



PRESCHOOL

CROSSWAY CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

TECHNOLOGY

CONVERSATION GUIDE



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 and they need you to guide their introduction into this world and set them up for success. Remember your role in the preschool phase is to help them...

ENJOY
the advantages



So they will...
**EXPERIENCE BOUNDARIES
& HAVE POSITIVE EXPOSURE**

This guide is designed to help you meet your preschooler where they are now, giving you some words to say and not to say as you navigate the critical issue of technology. As the conversation progresses through the phases, always keep this end goal in mind:

TECHNOLOGICAL RESPONSIBILITY

**Leveraging the potential of online experiences
to enhance my offline community and success**

WHAT TO SAY:

"Playing on mommy and daddy's phone can be fun, but you always need to ask us first."

"We love to talk to each other while we eat, so we are not going to play a game or watch a video during a meal time."

"You can watch/play for _____ minutes, and then we will do something else."
(read books, put together a puzzle...)

Talk about your rules for phone and screen use in terms your preschooler can understand. Be clear about your screen-free zones and times and stick to them.

You will want to capture those adorable moments by taking pictures, but be careful to not miss the moment because you're distracted by posting or sharing.

Model the great ways to use technology by playing learning games together.

WHAT NOT TO SAY:

"Here, take my phone and watch whatever you want. Just be quiet."

"Stop asking questions about what I'm doing on my phone."

"There are scary people that can connect with you through the phone and computer so you should never use them." (*While we want to set firm boundaries for our children, we don't want them to think technology is bad*)

JUST REMEMBER

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

For more information and other great parent resources, visit [ParentCue.org](https://www.ParentCue.org)

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TECHNOLOGY

CONVERSATION GUIDE

They might not have asked yet, but kids want to know when they'll be able to get their own phone, have their own social media profiles, and interact with friends online. Start the conversation about technology now, and begin setting clear guidelines. Kids know they can get their license at sixteen, which gives them something to look forward to. Set expectations about when they can get their 'technology license' too. Technology can be a positive experience as long as parents stay informed and involved. Remember your role in the elementary phase is to help them...

EXPLORE
the possibilities



So they will...
**UNDERSTAND CORE VALUES
& BUILD ONLINE SKILLS**

This guide is designed to help you meet children where they are now, giving you some words to say and not to say as you navigate the critical issue of faith. As the conversation progresses through the phases, always keep this end goal in mind:

TECHNOLOGICAL RESPONSIBILITY

**Leveraging the potential of online experiences
to enhance my offline community and success**

WHAT TO SAY:

"Google can be amazing, but it's very important that you don't ever Google without me."

"What do you think is the right age for a student to get a phone?"

"We have to be careful with Google. If we type in the wrong thing, we might end up somewhere we don't want to go."

"What kind of computer gadgets do your friends have?"

"Do any of your friends own their own phone yet?"

"When you get together with friends who have phones, do you ever create videos, text each other or do anything like that?"

"We're proud of the young man/lady you are becoming. Before long you'll be ready for your own phone. We think when you're *(age you decide)* you'll be ready to handle that kind of responsibility."

"Will you help me decide where to put the family computer? We have three choices – living room, kitchen (or name another open area of your house)."

"We're here to help you learn how to use technology in a safe and fun way. That's why we have to know your passwords and what you're doing with your phone. As you get older, you'll gain more freedom. But for now, we're in this together."

"We're on the same team when it comes to technology. I trust you, but I'm not quite ready to trust the other 800 million people on the internet. You can count on us to help you."

"Let's talk about our family rules for using the computer (i.e don't ever post our home address)."

"Have you seen anything online that surprised you? It's always ok for you to talk with me about it."

WHAT NOT TO SAY:

"I didn't have a cell phone growing up. You'll survive without one."

"I can't believe your friends parents already let them have a phone. That's terrible."

"Kids your age shouldn't even be thinking about phones. That's crazy!"

"I guess you can have a phone if all of your friends already have phones."

"We will talk about it when I'm ready."

JUST REMEMBER

Every PHASE is a timeframe in a kid's life when you can leverage distinctive opportunities to influence their future. The elementary years are full of possibilities and you want to engage their interests in a healthy way. Use technology to share things you enjoy. Stay curious about what they are seeing and learning and help them to feel safe in bringing their questions to you. When they push back against your rules and guidelines, engage them in talking about the 'why' behind the rules. Stay informed. Stay involved. Keep the conversation going.

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TRANSITION

CONVERSATION GUIDE

Kindergarten. Can you believe it? Your child—the one who just started preschool, or so it seems—is now ready for kindergarten! Yes, time does fly! The days of sippy cups and naptime are transitioning into homework and playground adventures. This is a time that causes excitement for some and fear for others—for both child and parent! The words you choose to say and not say will help you and your child have a positive transition into the next phase. During the days ahead, you'll want to comfort any fears they (and you) may have. We want to help you by giving you some words to say and not to say. Remember that your role during this time is to:

ENGAGE their interests

WHAT TO SAY:

"Your teachers will be (*Mr. Todd and Ms. Kathy*). They will be so happy to meet you!"

"Would you like to see your room? Let's go see it together."

"You are going to learn so many new things."

"Don't be afraid to ask your teacher a question if you don't know what to do."

"What are you most excited about going into Kindergarten?"

"Your teacher will help you know what to do each day, and where to go, until you get the hang of it."

"You might see some of your old friends, and you'll also meet some new ones."

"I can't wait to hear all about your first day!"

WHAT NOT TO SAY:

"You will have lots of new friends in your new class." *(This can sound overwhelming.)*

"You will have all new teachers. Isn't that exciting?" *(It may sound more scary than exciting.)*

"You are a big kid now. You can walk into your new room without me."

"Big kids do not cry."

"You get to do big kid work now."

JUST REMEMBER

Every PHASE is a timeframe in a kid's life when you can leverage distinctive opportunities to influence their future. Kindergarten is a time when your child is motivated by fun, thinks like a scientist, and always wants to know if they have your attention. In conversations, remember to give concrete examples and listen patiently to their questions and fears. Your child will thrive on routine and predictability, but they will also crave the opportunity for unstructured play. In this new season of school, remember to have fun together!

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