



DIGITAL DIALOGUES

#digitaldialogues are meant to keep the conversation going. Keep in mind that they are less about specific content and more about connection. Don't feel pressure to stick with our suggestions- if the conversation goes down a different path, that's good, too. And by the way, if your child's not a talker, don't fret! Just bringing up these topics is a great way to show them that you are interested in their digital lives.

Get your tween involved in thinking critically about their online lives and the role of technology in their lives. Create a Teachable Moment with this #digitaldialogue!

Ask your tween why they think social media platforms require a person to be 13+. Explore why some people think social media is inappropriate for certain age groups. Is there a “right” age for using social media? What kind of skills does someone need before they start interacting online?



At TDSU our emphasis is on developmental readiness over chronological age and skill mastery over constant parental oversight. Check out our blog, at tdsu.org: “Is Your Child Ready to Start Interacting Online?”

Create Teachable Moments when you can. Use this #digitaldialogue to help your tween reflect on how they'd like to see their independence grow and what they need to learn to achieve that goal!



Ask your child to reflect on the last few months. Can they name some ways that they've matured? Can they think of some new skills that they have learned? Share with your tween the growth and development you have noticed. What about in their online life? Are there any new privileges that you each see on the horizon for them? Talk about any new skills they think they need to learn. Think about how you might each actively measure success and growth. What will you and your tween do if either of you realizes some more practice is needed?

When you are guided by a clear set of values, and you have learned the skills to support these, it becomes much easier to navigate sticky situations. Get Started with this #digitaldialogue!

Ask your tween if they have a sense of what your family's online values are. See if the two of you can name a few. For example: The value of well-being. How does that translate online? Maybe you unfollow anything that makes you feel anxious or judged. The value of respect. How does that translate online? Maybe you never post photos of someone without their permission. Find what works for your family!



Even if your tween has never engaged with you around your family's online values, they may have picked up on your messaging about what's important to your family. Or maybe they have no idea. That's ok! Take it as an opportunity to work on this together. By coming up with values that resonate with your family you are reminding your child that online interactions require thoughtfulness.



DIGITAL DIALOGUES CONT...

This #digitaldialogue provides an opportunity to create a Teachable Moment.

How can you get your tween to talk about their emotional lives? Instead of “How does that make you feel?” try, “I can imagine you might be having a lot of feelings. Can you name a few?” Help them explore what might be beneath the emotion. For example: Is their anger a reflection of hurt feelings? Are they feeling frustrated or embarrassed?



Understanding our feelings and where they are coming from can be helpful when interacting online because it allows us to better express ourselves and avoid miscommunication and misunderstandings.



When your tween is ready to start interacting online, Get Started by helping them create their Trusted Team with this #digitaldialogue

Talk with your tween about setting up their Trusted Team. Who should be on it? How would your child like the Trusted Team to help them? Their Trusted Team can: Interact with your child online; Be available if your child wants to run something by them before posting or sending; Point out if there are any *Thumbs Down* skills that need work.



Kids should have a trusted group of people who have their back when they are learning to interact online.

This is a great Get Started #digitaldialogue. It’s about getting curious!



What does your child actually know about their favorite app? For example, does your tween use Snapchat? Get them thinking about the complex social dynamics of the platform. Ask them about: Best Friend Scores; Snap Map; Streaks.

You can start preparing your child to interact online before they even get a device! Use this #digitaldialogue as a way to Get Started by modeling the behaviors you want to see your tween learn.

Are there behaviors that you model for your tween? For example: Do you put your phone away during meals? Do you check your text messages before hitting send? Do you get permission before sending or sharing photos of people? Ask your tween if they know why you are doing these things. Do they know why these things are important?



Modeling behaviors we want our tweens to emulate is important, but we can help them better integrate these lessons by encouraging them to think critically about why they matter.

Let’s get proactive about managing Screen/Life Balance! Use this #digitaldialogue to get your tween thinking about their coping skills.



Healthy coping skills build resilience. How does your tween cope when things get rough? What do they do to take care of themselves when feeling upset? How do they distract themselves when their thoughts are running wild? Who do they turn to when things get confusing? Share some of your healthy coping skills.



DIGITAL DIALOGUES CONT...

At TDSU we believe there are three basic skills kids need to learn in order to be safe and responsible online. This #digitaldialogue will help you Get Started with this process.



What are the three skills your tween needs to be safe and responsible online? They need to know when and how to: 1. Pause Before Posting 2. Move a Conversation Offline 3. Reach Out to an Adult. Share these with your tween and get the conversation going. Does your tween know why pausing before posting is important? Do they know how to move an online conversation offline? Who will your tween turn to if things get sticky online?

This #digitaldialogue is a great way to Get Started if your tween is asking to start interacting online.

Is your tween interested in social media apps? Ask them which ones. Get the conversation started! Ask them to be your tour guide: Have them show you how the app works. Ask them when and how they would use it. How do they think it would enhance their life? What are the possible pitfalls? What skills do they think they need to learn before they start using it?



Letting your kids start to navigate digital interactions can feel scary, but with TDSU at your side, it doesn't have to be! We believe there are three skills every kid needs to learn to be safe, responsible, and eventually independent online: when and how to Pause Before Posting, Move a Conversation Offline, and Reach Out to a Trusted Adult.

Sometimes our best partner in parenting is our tween! This #digitaldialogue will help you Get Started in getting them involved - they may surprise you with their insights on the help they need to more safely and responsibly interact online.



Ask your tween what they're up to online. Who are they interacting with lately? How are their online interactions going? Is there anything happening online they could use some help with? Are there TDSU skills they need to brush up on?

This #digitaldialogue is about normalizing talking about your online life and Screen/Life Balance.



Ask your tween if they have ever felt anxious after using their device. Have you? Tell them about it! Chat with your tween about ways to reduce these negative feelings. Ask them how they know when it's time to step away from their device. What signs do you both look for?

This #digitaldialogue will help you and your tween get started!



What concerns do you have about your child being on social media? Does your tween have any concerns? Talk about ways you can work together to address these.



DIGITAL DIALOGUES CONT...

This #digitaldialogue focuses on Screen/Life Balance. Start the conversation about ways to manage the anxiety that can come with access to online interactions.

Chat with your tween about how online interactions make them feel and what they can do about it. How would they feel if they were left out of a social event? What about if their post doesn't get a lot of likes? What can they do if the news becomes so grim that they start to feel scared? Encourage them to pay attention to how they're feeling before and after they use an app. Remind them that they get to decide what they engage with online.



There are so many skills and habits we want our kids to learn before they embark on their online lives, not the least of which is how to manage the feelings that social media and news feeds might trigger. Don't wait to talk about it until it happens - be proactive! Help your tween come up with some steps they can take when a post or feed makes them feel anxious, scared, left out, judged, or angry. We can't always protect our kids from what they might encounter online, but we can prepare them to deal with it.

What will your tween do if someone is being mean or hurtful to them online? How will they feel when they find out they were left out of a social event? Or if their post doesn't get a lot of likes? Help them be clear about their boundaries; remind them they get to decide who does or does not have access to them online. When the news becomes so grim your tween starts to feel scared or depressed, what can they do? Be sure your child's access and exposure to online interactions matches their demonstrated strengths and capabilities.

Encourage your tween to share their feelings with you or other people who are supportive listeners. Remind your child that they are not in this alone.

There is so much to learn in order to be a savvy user of online resources and to safely interact online. Take it step-by-step! This #digitaldialogue is one way to create a Teachable Moment!

Ask your tween if they know what a Deepfake is. Look some up together. Have a discussion about the risks of Deepfakes. Educate yourselves about ways to avoid or detect them. Ask your tween if they've ever gotten junk texts or emails. Talk about ways to tell if something is spam or legitimate.



*For tips on how to spot a Deepfake, check out this article by Norton Antivirus.
<https://us.norton.com/blog/emerging-threats/how-to-spot-deepfakes>.*

*For tips on how to recognize spam text messages, check out this article by the FTC:
<https://consumer.ftc.gov/articles/how-recognize-and-report-spam-text-messages>.*

Use this #digitaldialogue to work on Screen/Life Balance through mindfulness.

Ask your tween how mindfulness may help them when they interact online. Share your thoughts. Ask your tween if they feel any different when interacting online with more intention. What about you?



Mindfulness is:

- noticing
- on purpose
- without judgment

This #digitaldialogue focuses on resilience, an important part of Screen/Life Balance.



Healthy coping skills build resilience. How does your tween cope when things get rough? What do they do to take care of themselves when feeling upset? How do they distract themselves when their thoughts are running wild? Who do they turn to when things get confusing? Share some of your healthy coping skills!



DIGITAL DIALOGUES CONT...

Screen/Life Balance is important for all of us, and it is something we have to work on intentionally. This #digitaldialogue will get you and your tween thinking about your relationship with your devices and changes you may want to make.



Talk with your tween about digital routines. Do they have one? Share yours! Do you look at your newsfeed the second you wake up? Does your tween go on TikTok while getting ready for school. Do you turn to your device when you're bored or anxious? Ask your tween if they also do this. Brainstorm alternative ways to manage these feelings.

The Trusted Team is an important part of the TDSU approach, and this #digitaldialogue is a great way to Get Started!

Talk with your tween about setting up their Trusted Team. Who should be on it? How would your child like the Trusted Team to help them? Their Trusted Team can: Interact with your child online; Be available if your child wants to run something by them before posting or sending; Point out if there are any Thumbs Down skills that need work.



Kids should have a trusted group of people who have their back when they are learning to interact online.



Communication is key when it comes to helping kids be safe and responsible online. This #digitaldialogue will help you get a sense of what your child knows about the apps they are using.



What does your child actually know about their favorite app? For example, does your tween use Snapchat? Get them thinking about the complex social dynamics of the platform. Ask them about: Best Friend Scores, Snap Map, Streaks.

A great place to Get Started is with your family's online values. This #digitaldialogue can help your family build the foundation for their digital lives.

Ask your tween if they have a sense of what your family's online values are. See if the two of you can name a few. For example: The value of well-being- How does that translate online? Maybe you unfollow anything that makes you feel anxious or judged. The value of respect- How does that translate online? Maybe you never post photos of someone without their permission. Find what works for your family!



Even if your tween has never engaged with you around your family's online values, they may have picked up on your messaging about what's important to your family. Or maybe they have no idea. That's ok! Take it as an opportunity to work on this together. By coming up with values that resonate with your family you are reminding your child that online interactions require thoughtfulness.



Get your tween talking about interacting online. Get Started by including them in a conversation about their digital lives with this #digitaldialogue.

Is your tween interested in interacting online? What about it are they looking forward to? Is there anything about interacting online that concerns them? How can you help them be safe and responsible online?



Social media has so many purposes! It is a great way to spread a message, connect with friends, or just see what's new. But some kids might not be ready, and that's ok, too!



DIGITAL DIALOGUES CONT...

Dive into developmental readiness with your child. Set yourself up for a Teachable Moment with this #digitaldialogue.



Ask your child if they know what impulse control means. Why do they think it matters for interacting online? Ask your child if they know what perspective taking is. Why would that matter if you are texting someone? Do they know what it means to delay gratification? How might that be helpful when interacting online?
