersofboys.life/podcasts.