



**eSmart**

alannah & madeline foundation

# Five tips for parents

Tuning into our children  
can be a very positive  
experience for everyone.

[esmart.org.au](http://esmart.org.au)



## Five tips for parents

# 1. Be curious

Ask your child about what game they are playing? Get them to show you what they are doing. Ask then why it is fun?

Showing an interest in your child's tech life and having them teach you about it, is a great way for you to build an understanding and empathise with your child's interest - it may change the way you see their technology use, alleviate some concerns and change how you make decisions around it.





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# 2. Build a sharing culture



Even with young children - show them photos on your phone, or your favourite websites. Influence them by sharing videos you find that they might not see and then foster that as they become older and encourage sharing things they find on social media (not by following them) by sending a message or just showing it on their phone screen.

Normalise that there are things they want to show and share, some things they won't - and so that should be - parents shouldn't know everything their child does or says with friends.

You want to build a relationship of sharing, so when something does go wrong for them, and they need help - they come to you.



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# 3. Be respectful

Make sure you show children how to be respectful around technology. This means not turning off the internet connection or computer mid game. This means not dealing with an issue when you are angry and frustrated.

As the adult, you should create space for conversations about issues you have with your child's technology use. Just dictating what and when they should play is not supporting them to develop, grow or learn to negotiate and make good decisions.

You want your child to be a respectful person, so model that behaviour to them.





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## 4. Invite your child to do other things

Rather than dictate when children can or can't use computers, prioritise other things. Have a family board game night. Watch sport together. Take a weekly walk with your child.

Rather than just setting a time limit, create spaces for the things you know are also beneficial and good for your child and family. Then, 'screentime' becomes less important as an idea and how we spend time doing a variety of things as a family and for ourselves becomes the focus.





## 5. Trust yourself

You are the expert in understanding your child. You know them better than the people who write books, or give you 'Five Tips for Parents'. Be clear on your values and your expectations, talk and know as a family what is important to you. It will be awkward and strange, teenagers might not say anything - but that is ok - try it, normalise it.

It is far better than just trying to control and micromanage our children - that only causes tension and arguments, and doesn't support them to appropriately use technology in their lives now and in the future.

