

Six steps to a better digital-life balance

How to make sure your family home stays healthy and happy on and offline

1 | Sensible screen time

Battles over screen time can be a tricky part of family life, but they don't need to be. What children are doing on their devices is far more important than the amount of time they're spending on them. So make sure they're watching, playing and reading good-quality, educational and age-appropriate content rather than worrying about setting strict quotas. That said, if you notice your child's schoolwork, sleep, mood or health being affected, it's time to talk and revisit the rules.



2 | Bold boundaries

Whether agreeing the age they can go on social media, setting out how long they can spend gaming or having a curfew to avoid disturbing sleep, setting clear boundaries will make your child feel more secure about your expectations and confident about what's OK.

3 | Don't pull the plug

Emerging from the immersive world of video gaming is like a deep-sea diver coming back up for air – do it too quickly and it can have a negative effect. Give your child reasonable warnings about when to turn off, to help them ease out of their game, private chat or video.

4 | Keep talking (or texting)

Around 60% of children say their parents don't discuss issues around digital life. Maintain an open and honest dialogue with your child, whether that's face-to-face or via messaging. You may not have every solution to hand, but speaking about any issues is an important first step.

5 | Engage in their world

To understand your child's online world and spot if something is going wrong, it's vital to know what they are doing. So take a healthy interest and remember to regularly ask your child about their favourite vlogger, game or activity.

75%

of children say their parents don't understand their online lives.

80%

of children aged 12-16 think their parents' rules on screen time are unfair.

6 | Bedtime bans

Making sure your family gets the right amount of sleep is crucial to healthier offline lives. Remove the temptation and improve their sleep quality (and perhaps your own) by ensuring phones and other devices are charging outside the bedroom at night.

