RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PARENTS ABOUT TECHNOLOGY USE IN THE FAMILY

These recommendations represent what the PARED Schools consider to be best practice regarding child and family use of technology and media, whether interactive or passive, done on a device such as a smartphone, handheld gaming device, tablet, laptop, computer or television. They are based on current research and collaboration with parents who have children across all age groups.

The recommendations are framed to gradually move a young child from minimal use of technology under close parental supervision, towards an appreciation of appropriate criteria through dialogue with parents, and ultimately to free and responsible self-regulation.

The aim is to promote the safe, responsible and ethical use of technology and provide common ground for age appropriate technology use among the families of our Schools.

We encourage parents to read these recommendations together at home and use them to create a technology agreement that suits their family. We respect that parents may make different choices about technology for their families. We strongly encourage parents to discuss technology expectations with other families.
CHILDREN UNDER 3

- Screen time for children under age 3 should be very minimal. A child’s brain develops rapidly during these first years, and young children learn best by interacting with people and the physical world, not screens.

- The quality of content is more important than the platform or time spent on screens. Check the reviews and choose programs and apps with interactive components.

- Avoid using screens as part of the bedtime routine.

RECEPTION TO YEAR 2

- Most free time should be spent in unstructured play: dress up, active outdoor play, creative, rough and tumble, playing with toys that require a ‘stick-to-it kind of attention’, exploring nature, listening to you read and tell stories.

- Screen time should be minimal - recommended maximum of 1 hour per day, less on a school day.

- Enjoy the multimedia device with your child. Ask questions while you look over her or his shoulder or pause the game while you watch it together.
YEAR 3 TO YEAR 6

• Continue to prioritise unstructured time to play, pursue hobbies, read books, explore nature, etc.

• Keep screen time to a minimum - a recommended maximum of 1 to 2 hours per day.

• Continue to share time with your child using tech devices together.

• If necessary for transport arrangements etc, a ‘dumb’ mobile phone with no internet access e.g. Nokia Classics; KISA phone.

• When making tech and media choices or consulting movie, app and game reviews, discuss this with your child. Help him or her to practise good judgment by developing an understanding of what is acceptable and unacceptable; what is simply gross; and what is immoral.

• Promote limited use of educational apps and programs, e.g. Maths Online and Canvas.

• Possibly allow limited use of a shared, family email account eg to send messages and photos to grandparents or other family members.

• Limited use of School email account.

• Limited time on tablets and iPods and with parental supervision: these devices have internet connectivity, e.g. through a friend’s hot-spot or commercial places with free Wi-Fi access.

• For individual music time, limited time with MP3 player which does not have internet connectivity e.g. iPod Shuffle; SanDisk

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

• From Year 10, possibly limited use of a smartphone and social media, with clear limits. As your teenager matures, balance your concern for safety with respect for his or her privacy: consider whether use of a parental control tool is appropriate.

• Help your child make quality media choices and critically evaluate apps and programs for themselves. This is a life skill which will transfer beyond technology.

• Keep a limit on recreational screen time - a recommended maximum of 1 to 2 hours per day.

• Provide alternatives. Rather than saying ‘no’ to content which is not appropriate, help your child find suitable media content by searching media review sites for popular games, videos and apps.

• Help your child avoid multitasking with devices e.g. texting while watching TV or having Facebook open while studying. Device multitasking reduces our attention span and memory and has been linked with anxiety and depression. Encourage your child to be present in the moment and focus on the task at hand.

• Educate your child about the trap of FOMO (Fear Of Missing Out). Social media can be fun and absorbing, so help your child to develop habits of self-control.

• Talk with your child about what real friendship means and how virtues such as kindness and respect can be lived when using social media. Without being intrusive, know who your child is friends with online.
# Recommendations for age appropriate use of smartphones, apps and social media.

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<th>Technology</th>
<th>Not Before*</th>
<th>Safety Tips</th>
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<tr>
<td>Personal Email</td>
<td>Age 13</td>
<td>Before children begin to use email, they need a thorough education in spam, phishing, bullying, inappropriate contact and the permanence of electronic communication. Consider making it a condition that your child gives you the email password.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skype</td>
<td>Age 13</td>
<td>There are default privacy settings for children under 16. Those over 16 should adjust their privacy settings so only people confirmed as a contact can communicate with them. Skype’s security page has more information about protecting online safety, security and privacy.</td>
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<td>Viber</td>
<td>Year 10</td>
<td>Viber is an app that allows people to connect with their contacts and strangers across the globe, for free via a WiFi or 3G connection. Caution: Viber has a feature called Public Chats. Users can follow their favourite personalities and celebrities or participate in chats about their favourite topics. If users participate in chats, all their personal information can be seen by other participants who may be strangers. Block contacts who communicate inappropriately. Make changes to Viber privacy settings: hide profile photo and location sharing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Smartphone</td>
<td>Year 10</td>
<td>Before children begin to use a smartphone, it is important to have a conversation about the inappropriateness of sexting and sending nude or sexual images or videos. Disable geotagging. Consider an Android smartphone and install the free Vodafone Guardian app. Talk with your child and together select the best settings to support safe and responsible mobile use.</td>
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<tr>
<td>WhatsApp Messenger</td>
<td>Year 10</td>
<td>WhatsApp has a number of safety settings: Change privacy setting to “My contacts” so that only your child’s contacts are able to see status information. Turn off location sharing. Block, delete or report inappropriate users.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kik Messenger</td>
<td>Year 10</td>
<td>There has been activity on Kik by predators pretending to be teenagers or children. Use safety settings: Hide any messages sent to your child from people who aren’t on their contact list. Discuss with your teenager about blocking and deleting inappropriate users.</td>
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* Many apps and sites have a minimum legal age of 13. However, due to safety concerns, we recommend some apps and sites are not accessed until at least Year 10.
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| **Facebook**<br>Twitter<br>Youtube<br>Instagram**<br>and other social networking** | **Year 10** | - Set the profile to private
- Turn off the location function on your child's mobile device.
- Talk to your child about what personal information is okay, and what is not okay, to share online.
- Teach your child to accept friend requests only from people he/she knows and trusts
- Know who your child is friends with online
- Show your child how to block offensive users
- Report fake profiles |
| **Google+** | **Year 10** | - This is a social networking platform which includes instant messaging, photo sharing and video chat.
- Turn location sharing off
- Hide birthdate and personal information by changing user profile
- Report spam, abuse or inappropriate content
- Block a person who sends inappropriate content. |
| **Snapchat** | **Year 10** | - Manage privacy settings so your child can receive snapchats only from known contacts.
- Explain to your child that images can be saved on Snapchat, even without him/her knowing
- Talk to your child about appropriate and inappropriate material |
| **Pokémon GO** | **Year 10**<br>(or possibly earlier with adult supervision) | - This game uses a phone’s GPS and camera to create an augmented reality monster hunting game, blending the real world with a simulated online world. The aim is to collect and trade Pokémon creatures in order to gain points. Safety concerns have been raised about this game.
- For privacy and safety, use a pseudonym for the player's username.
- Be aware that the game is location based, so players share their location with the service.
- Be careful that the location children are going to is safe and not private property.
- Parents should consider adult supervision for younger players: be careful while walking on public streets. Players may actually meet the people they play against. Parents may wish to accompany their children to these public ‘battles’. |
| **Amazon Rapids**<br>Ages 5 - 12 | | - Amazon Rapids is a reading app for children ages 5 – 12 that is associated with a Parent’s Amazon account. This service is designed to make reading fun, boost reading confidence, and encourage creativity. Parents can utilize Amazon Rapids to start a dialog with their children. |
| **Facebook Messenger** | **Year 10** | - Facebook messenger allows you to chat with anyone on Facebook. To initiate a conversation with users you need to add them to your Facebook friend list. We suggest for parents to add their children on Facebook and to monitor who they are adding as friends. Facebook Messenger is tied to a Facebook account, which is tied to a child’s real identity, reducing the amount of bullying and anonymous messaging. |
| **Linkedin** | **Year 10** | - Linkedin is the world’s largest professional network. It is an important tool for teens who want to improve their Google results when applying to college. It is the best place to start an online image to impress future employers. |
### Technology | Not Before* | Safety Tips
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 Pinterest | Year 10 | Pinterest is a visual discovery tool that helps users find and save ideas. It’s a great source of inspiration for students. They can use Pinterest to find studying tips, DIYs and more. Kids can have fun on Pinterest but know there can be some adult content on the network, so parents should be close by to observe activity.
 Google Hangouts | Year 10 | Google Hangouts is a messaging platform that is tied to your Gmail address. Users can message friends, start free video or voice calls, and start a conversation with one person or a group. Some parents have found predators targeting their kids through Google Hangouts to try and entice them into partaking in video calls or sending photos of themselves. Watch this video on how to be safe.
 Minecraft | Year 5 | Minecraft is the best selling PC game of all time. While Minecraft may be used for educational purposes, players can encounter bullying, inappropriate content and even viruses when playing this game. You can disable the chat function.

### THESE SITES ARE INAPPROPRIATE AT ANY AGE

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<td>ASK.fm</td>
<td>This app has been associated with cyberbullying due to users’ perceived anonymity when asking questions. There are no privacy settings - all content is public and ASK.fm is allowed to use all content in any way they wish.</td>
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<td>Bumble</td>
<td>Similar to Tinder, Bumble is a mobile dating app. However, on the Bumble app women must be the first to make contact. Tweens and teens have been known to lie about their age and create fake accounts on apps like Bumble. Also, Bumble makes it easy for predators to target victims.</td>
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<td>Finstagram</td>
<td>Finstagram (Finsta) is a fake (or second) Instagram account. Students get a second Instagram account along with their real Instagrams (Rinstagrams), to post inappropriate pictures or videos (without their parents knowing about the second account).</td>
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<td>Musical.ly</td>
<td>Musical.ly is a popular app that lets users create lip-syncing videos to their favourite songs. However, there can be adult content. There is mature language and sexual content in the songs that are popular on the app, and there is no way to filter the content. Videos can contain mature situations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tinder</td>
<td>This is an adults only dating app often used with the intention of finding a sexual partner and users may send nude photos to other users.</td>
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<td>Tumblr</td>
<td>Tumblr is one of the world’s most popular blogging platforms. In 2013 Tumblr’s terms of service stated they would not delete pornographic information (and they were OK with that sort of content). They encourage students to hide from their real identity (by creating fake usernames on registration). They have a big search box at the top of the page and pornographic information can still be found.</td>
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### FOR OTHER APPS: POPULAR APP GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS

- Parent Resources - Office of the Children’s eSafety Commissioner
- Australian Council on Children and the Media
- Safe, Smart and Social
- Common Sense Media
- Think U Know
- Cyber Safety and Security Guide

SCREEN SMART - Recommendations for parents about technology use in the family