

## It's Just A Phase . . . So Don't Miss It

As a parent, you want to invest your time in things that matter. Like having the right conversation with your child at the right time, with the right things to say at your fingertips. These conversation guides will help you navigate the critical issues you face at each phase, as you imagine the end for your child. They are based on research from **The Phase Project**, a collaborative, ongoing effort assembling classic and innovative research with practical application.



**Elementary**

# TECHNOLOGY

## PARENT CONVERSATION GUIDE

. . . for intentional conversations with kids

They might not have asked yet, but kids want to know when they'll be able to get their own phone, have their own social media profiles, and interact with friends online. Start the conversation about technology now, and begin setting clear guidelines. Kids know they can get their license at sixteen, which gives them something to look forward to. Set expectations about when they can get their 'technology license' too. Technology can be a positive experience as long as parents stay informed and involved.. Remember your role in the elementary phase is to help them...

**EXPLORE**  
the possibilities



So they will . . .  
**UNDERSTAND CORE VALUES  
& BUILD ONLINE SKILLS**

This guide is designed to help you meet children where they are now, giving you some words to say and not to say as you navigate the critical issue of faith. As the conversation progresses through the phases, always keep this end goal in mind:

**TECHNOLOGICAL RESPONSIBILITY**  
Leveraging the potential of online experiences to enhance my  
offline community and success

## WHAT TO SAY:

"Google can be amazing, but it's very important that you don't ever Google without me."

"What do you think is the right age for a student to get a phone?"

"We have to be careful with Google. If we type in the wrong thing, we might end up somewhere we don't want to go."

"What kind of computer gadgets do your friends have?"

"Do any of your friends own their own phone yet?"

"When you get together with friends who have phones, do you ever create videos, text each other or do anything like that?"

"We're proud of the young man/lady you are becoming. Before long you'll be ready for your own phone. We think when you're (*age you decide*) you'll be ready to handle that kind of responsibility."

"Will you help me decide where to put the family computer? We have three choices – living room, kitchen (*or name another open area of your house*)?"

"We're here to help you learn how to use technology in a safe and fun way. That's why we have to know your passwords and what you're doing with your phone. As you get older, you'll gain more freedom. But for now, we're in this together."

"We're on the same team when it comes to technology. I trust you, but I'm not quite ready to trust the other 800 million people on the internet. You can count on us to help you."

"Let's talk about our family rules for using the computer (*i.e don't ever post our home address*)."

"Have you seen anything online that surprised you? It's always ok for you to talk with me about it."

## WHAT NOT TO SAY:

"I didn't have a cell phone growing up. You'll survive without one."

"I can't believe your friends parents already let them have a phone. That's terrible."

"Kids your age shouldn't even be thinking about phones. That's crazy!"

"I guess you can have a phone if all of your friends already have phones."

"We will talk about it when I'm ready."

## JUST REMEMBER

Every PHASE is a timeframe in a kid's life when you can leverage distinctive opportunities to influence their future. The elementary years are full of possibilities and you want to engage their interests in a healthy way. Use technology to share things you enjoy. Stay curious about what they are seeing and learning and help them to feel safe in bringing their questions to you. When they push back against your rules and guidelines, engage them in talking about the 'why' behind the rules. Stay informed. Stay involved. Keep the conversation going.