

# Phoenix Academy



## Websafety Resource Guide

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*\*Disclaimer: This Resource Guide is a parent driven initiative for information purposes only. The views, thoughts, and opinions expressed in the text of the various links provided belong solely to the authors of the text, and not to Phoenix Academy High Point administration and faculty; these are parent suggested resources.*

\*\*For ease of use, click the title to access a bookmark and be taken directly to that section.

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## Why Should I Care?

### Why should I set parental controls?

Parental controls can help ensure your child's safety on the internet. While it's important for students to learn how to use technology in an appropriate way, that isn't something they are going to learn over night. It is important to set limits and parental controls can help you monitor and maintain those limits.

### Why limit screen time?

The [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) and the [World Health Organization](#) recommend students limit screen time just like anything else. You wouldn't let your child stand in the corner and stare at the wall all day; they shouldn't sit on the couch and stare at a screen all day either. It is important for students to have active playtime each day.

### Gaming Concerns

Why is it important for me to know what games and apps my kids are playing? Children and young adults don't always make the best choices. It is important to set limits and restrictions based on your family values and your child's maturity. Most games and apps have ratings that suggest an appropriate age range for that game. Some games, like Roblox, contain multiple games within one environment. It is important to know what games kids are playing and make sure those are appropriate for their age and maturity level.

Some MMOs (massively multiplayer online games) include a chat feature. Often, parental controls can assist you in turning off or otherwise limiting who your child can chat with. It is also important to begin teaching students the safe way to chat online. It's the modern equivalent of don't talk to strangers. We teach kids not to share their address or phone number with strangers at the store or people they don't know, but we often forget these lessons need to carry over to technology as well. It's not safe to give out personal information online. Child predators and identity thieves are online and in the real world.

### Why should I let my child have screen time at all?

If it's dangerous or potentially needs to be monitored, why not just take away the screens altogether? Our kids are growing up in a world full of technology. Whether we like it or not, they will have to use at least some of that technology in their day to day lives. As they grow older, it will become impossible to do research for school or even get a job without spending some time in front of a screen. It is important for kids to learn how to deal with technology and use it appropriately; the younger they start learning, the more ingrained those lessons will be. Learning how to limit screen time and manage technology is now a vital part of helping children grow into adults.

## Conversations with Your Child

### What should I talk to my child about and when?

Having a conversation with your child about internet use and safety is important. Even young children need to talk about technology and internet safety. Here are some basic ideas to help you get that conversation started.

- **Basic Conversations**

- *Social Stranger Danger:* Help your child recognize that strangers online are just like strangers in real life. We don't share our personal information with people we don't know.
- *Privacy:* Children need to understand what is private information. Apart from name, address, and phone number, talk to your child about other information they should not share like what time mom and dad aren't home, codes to alarms or electronic locks, or even what school they go to.
- *Who is my friend?* It's important for kids to understand who their friends are and who is merely an acquaintance. It's probably okay to give your email address or your screen name to a close family friend. It is not okay to give out information to someone you just met. It's also not okay for an adult to ask for your information. Talk about the difference between types of friends (ie close friends, acquaintances, and online friends).
- *What do I say if someone asks me for something they shouldn't?* Teachers, grown-ups, babysitter, bus drivers, teen helpers, (etc) should never *ever* ask for a child's information (email address, phone number, screen name, etc). With few exceptions, adults should never be giving their information to children or students either. Talk about what your child should say to an inappropriate request from an adult. Something as simple as "you'll have to ask my mom" might be a good phrase to practice.
- *When do I need to tell an adult?* It's important for kids to know when they need to involve an adult and who they should tell. It's important to talk to an adult if someone is trying to get information they shouldn't, especially if they say something like "you don't have to tell anyone." If you're not sure if something is okay, ask a grown-up!
- *Parents, be aware that online bullying is real,* even among the younger age groups. Let kids know they can talk to you or a trusted adult about someone being mean to them online. Help them know how to "walk away" and leave an online space when they need to or how to get help from a grown-up. ([Cyberbullying: How to Recognize It and What to Do About It](#)) ([A Parent's Guide to Understanding Cyberbullying](#)) ([More on Cyberbullying](#))

- **Additional Topics for age 7 and up**

- *Bullying and Online Behavior:* Talk to your child about bullying and other inappropriate behavior. Explain that the rules online should be no different from the rules in real life. If you wouldn't say that to someone's face, you shouldn't say it in a chat. If you wouldn't be friends with someone who tore up your drawings, don't be friends with someone who destroys things in online games. ([Cyberbullying Videos to Share and Points to Talk About](#))

- *Ask!* It's so important to ask your kids what they are doing online. Just like many parents ask "what did you do today" when your kids get home from school, we need to be opening the conversation about what our kids are doing online. If your child is doing something they shouldn't be, try to discuss it calmly and remind them what the household rules are for your family. Remember, your reaction may determine whether or not they tell you things in the future.
- *Should I post this?* Talk to your child about what information and which pictures should be posted in games or on social media. Remind them why they may not want to post certain things. Explain that the things they say and do online do not disappear. People might forget what we say in real life, but our online words are written down and saved.
- *How do I know what's true?* Just because something is online doesn't make it true. It's always important to double check any information you find online, especially on social media. Make sure information is coming from an accredited, peer reviewed source.
- *Computer Security:* Talk to your student about things like email phishing. Be aware of offers for "free" downloads and games. Be cautious of in-app purchases, peer-to-peer sharing, and other security risks. (For more, see this article on [Kids and Cyber Security](#).)
- **Additional Topics for age 11 and up**
  - *See something, say something:* Talk to your child about the importance of being observant and telling an adult when need be. If you see something, say something, especially when it comes to topics like suicide, bullying, school shootings, etc. Students need to know what to do if someone is talking about hurting themselves or someone else. ("[Telling An Adult Isn't So Easy](#)")
  - *Deleted doesn't mean gone:* Have an open conversation about posting. Anything posted can be copied and shared with anyone. Even apps that claim to delete your picture or post within seconds can still be captured and saved by things like screenshots. Once something is shared, it can't be taken back.
  - *What do I do when inappropriate content is shared?* Talk to your kids about what to do when something inappropriate is shared. This might be over chat, IM, text, email, Google hangouts, etc. Let them know who they can talk to and what they should report.
  - *Social Media:* Have an open conversation about social media. What is its value? What is its downside? How frequently should social media be used? What types of things should never be posted?
  - *Meeting online friends in real life:* Always use caution when meeting someone you met online. Take a group of friends, have an adult nearby, and meet at a public place. Know who to talk to at that place if the meeting becomes inappropriate, unsafe, or uncomfortable. Never meet a stranger at your home.
  - *Who can post or take my picture?* It's usually not okay for someone to ask for your picture. Encourage students to always tell an adult or leave a situation where someone they don't know is taking their picture or asking kids to send them a picture/video. It is also important for teens to ask their friends if it is okay before posting pictures and group shots on social media.

## Parental Controls

### Internet Guidelines:

Only you can decide what is appropriate for your child and what works for your family. However, here are a few resources you may want to consider utilizing as you create your family rules for safe internet and technology use.

- Things to consider about how you can [create safe technology use](#) in your house.
- Common sense ideas for [internet safety](#) in the home.
- The American Academy of Pediatrics has some useful [technology tools](#).
- Know what your kids are doing online. Familiarize yourself with the games and apps they are using so you will know what is appropriate and what is not.
- More information about specific uses for [parent controls](#).

### Network and Router Settings:

Did you know there are several ways to utilize parental controls on your home internet network? You can implement content restrictions, website restrictions, time limits, browser sensors, and other useful parental controls. Some of these can be accomplished through your current router and others require either additional software or an external device. Software is run from a computer connected to the network. A parental control device will be a physical box that will be plugged into your router to filter what is accessible from your network. You can find more information at the links below.

- Four main ways to [set up parental controls](#) on your home network
- Step by step [directions](#) for parental controls for blocking a website through your router
- Configuring parental controls on your [Netgear](#) router
- Parental controls [software comparison](#)
- Parental control [devices](#) for your network

### Phones and Tablets:

Even if you choose not to utilize parental controls, it is important to make sure all family phones are safe and secure. Here is a [Smartphone Security Checklist](#) recommended by the FCC.

Most cell phones and tablets can be set up to utilize parental controls. These might include time limits, game rating restrictions, internet search restrictions, download and purchase limitations, and other useful tools to help keep your child safe. Many controls are specific to each device or device type.

- Apple [iPhones and iPads](#) have built in parental controls

- Most Android devices use [Google Play](#), which has built in parental controls, for apps and downloads.
- Some [Android devices](#) also have additional parental controls.
- Tablets like [Kindle Fire](#) and e-Readers like [Kindle Paperwhite](#) and [Nook HD](#) also have parental controls built into their software settings.

### **Laptops and Desktop Computers:**

Many computers or computer software companies provide customers with built in parental controls. Some, like Microsoft, even offer time limits and restrictions across devices. Limits set on a microsoft computer account will also be in effect for an XBox account, assuming the child signs in with the same microsoft account at both computer and console.

- Windows and Microsoft [directions](#)
- Additional Windows [instructions](#) including older versions
- Mac [directions](#)

### **Gaming Consoles**

Gaming Consoles, like the Playstation or the XBox, have their own internal parental controls. Each game may also have its own individual controls, but the console itself can regulate and/or monitor some activities. If you have one of these consoles, it's definitely worth checking the settings.

- Understanding [parental controls](#) by situation and by gaming system
- Playstation [directions](#)
- XBox [directions](#)
- Nintendo Switch [parent control app directions](#)
- Nintendo Switch [manual device control directions](#)
- Nintendo Wii [directions](#)



## Gaming Safety

### Setting Up a Safe Gaming Environment

Here are a few basic tips to help keep your young gamers safe online. For more information on what a virtual world entails, check out [this article](#). For more on video gaming, parental controls, and web-based vs mobile platforms, click [here](#).

- *Screen Names:* Never use your real name as your screen name. Instead, it should be easy for you to remember but something that does not give away real life information.
- *Friend Requests:* Do not accept a friend request from someone you don't know in real life. Accept requests from real life friends you know well. Always get a parent's permission before accepting a screen request from an adult (ie a coach, friend of the family, or parent of another child).
- *Chat Controls:* Most games have some chat controls. Sometimes it is simply on or off, but many newer games allow more control. You might be able to select "chat only with friends" or that type of feature. Check out the games chat and parental controls before allowing a child to play.
- *Parental Controls:* All games have some form of parental controls. You might have enough setting with your network or device, but it never hurts to check out the game's controls as well.
- *For More Information and Ideas:* Check out [this article](#).

### Red Flags

All students need to know what words or behaviors should be a red flag. It's important to talk about and teach your child what things they should be watching for when it comes to online safety. Some things are the same online as in real life but some things are different.

- *Older Players:* It's hard to tell how old someone is online. At a playground if an adult approached, it would be easy to know that person isn't a child. Online, you need to listen for older voices or someone talking in a fake voice. If you hear an older voice and you don't know who it is, you shouldn't talk to that person and you may need to leave that chat or gaming area.
- *Encouraging Rule Breaking:* Anyone encouraging you to break the rules is not a good person. This might be someone telling a child "you don't have to tell your parents" or "you don't really need to ask an adult's permission." It might be another child encouraging cheating or picking on weaker players. If someone isn't playing by the rules and especially if they are telling another child not to follow the rules, it's time to leave the game.
- *Asking for Information:* No one should ask you for your username or password, not even real life friends. It is okay to share a screen name with real life friends so they can find you online, but never *ever* share your username and password. No one should ask you for personal information, like your real name or phone number. And definitely don't switch accounts with other people online.
- *Asking for Pictures:* No one should be asking for pictures, videos, or private messages.



## Social Media Safety

### What is social media?

Social media is any platform (app, website, etc) that allows for networking ([More on Social Media](#)). Popular social media sites include facebook, snapchat, and instagram. For more information about the main social media outlets your child may be interested in using, [click here](#). It is important to talk to your kids about what they should be posting, how they should be posting it, and other online social etiquette. For more on cell phones and social media posts, check out [this article](#).

### Things to talk about when it comes to social media:

It is important to discuss not only your expectations for your child using social media, but what is [appropriate online behavior](#).

- *Truth:* Just because someone posts something doesn't make it true. This could be anything from inaccurate articles to comments about another person. Talk about ways to find out what is true (sources like [Snopes](#) can provide quick fact checks on common mispostings). Remember to always double check information even if it seems like it is from a legitimate source.
- *Claims of Harm:* Unfortunately, we have to have open and honest conversations about posts threatening harm. Students need to know that it is not okay to post about injuring or attacking others, even if they don't mean it; threatening language can and should be taken seriously. If students see someone else posting about hurting themselves or others, they have to know what to do and how to speak up. It is an unfortunate part of our modern reality, but claims or threats of harm have to be taken seriously.
- *Permission to Post:* Encourage students to ask permission before posting a picture of others. It is important to consider how other people might feel about that picture being posted. Talk about what kind of pictures and videos are okay to post and which aren't.
- *What's in the background?* Sometimes we forget to check the background of an image before posting. This is especially important for pictures taken in private spaces like changing rooms, bathrooms, and doctor's offices. Even in public spaces, people might be attempting to spice up a picture in the hopes it will be posted unnoticed. Always check the background of your image before posting.
- *When should I delete/unfriend someone?* Talk to your teen about when they should walk away in a virtual environment. What types of behavior should be a red flag for friendship? When should they stop listening to or stop responding to messages, posts, etc?
- *It's okay to tell.* It might be difficult, but it is okay, and sometimes important, to tell an adult about things seen online. Let's face it, sometimes teens aren't going to want to tell things to mom and dad. Talk to your teen about other trustworthy adults they can turn to if they aren't comfortable talking to you.

- *How to Respond to \_\_\_\_*. Talk to your teen about specific instances they might face on social media and how they should respond. What should they do if someone posts a picture they don't like? What should they do if someone asks them for something inappropriate? What should they do if someone posts inaccurate information? Having an action plan can be helpful. It's hard to respond in the right way in a moment of frustration.
- *Would you say that in real life?* If you wouldn't say it in real life, you shouldn't say it online. It seems easier to say things you shouldn't when you're typing the words on a keyboard rather than saying them face to face. Talk to your teen about what they should and shouldn't be saying online.

## Other Media: Music, Email, Text, and Private Messaging

### Multitasking with Media:

Many students think they can listen to music or watch TV while they study. For the most part, this will divide their focus and decrease learning. It can also cause trouble when they go to take a test and they cannot have the music they were listening to while they were studying. [Studies](#) show that we recall best in the same environment in which we learned. Of course, there are exceptions. Some [studies](#) show that listening to music can improve your mood and therefore improve your study skills; however, the lyrics are distracting, so music without any words is best while studying.

### Things to talk about when it comes to messaging:

It is important to discuss not only your expectations for your child using private messaging, but what is appropriate online behavior.

- *Is it OK to use my real name as my email address?* Unlike a screen name, it is okay to use your name as part of your email address (firstname.lastname@blankmail.com). Pick something easy to remember and something you are comfortable sharing with other people. Avoid innuendos and inappropriate comments as part of your email handle. Something plain will last longer and be less frustrating in the long run.
- *How do I unsend?* Most private messaging is just like spoken words in that once they are said they can't be taken back. Once you hit send, it's gone and there often isn't an undo button. Students need to understand the importance of checking a message before sending it, especially if that message is to a teacher, boss, or other authority figure.
- *How private is private messaging?* Private messaging just means it's not out there on the internet for everyone to have easy access to, but that doesn't mean that no one has access. Personal information like an address, social security number, debit card numbers, etc should not be shared over email or other private messaging systems. It is possible for these systems to be hacked or stolen. Be careful with what you share.
- *Inappropriate content:* Talk to your students about what they should do if someone shares inappropriate materials. Never accept dropbox, airdrop, emails, text messages, Facebook Messenger requests, or other private messages from people you don't know.
- *Phishing:* Make sure students know how to tell the difference between a real email and a scam email. This will become increasingly important as students get older. Never share private information over an email and never click on links from someone you don't know. Even if the email appears legitimate, pull up the webpage yourself rather than clicking the email link to avoid scammers.
- *Sexting:* Yes, this is a real word and it needs to be discussed. [More on Smartphones, Texting, and Sexting](#)

## Knowing What's What

### How Do I Know?

It can be difficult to keep up with all the games and apps available today. It's hard to know whether certain games and apps are inappropriate, educational, or even safe to play. Here are some links to help parents understand what is what when it comes to games and apps.

- Understanding [ratings](#)
- [Social Media Apps](#) explained
- [Teen Dating Apps](#) explained (yes, they're really a thing and yes, you should be concerned)
- [Games reviewed](#) including suggested player age, content breakdown (educational value, violence, language, etc), basic description, "what parents need to know," kid reviews, and parent reviews for each game
- [Apps reviewed](#) including suggested player age, content breakdown (educational value, violence, language, etc), basic description, "what parents need to know," kid reviews, and parent reviews for each app
- [Websites reviewed](#) including suggested player age, content breakdown (educational value, violence, language, etc), basic description, "what parents need to know," kid reviews, and parent reviews for each app
- [Additional Parent Reviews](#) for Movies, TV Shows, Etc
- Common Sense Media's [Parent's Ultimate Guide To...](#) is a collection of articles and reviews on the most commonly used apps, games, and social media platforms.
- Popular [App Explanations](#)
- The Entertainment Software Ratings Board has an [app](#) for on the go ratings and game/app information
- Everybody Plays has a good set of [reviews](#) and [parent guides](#) for games
- For more information or alternative review sites, check out [this article](#).
- More on MMOs and [Gaming](#)

### More Parent Resources

[Phoenix Academy's Team App](#) information for sports

[Four Quizzes](#) designed for Teens to guide internet etiquette and safety.

[PowerPoint presentations and PDF guide sheets](#) by grade level and/or topic

[Parenting Digital Resources and Articles](#)

[Videos, Guides, and Conversations Scripts for Parents](#)

[Short Video Presentations for Parents](#)

[Parent Advice for Technology Topics in short videos](#)

[Additional Talking Points](#)

## Teacher Resources

### Bullying and Cyberbullying

- [10 Things Students Wish Teachers Knew About Name Calling](#)
- [How to Intervene Without Making It Worse](#)
- [Cyberbullying Workshops and Information](#)
- [Bullying and Cyberbullying Resources for Schools](#)
- [Cyber Bullying: What to Do and How to Recognize It](#)
- [Videos and Teaching Materials on Cyberbullying](#)

### Teaching Strategies and Classroom Activities

- [Classroom Activities to Teach Internet Safety](#)
- [PowerPoint Presentations and PDF sheets by grade level](#)
- [Videos and Activities about Internet Safety for Young Children](#)
- [Videos, Games, PDFs, and Other Resources for Educators of Tweens and Teens](#)
- [Social Media Classroom Activities: Learning What to Post](#)
- [Building Respectful School Climates Webinar Series](#)
- [Educator Resources for Elementary, Middle, and High School Teachers](#)
- [Videos by Teens about Online Enticement and Inappropriate Requests/Relationships](#)
- [Classroom Videos by Age and Topic](#)
- [Downloadable Handbooks and Resources](#)

### Free Tools for Connecting with Students and/or Parents

- [Remind](#): Consider using Remind for text communication. This app/webpage protects teachers and students by concealing the actual phone numbers but still offering instant communication. Works well for special groups like classes or parent volunteers. Schedule reminders and messages ahead (ie “don’t forget the test tomorrow” or “all students must wear uniforms on tomorrow’s fieldtrip”)
- [TeamSnap](#): Software plans (some free but some paid) for team management.
- [Four Communication Tools to Energize the Parent Teacher Relationship](#) :includes links and descriptions for popular sites Remind, ClassDojo, Bloomz, and ClassTag. Find what’s right for your group and your teaching style.

### Submitting Assignments and Encouraging Peer Collaboration

- [Turn It In](#): Plagiarism detection and teaching resources for increasing academic integrity
- [Google Docs](#): A great place for students to collaborate on papers, projects, etc.
- [Quizlet](#): Generate flashcards, vocabulary lists, and other study tools

## Official School Policies

### Phoenix Academy Email and Parent Contact Policy

Phoenix Academy encourages communication between Parents/Guardians and the school. Due to (1) Family Educational Privacy Act concerns, (2) the fact that much of Phoenix Academy's emails are subject to disclosure under the North Carolina Public Records Act, and (3) concerns regarding the security of emails, Parents/Guardians are asked to schedule a conference with their children(s)' teacher on any issues that arise, especially regarding any "academic failure" or "bullying" issues, rather than emailing those concerns to the school. In addition, Phoenix Academy teachers and staff are instructed to answer Parent/Guardian emails regarding factual information about school events and Assignments.

However, Phoenix Academy teachers and staff are instructed to not email Parents/Guardians about academic, emotional, or behavioral issues. Academic, emotional and behavioral issues should be addressed by telephone or by in-person conference(s) between Phoenix Academy and the Parent/Guardian.

Phoenix Academy administration shall keep on file, and up to date, contact information for students and their Parents/Guardians. Parents/Guardians are asked to keep their contact information up to date with Phoenix Academy administration.

### Handbook Rules Specifically Pertaining to Technology

#### **Rule 8. Insulting, Abusive, Harassing, Profane, Obscene, or Seriously Disrespectful Words, Acts of Touching Gestures, Signs, Verbal Threats or Other Acts** (including electronic communications)

Students shall respect other students, visitors, school employees and other persons by utilizing appropriate language and behaviors at all times. No aggression towards one self or others. Any action which is insulting, abusive, harassing, profane, obscene or seriously disrespectful and which disrupts the learning process for any student or which demeans or degrades another person is specifically prohibited. Students who believe they have been subjected to violations of Rule 8 should consult Board policies on reporting student harassment. Consequences: Up to 3 days OSS.

It is the priority of Phoenix Academy to provide every student and employee in the school with a safe and orderly learning and working environment. To this end, the school specifically prohibits bullying and harassing behavior as defined in the school handbook under Harassment/Bullying and Rule 8. As used in this policy, bullying or harassing behavior is any pattern of gestures; written, electronic, or verbal communications; any physical act; or any threatening communication that places a student or school

employee in actual and reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property or creates or is certain to create a hostile environment by substantially interfering with or impairing a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits. A hostile environment means that the victim subjectively views the conduct as bullying or harassing behavior and the conduct is objectively severe or pervasive enough that a reasonable person would agree that it is bullying or harassing behavior.

See Student Handbook for more information on Bullying and Harassment.

#### **Rule 24. Electronic Devices**

Items such as pagers, cell phones, record players, MP3 players, tape players, CD players, radios and other transmitters of sound must not be brought to school or to any school related activity. This policy also includes laser pointers/lights. Students may not have such devices at any time during the school day or at events. Our staff will be instructed upon a disturbance from these items, to confiscate the item and the student is considered to be out of compliance with the rule. It is our policy to only return these devices to a parent or guardian during the school year. Items collected more than one time will be held by Administration until the end of the school year at which time parents or guardians must pick them up. Any item not reclaimed on the last day of school will be disposed of.