



A calmer start for your child's first phone

Set expectations together, check key settings, and make sure your child knows who to turn to when something feels wrong. A first phone works best when a child knows how to use it, what to do when something feels wrong, and which trusted adult will help. No checklist or setting can prevent every problem.

GET HELP NOW

If someone is in immediate danger, call 911. For suspected online child exploitation, report to the NCMEC CyberTipline at report.cybertip.org. Get a trusted adult involved.

MAKE A FAMILY PLAN

- ☐ Purpose: What will the phone be used for? Which apps or features are needed now?
- ☐ People: What should your child do if an unknown person messages or asks to move the chat elsewhere?
- ☐ Privacy: Keep address, school, passwords, live routines, and identifying details private.
- ☐ Boundaries: Set expectations for bedtime, school, shared spaces, driving, and spending.
- ☐ Trusted adults: Name two people your child can contact.

TALK ABOUT IMAGES

- ☐ Explain that intimate images of anyone under 18 should never be requested, created, saved, or shared.
- ☐ If an image is involved in a threat, do not forward or repost it. Ask a trusted adult for help.

SET A REVIEW DATE

- ☐ Choose a date to revisit the agreement together. Update it when your child's needs, maturity, device, or apps change.
- ☐ Make clear that asking for help will not automatically mean losing the phone.

THE GOAL

Build a phone plan your child understands and can come to you with when the unexpected happens.



Set up the phone together

Use this as a starting checklist. Menus and features vary by operating-system version, account age, carrier, and app. Follow each company's current instructions.

DEVICE AND ACCOUNT

- ☐ Set a strong device passcode and automatic screen lock.
- ☐ Turn on automatic operating-system and app updates.
- ☐ Set up the child's account using their correct age and available family-supervision tools.
- ☐ Add an account recovery method that a parent can help manage.
- ☐ Review camera, microphone, contacts, photos, and location permissions.
- ☐ Discuss what appears on the lock screen and in notifications.

PRIVACY AND LOCATION

- ☐ Review location sharing together: who can see it, why, and when it is appropriate.
- ☐ Limit precise location exposure in apps, photos, and public profiles.
- ☐ Set accounts to private where available.
- ☐ Limit who can message, comment, tag, mention, or add the child to groups.
- ☐ Review friend and follower lists together; remove unknown or unwanted contacts.
- ☐ Set purchase approval or spending limits for downloads and in-app purchases.

MESSAGING, SOCIAL APPS, AND GAMES

- ☐ Start with a short list of approved apps; check age requirements and privacy settings before installing.
- ☐ Discuss game chat, voice chat, livestreams, disappearing messages, and moving conversations to another service.
- ☐ Set content, communication, and downtime limits that fit your child and family.
- ☐ Talk through suspicious links, verification codes, money requests, and urgent messages.
- ☐ Tell your child what you check, when you check it, and why.

KEEP IT COLLABORATIVE

Use the least intrusive settings that meet your child's needs and family safety plan. Revisit settings together; one setup will not stay right forever.



First-phone family agreement

Fill this out together. Child's name: _____ Date: _____

OUR SHARED PROMISE

We agree that a phone is a tool and that safety matters more than avoiding trouble. We will speak honestly and ask for help early.

I WILL

- ☐ Keep my passcode and account passwords private from friends. I will not share someone else's password or use their account without permission.
- ☐ Pause before posting or sending. I will not share my home address, school, passwords, or live routines with people I do not know and trust.
- ☐ Tell a parent or trusted adult if someone pressures or threatens me, asks for sexual images, asks me to keep a secret, offers gifts or money, or wants to meet privately.
- ☐ Avoid suspicious links, sharing verification codes, or sending money or gift cards because someone online tells me to.
- ☐ Treat people respectfully and avoid forwarding embarrassing, private, or harmful content.
- ☐ Follow our family's phone-time, school, sleep, driving, and spending rules.

MY PARENT OR CAREGIVER WILL

- ☐ Listen first and help me make a plan. I can ask for help without being shamed.
- ☐ Explain what safety settings and reviews are in place and why.
- ☐ Protect my privacy while helping me stay safe, and adjust supervision as I show readiness.
- ☐ Help me block, report, and leave unsafe interactions; contact support if needed.
- ☐ Review this agreement with me and make changes together as I grow.

FAMILY PLAN / SIGNATURES

OUR PHONE-TIME PLAN

TRUSTED ADULTS I CAN CONTACT (1 AND 2)

1. _____
2. _____

IF I FEEL UNSAFE, I CAN SAY OR TEXT

"I need help. Please listen first."

APPS OR FEATURES APPROVED NOW

NEXT REVIEW DATE

SIGNATURES

Child: _____

Parent: _____



Conversation cards: prompts 1-5

Choose one or two prompts at a time. Ask with curiosity; this is not a test. You can remind your child: "I'm here to listen first, and we'll figure it out together."

PROMPTS 1-3

- ☐ What would you do if someone you don't know said they knew your school or neighborhood?
My answer: _____
- ☐ What might make an online friend seem trustworthy even when you have never met them?
My answer: _____
- ☐ If a message made you uncomfortable, who could you show it to?
My answer: _____

PROMPTS 4-5

- ☐ What could you say if someone asked you to keep a chat secret from your family?
My answer: _____
- ☐ What would you do if a friend sent you a private or intimate photo?
My answer: _____

KEEP TALKING

Choose prompts as your family needs them. There are no wrong answers; revisit the conversation as your child's needs and apps change.



Conversation cards: prompts 6-10

Continue the conversation at your child's pace. Ask with curiosity, listen first, and make it clear they can come to you for help.

PROMPTS 6-8

- ☐ What if someone said they would share a picture unless you paid or sent more?
My answer: _____
- ☐ What details can a photo reveal even when you don't write a caption?
My answer: _____
- ☐ How can you tell whether a link, giveaway, or urgent message might be a scam?
My answer: _____

PROMPTS 9-10

- ☐ What would help you pause before replying when you feel angry, embarrassed, or pressured?
My answer: _____
- ☐ If a friend told you they were in trouble online, how could you help them reach a trusted adult?
My answer: _____

KEEP TALKING

Revisit the conversation as your child's age, apps, and online experiences change.



If something goes wrong

Stay calm and focus on safety. Thank the child for coming forward. A child who fears punishment may wait to ask for help.

1 Check immediate safety

1

If there is an immediate threat or danger, call 911. Move to a safe place and get a trusted adult.

2 Stop engaging and preserve details

2

Do not argue, threaten back, pay, or send more information or images. Record usernames, profile links, dates, times, and threat messages. Do not copy, forward, or repost sexual images of anyone under 18; ask law enforcement or NCMEC what to preserve.

3 Report and get help

3

Report the account or content to the platform. For suspected online child exploitation, report at report.cybertip.org and contact local law enforcement when appropriate.

4 If an intimate image of a minor is involved

4

NCMEC Take It Down can help limit sharing of images taken when the person was under 18. It creates a digital fingerprint on the person's device; the image itself is not uploaded. Do not forward the image to use the service.

5 Support the child

5

Reassure them they are not alone and that help is available. If they are in emotional crisis or at risk of self-harm, stay with them and call or text 988.

IMMEDIATE DANGER

Call 911 if someone is in immediate danger.



Official help and setup resources

Use current instructions from the device maker, app, or safety organization. Features and menus can change.

DEVICE AND FAMILY SETTINGS

- ☐ FTC Parental Controls - device and app controls.
- ☐ Apple Screen Time - parental controls for Apple devices.
- ☐ Apple Communication Safety - sensitive image and safety protections.
- ☐ Google Family Link - supervised accounts and Android family tools.
- ☐ Google Location Settings - manage a child's location.

ONLINE SAFETY AND CRISIS HELP

- ☐ NCMEC CyberTipline - report suspected online child sexual exploitation.
- ☐ NCMEC Take It Down - help limit sharing of intimate images taken under age 18.
- ☐ NCMEC NetSmartz - online safety education for children and families.
- ☐ 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline - call or text 988 in the United States.

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This is general education, not legal advice or a substitute for emergency services, individualized safety planning, or current device/app instructions. If a child may be in immediate danger, call 911 or local law enforcement. Officer Nae Nae is an independent educational platform, not an official law-enforcement publication or employer statement.