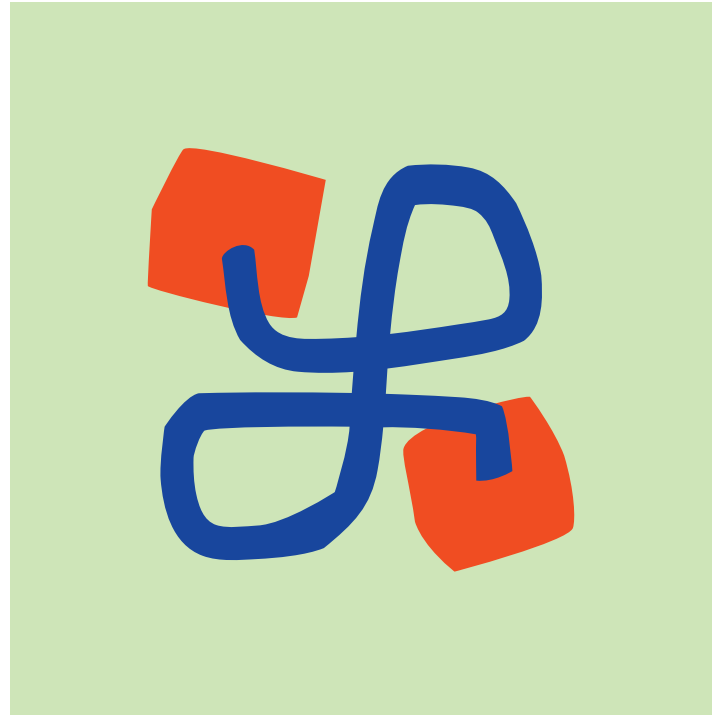


Technology



Are you blown away that your preschooler can swipe and click even faster than you can? How did they figure out how to find that Disney video in the sea of app icons on your screen? These keen abilities are exactly why it's a great time to start a conversation about the big world of technology. Your preschooler is a long ways from having their own phone and social media accounts, but every day they are watching, listening, and learning. They need you to guide their introduction into this world and set them up for success.

Your role during this phase is to...

Help them enjoy the advantages so your child will experience boundaries and have positive exposure.

This guide is designed to help you connect with your child in the phase they are in, by giving you some words to say to navigate the critical issue of technology. As the conversation progresses through the phases, always

keep this end goal for your preschooler in mind: Technological responsibility means leveraging the potential of online experiences to enhance my offline community and success.

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Tips to Help Preschoolers Navigate Technology

Every phase is a timeframe in a kid's life when you can leverage distinctive opportunities to influence their future.

In the new baby phase...

(YOU) THINK THINGS LIKE

"Does it really matter if I forgot to record the last feeding in the app?" (Answer: No. As long as the baby ate, she doesn't care.)

"Is there anyone out there who can relate?"
(Use technology to connect to other adults.)

"Look at this baby!"
(Take as many photos as you like.
You will enjoy seeing them later.)

Remember

The preschool years are the years you want to embrace their physical needs. They need to be physically close to you so use screen time as opportunities for 'lap time' where you can cuddle and share the experience. In this phase, your child thinks like an artist, and you can help them learn by engaging their senses through what they see and hear. Remember that screen time doesn't have to be isolating but can be used to stimulate great moments together. Stay informed. Stay involved. Start the conversation.

In the following preschool years...

SAY THINGS LIKE

"No juice by the computer."

"Tablets don't go in the bathtub."

"Let's turn off the TV now."

"I'm texting Grandma to ask a question."
(Talk openly about technology as you use it.)

"I put my phone away when we are eating so we can talk to each other." (Set limits for screen time.)

"You need to ask before you use the computer."
(Know when they are on a device and what they are using it to do.)

"Let me show you what a galaxy looks like."
(Use technology to enhance your conversations.)

"Let me see what you did."
(Show interest in what they do with technology.)

"It's time for you to put the tablet away."

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Enhance the Conversation

To enhance the conversation, here are a few conversation starters and activities your family can try:

Have screen-free time. Grab a bin or box that can become “home” for all technology when it’s not in use. Help your preschooler decorate whatever container you choose. Show them how the technology goes inside the bin and how to remove it (if it requires taking off a lid, unzipping a zipper, etc.). Let them help you decide where to store the bin. Talk to your preschooler about when they can and cannot access the technology from its “home.”

Create screen-free zones. Keep activities in your car, diaper bag, or purse that are not technology-related. It’s so easy to default to a tablet or phone to entertain your preschooler when you’re out and about. Giving your child another option may curb the impulse for technology to be your kid’s go-to. Ideas: a coloring book and crayons, an Etch A Sketch, tracing paper and pencils, books, a cookie sheet with magnetic letters, a dry erase board with markers, magnetic puzzles, etc.

Teach with Technology. Technology isn’t just for entertainment, it’s an important tool for learning. Introduce early reading and math concepts through websites and apps that involve matching games or associating words with images. There are even some apps that will read books aloud to you and your child. Spend some time investigating some of the best, and get recommendations from friends.

This guide is based on research from The Phase Project, a collaborative, ongoing effort, assembling classic and innovative research with practical application.

To discover more ways to understand this phase, check out the Parenting Your... book series at parentcuestore.org.

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