

## DIGITAL PARENTING

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Navigating parenting in our current digital age is a challenge every parent faces, where pitfalls and opportunities abound. Whether your children are young, or you have teenagers in the home still, you are raising the first generation of digital natives. Digital natives are those whose first tech device (a phone, tablet, tv, etc.) is “smart.” Meaning if you ever had a home phone or even a flip phone, you are a Digital Immigrant, learning as you go to interact with new technology. For parents that fall into this category, keeping up with the newest devices, capabilities and apps often feels like a game of whack a mole. Once we get a handle on one, another pops up, and we have to constantly discern what is appropriate and in the best interest of our children.

I am one of those people that hates phone updates. I don't like change, I don't want my apps and features to change, and I don't want to have to invest time in relearning a tool that I rely on. But the digital natives in our homes see new technology like a new piece of playground equipment to be explored and enjoyed. They don't dread having to learn it, but delight in playing with it. No one has taught my eight-year-old to navigate my phone. He just inherently knows how to, and if he doesn't, he finds great satisfaction in tinkering with it until he does. Digital devices are seen as play, which will benefit this generation as their world becomes increasingly tech-dependent.

The technology itself is not evil, but be sure that there are entire industries using tech to target our children with unspeakable filth and evil. Anyone with access to the internet knows that a simple search turns ugly quickly. In light of this, it's important to offer our children grace when they do stumble into inappropriate content, knowing they are being targeted and lured there by forces they can't begin to comprehend. “Be alert and sober of mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour” (I Peter 5:8). We have a very real enemy who is after the hearts and minds of our children. Before handing over any device or access to technology, put in place safeguards and limitations that align with your family's values. There are so many content monitors, blockers, app limits, etc. at your

disposal - become a diligent student of internet safety for the sake of your children's hearts and minds.

Just as there is so much access to evil in our digital age, there is also a lot of good. The Lord has not abandoned this medium, and its use for encouraging and building up people, sharing good news, and discipling people around the globe is breathtakingly beautiful. Share these observations with your children too! Let them see and hear the ways the Gospel advances around the world for God's glory. We want our children to become salt and light to a lost and broken world - that includes their online presence as well!

*The technology-driven goal is for our children to grow into God-honoring and people-honoring digital citizens, so that whether they eat, drink, play online games, chat, email, or engage with social media, they will do it all for the glory of God!*

Content taken from [Navigating our Digital World](#), by Kara Powell, Art Bamford and Brad Griffin

Additional Reading: <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/twelve-tips-for-parenting-in-the-digital-age>