Agree on clear use limits

Negotiate clear guidelines for Internet use that fit your kid’s age and maturity and that reflect your family’s values.

- Talk about who kids can talk to, text, or play games with and when, the websites they can visit, and so on.
- With older kids, discuss online bullying, sexting, and the dangers of driving while using the phone.

Help kids protect their privacy

- Have kids lock all devices and accounts with a PIN or strong password, and keep them secret—even from best friends.
- Help kids choose smart email addresses, online names, and gamer tags that don’t disclose anything personal and aren’t suggestive.
- Talk to kids about limiting the personal information they share to close friends only.
- Restrict access to forums unless they are moderated by adults.
- Consider disabling the location services on your young child’s devices; at the very least, turn it off for any camera. Also, teach tweens and teens to use location-based services cautiously.

Monitor apps and games

- Stick to well-known games or those from reputable sites to reduce the risk of downloading viruses or being scammed.
- Check and discuss the ratings of the games kids want to play.
- Choose apps that are appropriate for the kid’s age and maturity.
- Consider limiting in-app and in-game purchases.
Teach safe and responsible use

Encourage kids to:

▪ Be kind. Don’t say, text, or post anything that would hurt or embarrass someone. NO bullying. Period.

▪ Never make, send, or accept provocative texts, photos, or videos.

▪ Never click links with free offers in ads, contests, games, or text messages (even from friends).

▪ Be choosy about adding friends on phones, social sites, or games.

▪ Trust their instincts. Let kids know that if something feels uncomfortable or alarms them, you will help solve any problems.

Use tools to help keep kids safer

▪ Manage the sites children visit and their time online.

▪ Filter violent or explicit lyrics, video, and other content.

▪ Block mature websites and harmful content.

▪ Manage contacts, including blocking callers and restricting contact to approved numbers only.

Defend tablets and computers against Internet risks

▪ Install legitimate antivirus and antispyware software.

▪ Turn on automatic updates.

▪ Never turn off your firewall.

▪ Use flash drives cautiously.

▪ Be the administrator of your home computer. (Make sure that kids sign in using a standard user account: aka.ms/user-accounts.)