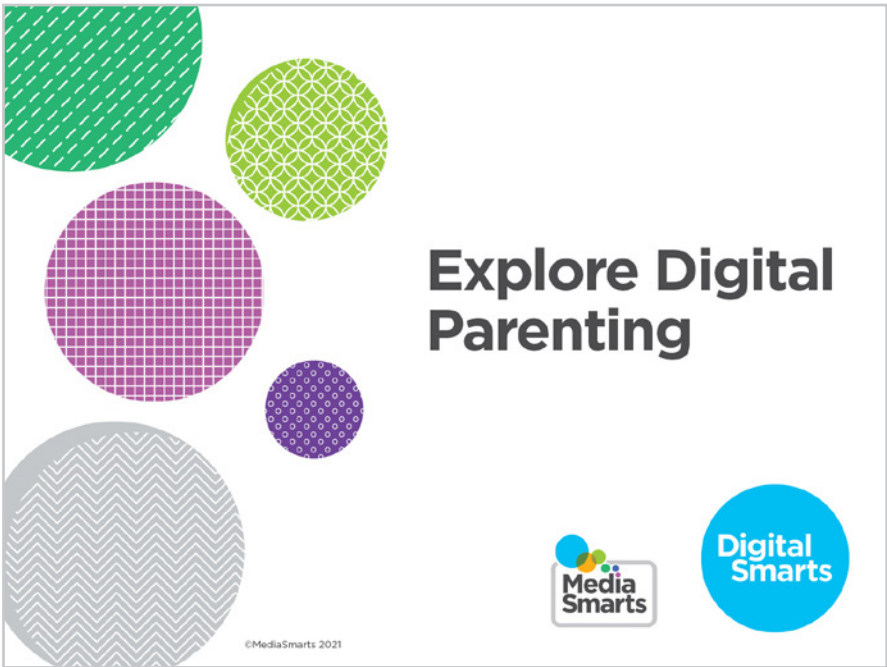




Workshop Script





1. Welcome to our session on exploring digital parenting.

We're going to have some time for questions at the end, but I'd also like to invite you to just raise your hand any time you have a question along the way.



2. Before we get started, I'd like you to think for a minute about what you're hoping to get from this workshop.

You don't have to answer out loud. Just think about – What are some things you or your kids do online?

What are some things that you wish you could do?

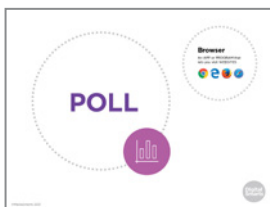
What are some things that you worry about when our kids are online?



3. It's not news that the internet can make it a lot easier to do things like watch TV and movies, keep in touch with friends and family, and share family news. More and more, kids need to use the internet to do their school work.

It's also not surprising that a lot of parents worry about letting their kids use the internet. Whether they're playing video games, watching YouTube, texting or using social networks like Instagram, a lot of parents feel like it's hard to keep up with what their kids are doing online.

There's no right way to be a parent, online or offline – but there are some simple things that will let you help your kids when they're using the internet.



4. Before we get started, let's do a quick poll to find out how much you already know.

You can answer the first question by raising your hand—how many people here are using devices, such as phones or computers, that you brought with you?

How many people are using devices that you haven't used before?

If you've got a device you already know how to use, start it up and use your browser to go to the website on the screen. Once you're there you can do the poll. It should only take a few minutes.

If you haven't used your device before, look for one of the browser logos you see on the screen. Then you can put in the web address to go to the poll.

I'll come around and help make sure everyone is able to get to the poll. If you finish ahead of other people, you can help one of your neighbours.



5. While the internet has made being a parent harder, what kids need from us hasn't changed.

That's why even without being a technical expert, there are five things you can do that will keep you on top of things:

Don't panic;

Talk to your kids;

Be a part of their online lives;

Be the person they come to when they have problems; and

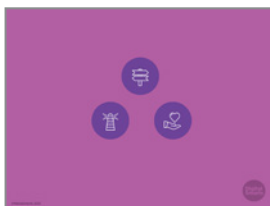
Set rules for them to follow, and share the values you expect them to live by - online and offline.



6. First of all, don't be scared!

It can help to think of the internet as being like a swimming pool.

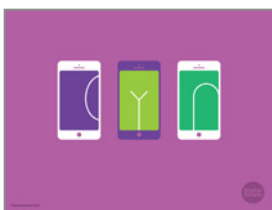
We know that pools can be dangerous, but we also know that the best way to keep our kids safe there is to teach them how to swim so they can keep *themselves* safe.



7. Even when it comes to technology, kids almost always turn to their parents for help when they have problems or questions.

When they do, they're not usually coming for help with the technology.

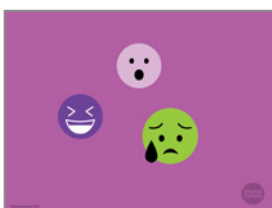
What your kids need from you is *guidance*, so they're ready to deal with problems before they happen, and *support* when things do go wrong.



8. A good example of this is how we talk to our kids about sexting.

It can be tempting to use “scare tactics” to try to convince them not to send sexts. But not only does this not work, it can actually backfire - partly because it makes sexting seem more common than it actually is, and also because if your kids’ main worry is getting in trouble, they won’t come to you if they have problems.

Instead, give your kids the guidance they need to make good decisions, and make sure they know you’ll be there if they need help.

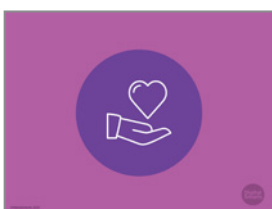


9. So what should we tell kids about sexting?

First, it’s not true that “everybody does it”: even among older teens, fewer than half have ever sent a sext.

Make sure kids know that once a photo or video is shared with *anyone* – even with a “disappearing” photo app like Snapchat – there’s a chance it can be copied and could stay online forever.

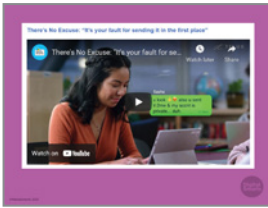
Even if kids know that, though, they usually think they can trust their friends or partners not to share a sext. Remind them that people sometimes do surprising things when they’re angry or upset – like if they’ve just broken up with someone.



10. If you feel comfortable, you can tell your kids about ways of “safer sexting” like hiding or covering their faces or other identifying features.

What really matters, though, is that that they know not to respond to pressure to send a sext. Encourage them to think about the difference between being liked for who you are and being popular, and tell them that they should never share anything online that they don’t want to.

And, of course, tell them to come to you if anything goes wrong. There are things that can be done if a sext gets seen by unwanted eyes – we’ll come back to that later in the workshop.



11. What's more important than talking to kids about *sending* sexts, though, is talking to them about *sharing* sexts. While sending sexts isn't usually a good idea, it doesn't do any harm so long as they're not being used to harass someone. The harm comes when somebody shares a sext without the consent of the original sender.

The problem is that a lot of kids believe that it's the sender's fault if sexts get shared, or that if a sext has already been shared there's no harm in sharing it again.

Kids who believe in excuses like there are five times as likely to share a sext than those who don't.

That's why we need to make sure our kids know that there's never any excuse for sharing sexts unless the person who sent them has clearly told you they don't mind.

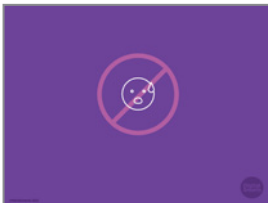
These short MediaSmarts videos are a quick, funny way to get the conversation started.



12. The single most important thing is to openly talk to your kids about what they do online.

Don't wait until things have already gone wrong. As soon as they start using internet devices you need to talk to them about how you expect them to behave and what to do if things go wrong.

Once you've started the conversation, keep it going. New issues will come up, your kids will start doing different things, and they'll start to push boundaries, so you have to check in with them regularly.

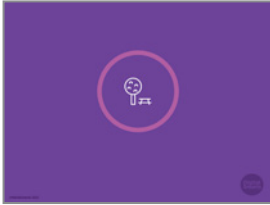


13. When you talk to your kids, don't try to scare them into staying safe.

Whether you're trying to scare them with what might happen if they do something wrong, or with what *you* will do to them if they do something wrong, "scare tactics" don't usually convince kids -- especially teens.

Doing that can also make them think that some bad behaviours are more common than they really are.

It can also keep your kids from coming to you if they need help.

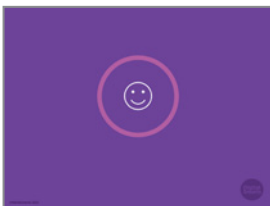


14. Instead, think of your kids' online lives as being like their school or the playground.

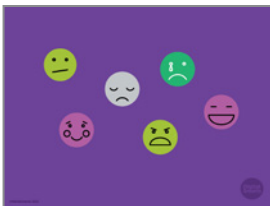
For example - you probably know the names of your kids' friends and you also talk to them about what's happening in their class.

The same should be true of their online lives. The more you talk about what they do, the easier it'll be.

If you start early, they'll be more willing to keep talking to you once they're in their teens.



15. Try to keep your talk positive. You want to understand what things your kids are doing online, and what's exciting about it to them, so you can ask them to show you some cool things they've been doing online.



16. You may not feel like a tech expert, but don't assume that your kids are either.

They do learn new things quickly when they first start using them, but that doesn't mean they understand everything. A lot of times kids learn just enough to do what they want, but they may not know what to do if things go wrong.

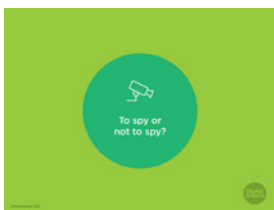
They also don't always know how to deal with their feelings or handle problems with their friends. This can be extra hard online, where you can't see or hear the people you're talking to.

That's just one of the ways in which they need the guidance and support that kids have always needed from parents.



17. What your kids are watching, playing, and doing online is a big part of the person they're turning into, and their online lives can be just as important to them as the "real world."

Younger kids are usually glad when their parents show an interest in the things they like, so get them to show you how their new favourite game works or why they're so excited about joining a new social network.



-
- 18.** One of the questions we hear most often is, how closely should parents watch their kids when they're online?

Spying on kids sends a signal that you don't trust them, which will make it harder to talk to them about what's happening in their online lives.

It also means that if something goes wrong, they'll be more worried about hiding it from you than getting your help.



-
- 19.** With younger kids, or with any age that has shown some bad judgment, it might make sense to monitor their activities closely, but be open about the fact that you're doing it and why.

What's more effective, in either case, is to have kids only use the internet in a part of the house where there are other people, like the kitchen or living room. That way you can just look over their shoulder now and then and check in about what they're doing.



-
- 20.** Once your kids have a smartphone, of course, it's a lot harder to control where they can use the internet. Even if they don't have a data plan, they can use their phones anywhere there's WiFi, like a coffee shop or public library.

If you're trying to decide whether or not to let them get a phone, the question really is whether you think they're ready to use the internet without you being there with them.

If your kids *already* have a smartphone, it's all the more important to talk to them about what they're doing and make sure they know how you expect them to behave.



-
- 21.** The other “big question” is whether, and when, to let your kids join a social network such as Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok and so on.

Most of these have rules that only kids 13 and older can use them. They don't often enforce these rules, though, and if your kids are ten or older there's a good chance some of their friends are on them.

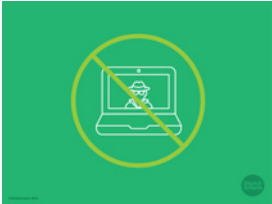
Here are some questions you can ask to see if your kids have thought about why they really want to use a social network, and if they're ready to deal with things that might go wrong:

Why do you want to use it? What do you like about it?

Who would you use it to connect with? Who do you know that's already on it?

How can you control who can connect with you? How can you control who sees what you post on it?

What can you do if somebody sees or shares something you didn't want them to? What can you do if someone is bothering you or being mean to you?



-
- 22.** One thing kids should stay away from is social networks or messaging apps that are totally anonymous.

Social networks where you use your real name, or make a permanent account with a fake name, are pretty safe so long as you use them carefully.

But ones where you don't have any permanent identity are dangerous because people don't feel like what they do there will have any consequences.

Kids mostly want to connect online with the people they know offline, so these apps don't stay popular for long. There's a long list of ones that have been briefly successful and then faded, from Ask.fm to Whisper to Omegle. But they sometimes do get very popular for awhile, so it's important that kids know why they're not a good idea.

The same is true with apps whose point is to that connect you with people you don't already know. Kids sometimes try these for the thrill of breaking rules against talking to strangers - but they need to know that they're likely to see things on these apps that they really didn't want to see.



-
- 23.** Social networks and games can also take up a lot of time, and it can be hard to turn them off.

Parents have been bothering their kids to turn off devices for generations, but there are some things about digital media that are different from things like TV.

For one thing, you never run out of it. There's always another video to watch, another level to play, another post to respond to.

It's also extra absorbing because in games and social networks you're not just watching, you're playing or connecting with other people.

All of these have also been built to keep people – especially kids – using them and coming back to them.



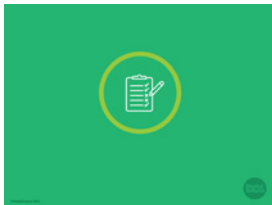
24. A lot of parents worry that their kids are using screens too much. It's important to pay attention to how much time your kids are spending using screens, but most of the time it's not a serious problem.

Here are a few signs that it might be:

Have your kids lost interest in other things?

Do you often have trouble getting them to stop what they're doing online?

Do they get angry or upset when they can't use screens at a time they expected to? Is screen use the only thing that can cheer them up when they're feeling low?



25. Even if it's not a serious problem, though, you probably want to take steps to manage your kids' screen time.

What's been found to work best isn't setting a time limit, but setting certain times and places where using screens is allowed and others when it isn't.

For instance, consider keeping screens out of kids' bedrooms. You can also say that they aren't allowed during family activities, like at mealtimes or when you're all out doing something together.



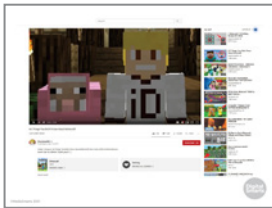
26. More than limiting screen *time*, try to steer kids to positive screen activities.

That can mean activities that they do with other people, especially if the people are in the same place they are. (For instance, playing video games together with a friend instead of alone.)

Things that make you move.

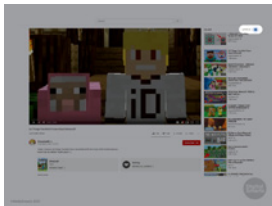
Creative things, like making videos.

And educational activities. CBC, PBS and other public channels have lots of educational games on their websites, and there are also great games and apps that can teach everything from math to coding.



27. It's also important to pay attention to what's in the things your kids are watching and playing online.

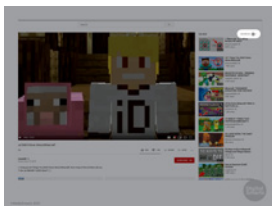
YouTube is the most popular app or website for kids of all ages, but there are a lot of things on it that you don't want your kids to watch.



28. If your kids watch YouTube, make sure that you've turned off Autoplay.

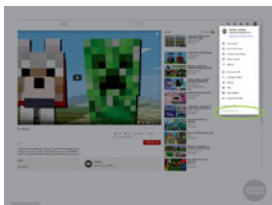
If it's switched on, the next video in the list will automatically play after the current one is done.

That's not always a problem when it's just one more Minecraft video – though it makes it harder to tell kids it's time to stop – but sometimes videos can lead to unexpected places.

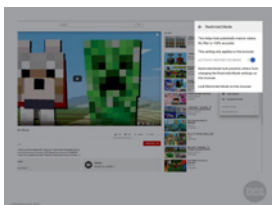


29. To turn off Autoplay, just slide the toggle at the top right so that it turns grey.

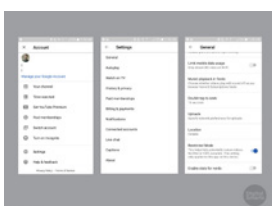
If you have a Google account and are signed in, you'll only have to do this once. If you don't have a Google account, remember that you'll have to do this step on every device and browser that your child uses.



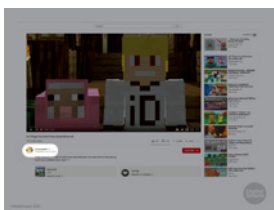
30. Another useful thing you can do if you're logged in is to turn on Restricted Mode.



31. Restricted mode keeps YouTube from playing videos that might not be appropriate for kids, and also hides the comment section. You can turn it on by clicking on your profile picture and then changing Restricted Mode to On.



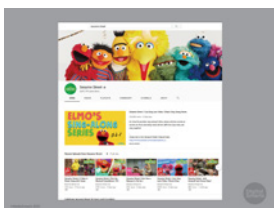
32. On a phone or tablet, you'll need to tap your profile picture, tap Settings, then General, and then slide Restricted Mode to on.



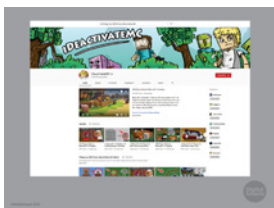
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- 33.** Two other things you'll want to know about are *channels* and *playlists*.

Because anyone with a Google account can post on YouTube, it's useful to find creators and channels that you know won't have inappropriate content.

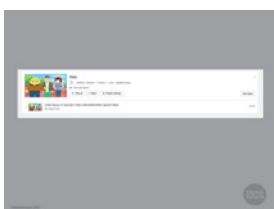
Click on the name of the account to see all the videos they've posted.



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- 34.** A lot of well-known TV shows like Sesame Street, and broadcasters like CBC Kids, have their own channels.

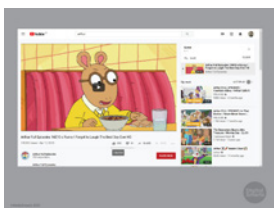


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- 35.** If you don't know anything about a channel, you can scroll through the videos and watch a few with your kids to make sure they don't have anything you don't want them to see.

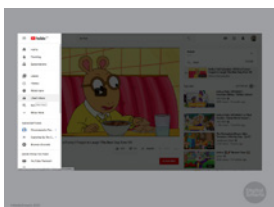


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- 36.** You can also create *playlists* in YouTube, so that your kids can only watch videos you've chosen ahead of time.

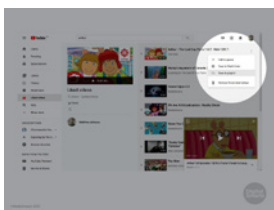
This can be a bit more work, but it's the surest way to keep them from finding something you don't want them to watch.



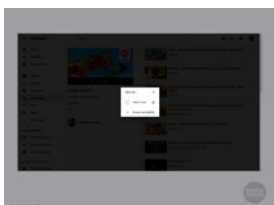
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- 37.** To add videos to a playlist, start by clicking the "Like" button (the thumbs-up).



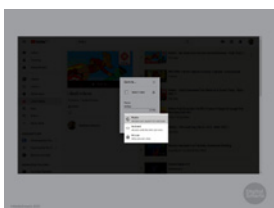
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- 38.** If you're using YouTube on a laptop or desktop computer, you can click the three bars at the top right and then clicked Liked videos to see the list of videos you've Liked.



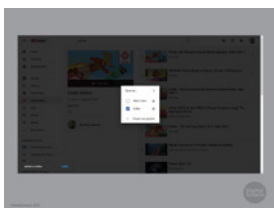
39. Next, click the three dots at the right and click Save to Playlist.



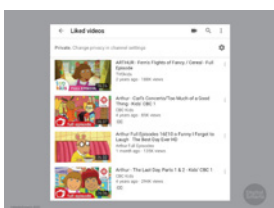
40. Now you can create a new playlist—we'll call this one Arthur since it's for episodes of the TV show—



41. and then choose whether you want your playlist to be private (which means only you can see it), public (which means anyone can see it) or unlisted (which means you can send people a link to see it.)



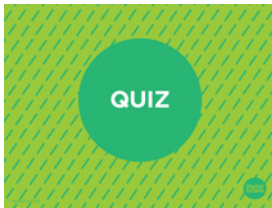
42. Once you've created a playlist, the next time you want to add a video you can just click that playlist.



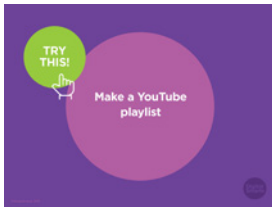
43. If you're using YouTube on a mobile device like an iPad you can't add kids' videos to playlists, but videos you've Liked are automatically saved to a playlist called Liked Videos.



44. You can see this, and any other playlists you've created, by clicking on Library. (That means that you can also make playlists when you're using YouTube on a computer, and then watch them on a mobile device later.)



-
- 45.** Let's do a quick quiz to check that you understood everything we just covered. It'll work the same way as the poll you did a few minutes ago.



-
- 46.** Let's try that now.

Go on to YouTube and log in. If you don't have a Google account, you can use the account information on the screen.

Now search for some videos you think your kids would like, and add them to your playlist.

I'll come around and help anyone who's having problems.

Now turn to the person next to you and compare notes. How easy was it? Did you have trouble finding videos you thought were safe, and that your kids would like? Do you have any videos or channels you think other parents should know about?



-
- 47.** A lot of the time, kids don't want to go to their parents when things go wrong because they're afraid they'll get in trouble.

Make sure your kids know they should come to you if things go wrong, like if they can't figure out a game or they accidentally access something unpleasant.

If they're in the habit of coming to you about the little things, they'll be a lot more likely to talk to you about the big ones.



-
- 48.** If they come to you with a problem, take it seriously.

What happens online can be just as real as what happens offline.

While bad decisions can be a good learning opportunity in the future, when they first come to you it's important to be supportive and reassure them that you're on their side - or they may not come to you next time.



-
49. Of course it's best to be ready to help when they come to you. MediaSmarts has many parent resources like tip sheets, guides and videos to help.

For example, the tip sheet *Help! Someone Posted my Photo of Me Without My Consent* gives advice on how you can get an unwanted photo taken down. It also explains how the law protects people who've had sexts shared.



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50. It's okay to tell kids to take a break, but most of the time you don't want to take away their phones, make them stop playing a game or stop using a social network completely.

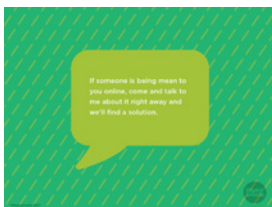
Games and social networks are a big part of kids' lives, so telling them to stop going online is like telling them to shut down their social lives.

It will also make them feel like **they** are the ones who are being punished, so it is really only appropriate when they're the ones at fault, for example:

If they've been seriously and repeatedly mean or cruel to someone online

If they've shared an intimate image of someone – where the person is partly or fully naked – without that person's consent

If they've used a digital device to commit a crime, such as hacking or posting hate material



-
51. Remember that most kids spend time online with the same kids they see offline. A lot of the “drama” that they get involved in spreads over both worlds.

Once your kids are on social networks, or connecting with people in other ways online, tell them to come talk to you if anybody is mean to them.



-
52. What's best, though, is to set clear rules so your kids know how you expect them to behave online.

It may seem like the internet is a place where rules don't apply, but the rules you set for your kids still affect how they behave



53. Your rules don't have to be just punishments for doing bad things.

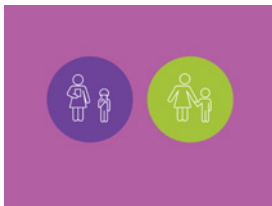
What's more important is to use them as a way of helping your kids understand the **values** you want them to live by.

It might be hard to believe – especially if you have teenagers – but kids generally want the adults in their lives to set limits and help them tell right from wrong.

That way they'll keep living by them even when you're not around – and when they're grown up and out on their own.



54. Make sure they understand that the result of these rules is **trust**: if you know that they understand and will follow the rules you've negotiated together, you'll be able to trust them more.



55. Remember that whether you're talking about treating people with respect or keeping screen time under control, what you *do* sends a more powerful message than anything you say. Not every internet rule has to apply to everyone in the house – it makes sense for adults, and older kids, to follow different rules than young kids – but pay attention to the messages your kids get by watching you.



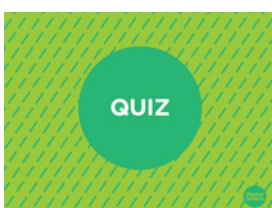
56. With younger kids, it makes sense to just explain the rules you expect them to follow.

As kids get older, though, they're a lot more likely to follow rules if they've been involved in making them.

Before you renegotiate rules, ask them some questions to find out which of the old rules they still remember:

Do you feel like you know what things we expect you to do, and not do when you're online?

Do you know what to do if things go really wrong?



57. Let's do another quick quiz to make sure you understood all that.



58. Let's try making some rules that make sense for your home.

Use the *Household internet rules* worksheet to make a list of things that your kids do online, like playing games, social networks and sharing photos and videos.

Now for each of those, think of what you want your kids to do and what you want them *not* to do.

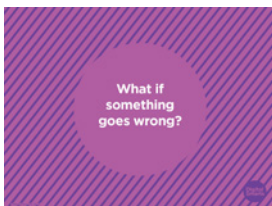
For example, you might want them to ask you before they download any new games or apps, and you might want them *not* to post any photos or videos that have anybody else in them without asking those people first.

Some of your rules might also fit into more than one activity. Treating people with respect, for example, is just as important in games as in social networks.

I'll come around and help anyone who's having problems.

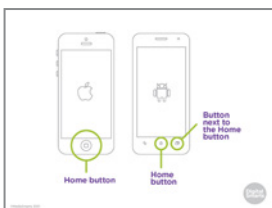
Now turn to the person next to you and compare lists. How similar are your lists? Did they think of rules you'd like to include in your list? Are there rules you think everyone should include in their lists?

Note to facilitator: You may choose to do this as a whole-group discussion if you feel it is more appropriate.



59. A lot of the time, there's an easy fix when things go wrong.

Knowing how to deal with some common problems can make it a lot less stressful when your kids are using digital devices.

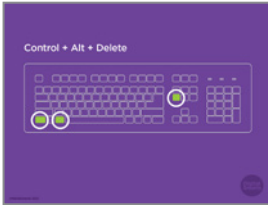


60. On phones and tablets you can usually leave an app without closing it by pressing the Home button.

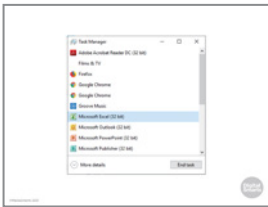
If you want to close an app on the iPhone or iPad, push the Home button twice. Then use your finger to swipe the app you want to close off the screen.

If you have a more recent iPhone or iPad with no home button, swipe your finger halfway up from the bottom of the screen and then lift your finger. This will open a new window where you can close apps.

On an Android device, tap the square *next* to the home button, then swipe the app off the screen. (Sometimes this is on the right, sometimes on the left.)



61. If you're using a computer that runs Windows, press the Control, Alt and Delete buttons at the same time. (They may not be in exactly the same spots on your keyboard.



62. That will bring up this Task Manager window. Click on the program that you want to close and press End task.



63. If you're using a Mac, press Command, Option and Escape instead.

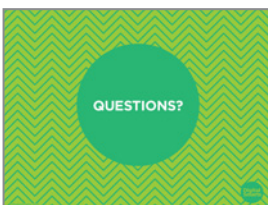


64. Before we finish, let's review some of the new terms we've learned in this session.

A *browser* is the app or program that lets your device visit web pages. Examples of browsers include Chrome, Firefox and Safari.

A *data plan* brings internet signals using cell phone signals.

WiFi sends internet signals to your computer without any kind of wires or cables by using a wireless *router* that's connected to cable internet.

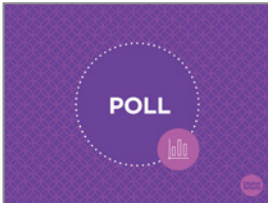


65. We're almost done this workshop, so let's stop for a second to see if anybody has any questions about what we've covered so far.

If you'd rather not ask your question now, I will be here for a little bit after the workshop, so feel free to come ask me.



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- 66.** Make sure to take home the Practice Sheet for this workshop. Use the video link on it to review what we covered today.
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- 67.** We've covered a lot in this workshop. Now we'd like to hear from you about what you learned, what you still have questions about, and your suggestions for how to make the workshop better.