

Introduction: What kids wished their parents knew about parenting and technology

- *"I wish they knew how much I actually _____ them."*
- *"I wish they knew that when they _____ it makes me feel loved."*
- *"I wish I had open and honest _____ with my dad [or mom]."*
- *"I wish they knew it's _____ the same as it was when they were a kid."*
- *"I wish they didn't just _____ my use of the internet."*
- *"I wish I didn't have _____, _____ access to the internet."*
- *"I wish we had real _____ as a family with _____ technology."*

I. What Do Parents Need to Know in Today's Tech World?

1. The _____ is constantly changing:

- a. Dial-Up → LAN [Ethernet] → Wireless/Bluetooth → ?
- b. Car Phone → Mobile Phone → Smart Phone → ?
- c. Tape → CD → MP3 [iPod → iPhone → iPad] → ?
- d. Atari → Nintendo → Xbox/PlayStation/Wii → ?
- e. MySpace → Facebook → Twitter → ?
- f. Email → Instant Message/Chat Rooms → Skype → ?

2. The _____ are ever changing:

- a. You can overthrow an evil regime with a Tweet. [Egypt]
- b. Anyone at any time can become famous with a click [Bieber]
- c. Old is obsolete – New is not just nice it's necessary. [pager]
- d. You can change the world from your garage. [Gates/Jobs]
- e. Global Awareness has brought a global responsibility. [Bono- The 'One' Campaign]

3. The _____ are changing and growing:

- a. Viruses/identity theft/hackers
- b. Texting & driving
- c. Addictions
- d. Social networks/YouTube/Chat rooms
- e. Pornography/Violent or disturbing content
- f. Gaming [violent, sexual content, social, online]
- g. Access anytime, anyplace to anything
- h. Disillusionment with reality
- i. Anonymizers
- j. Peer-to-peer [p2p] also called 'Torrents'
- k. Online predators
- l. Cyber-bullying
- m. Sexting/Sextortion

4. The basic _____ and _____ have NOT changed:

- a. Deep desire & need for community - [belonging]
- *Family dinners, weekly game night*
- b. Deep desire & need for significance - [impact/importance]
- *Go on a mission trip together, serve locally at a shelter*
- c. Deep desire & need for boundaries - [security/stability]
- *Have a family contract & instill family values*

II. What's The Game Plan?

1. Lead the _____

- a. Become a student and a support
- b. Get help if necessary
- c. Download a monitoring/filtering software today
- d. Be consistent – Follow-up and follow through

2. Have the _____ - often & openly

- a. Don't put it off – values/the why
- b. Create a safe environment for them to talk
- c. Internet safety & online dangers
- d. Ask questions
- e. Know the warning signs

3. Keep the _____

- a. Keep the location public
- b. Set specific rules/contract
- c. Set parental controls on all internet devices & TV
- d. Time limits – gaming/internet/phone
- e. Restrictions – Nothing good happens after midnight

4. _____ where they go

- a. When they are little [ages 0-12]: **Be a gate** [filters]
- *A gate determines what enters the home and what leaves the home.*
- b. When they are older [ages 13-18]: **Be guardrails** [monitor/accountability]
- *A guardrail is a system that is designed to divert potential disaster*

5. _____ where they go

- a. Check online accounts like: Facebook/MySpace/YouTube/Twitter/Etc.
- b. Have all passwords for your child's online activity
- c. If your child has a profile, so should you & be their "friend."

III. What Tools Are Out There to Help?

Parental Controls:

Almost every device today comes with Internet capability. Many devices [iPods, computers, Blue-rays, TV] come with a setting generally labeled parental controls. This is a good first step and should be enabled on all devices that are connected to the Internet. If a device does not have parental controls or the ability to enable a filtering or monitoring software do not allow it to be connected to the internet. *[note: not all parental controls are created equal nor do they all work in every area; test and make sure it is accomplishing what you want it to.]*

Passwords:

I've heard it said 'passwords are like underwear you never share them and you should change them often.' Parents need to know all the passwords and set the passwords for each internet device. Your child is smart so do not use obvious passwords [i.e. birthdays, pets, anniversaries] they may know or figure out.

Social Network Privacy Settings:

Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, YouTube all have privacy settings generally under 'Account.' Enabling this allows you to control what content is publicly shared to 'non-friends' about your child, such as photos, name, location.

Covenant Eyes: <http://www.covenanteyes.com/>

This is an excellent filtering and monitoring/accountability software that you download on to your computer[s]. It has an application for your smart phone as well, however, the user must disable the current web browser and use the Covenant Eyes App as the web browser. Covenant Eyes has a monthly cost to provide yourself or your family with the service. On the website they have excellent and helpful free resources in light of the changing tech world.

Safe Eyes: <http://www.internetsafety.com/>

This site is great for those with young kids. As a filtering/monitoring software, it provides excellent resources and up-to-date information and advice for parents. There is an annual subscription and fee.

XXXChurch: <http://www.xxxchurch.com/>

XXXChurch is an accountability software that provides both free and paid subscription for internet accountability. This is an excellent site for those who are struggling with a porn addiction and need accountability and resources.

Enough-Is-Enough: <http://www.internetsafety101.org/>

This site offers free information for parents on how to keep their child safe in a digital world. It offers excellent advice and steps to take for parents who are wondering what they do at different stages and ages for their kids.