3-Step Plan
for Parents

Digital Safety Planner

Defend
Young
Minds

Digital Safety Planner:
3-Step Plan for Parents

Now is the **perfect** time to re-evaluate and **fortify** your family's defenses against pornography and other online dangers.

We've created this planner to help you 1) Tackle the Tech, 2) Track Online Activity, and 3) Teach Refusal Skills.

1. Tackle the Tech

Use technology to make your electronics safer. Now is a great time to put in place or update your device protections. To help you with this, we've created checklists for personal/family devices and school-issued devices.

Personal Device Checklist

☐ **Internet Filter**: Many routers come with their own filters, but you can also install a filter. Don't get caught up in selecting the best filter. Just get one up and running as soon as possible. Here are some tips to help you select one:

- Filtering 101: Protect Kids From Porn on New Devices
- While we don't necessarily recommend one filter over another, here are a couple that are popular:
    - Bark is a parent monitoring tool that also includes a robust internet filter. (More on Bark below!)
    - Canopy is a filter that blocks nudity or partial nudity (depending on your settings) in real time. That means even if a site has been whitelisted or hasn't been blacklisted yet, if it's got pornography it's getting blocked. The really cool thing about Canopy is that if a website contains mostly appropriate content, the user can still get to the website and Canopy will block out only the inappropriate content.
    - A Gryphon router isn't just a router. It's a hub for monitoring your kids online and your family's first line of defense against digital dangers.
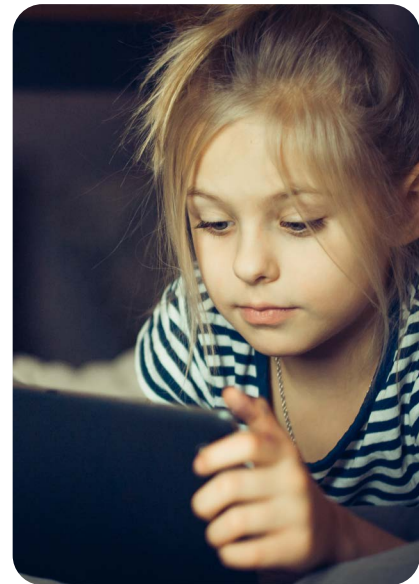
☐ **Parental Controls**: Most devices now have built-in parental controls. Make sure you've got those set up for any device your child might use.

- **Apple devices:** Be sure to utilize Apple's Screentime controls. First, you'll need to set up Family Sharing. Then you can adjust the Screen Time controls for your child's device.
- **Android devices:** You'll want to utilize **Google Family Link**. This is a great, free way to monitor Android devices. To learn more and get step-by-step set up instructions go here.
- You can find guides to setting up parental controls on various devices and services by doing a search for the device name plus the phrase "parental controls".

School Device Checklist

☐ **See what's already in place**: On your school district website, search "Acceptable Use Policy" (AUP) or filtering. This should give you an idea of what filtering is on your child's school-provided device.

- Computer/Device Level Filters: Look for a specific list of what the filters cover. It may be different than your family expectations.
- Internet Level Filters: Only applies when kids are using the device at school.

☐ **Find out what you can add**: If you aren't comfortable with the protections in place by the school, see what the policy will allow you to add. But don't worry too much--as long as you have a router in place your internet will still be filtered.

☐ **More articles to help you with a school-issued device**:
- 5 Troubles with Tech at School and 5 Top Ways to Keep Students Safe
- Parent Alert! A Timely Tech-Check for Your Kid's Back-to-School Safety
- Chromebook Safety 101: 5 Easy Tips for a Better School Year
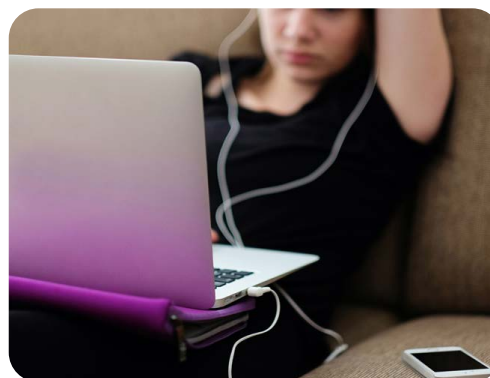
2. Tracking: Supervising Your Child's Online Activity

Regardless of the device used, your child's online activity should be supervised. But it's impossible for you to be watching everything your child is doing--especially if you have more than one child, are trying to work from home, or trying to do anything else really!

☐ **Allow Devices Only in Common Areas**: Whether your kids are using devices for school or entertainment, devices should only be used in common areas where you can see what's on their screen at all times. Devices should never be used in private areas like bedrooms and bathrooms.

☐ **Put Devices to Bed**: Have a set time to turn off electronics at night. It's a good practice to collect all mobile devices and have them re-charging in a parent's room at night.

☐ **Require Access**: Make sure you have the password to any accounts your kids are using--whether for school or for entertainment. Parents should have access to these accounts until well into the teen years.

☐ **Do Random Checks**: Look at what's on your child's screen every so often throughout the day. Randomly look at social media accounts, texts, emails, internet history, etc.

☐ **Use Monitoring Technology**: Because it's hard to see everything your kids are doing and many kids know how to delete things they don't want you to see, consider using a monitoring service like [Bark](#). Bark works by monitoring your child's accounts on various apps and websites. It watches for key words and phrases that can indicate a problem and sends you an alert.

☐ **Supervise Video Chats**: The live aspect of video chats makes it difficult to track problems after the fact.

3. Teach Refusal Skills: The Best Digital Defense for Kids

Filters and parental controls help parents, but they won't persuade a child to stay away from harmful, inappropriate content. Only a parent's love and mentoring can influence the minds and hearts of their kids. That's why Defend Young Minds recommends that parents build an "internal filter" in their child's mind.

Here are some important topics to discuss:

☐ **Pornography**: No child deserves to face the porn industry alone! Empowering your child with porn refusal skills is your child's best defense. Talk to your young

child about what pornography is, why it is harmful, and how to reject it when they see it. If you've already started, keep the convos going! Here are some tools to help you start or review this conversation:

- **Free guide:** How to Talk to Kids About Pornography: Quick Start Guide Not sure how to get the conversation started? We've got you covered! Download our FREE guide to get our best tips on how and when to approach this topic with your kids.
- Our Books | Defend Young Minds®: This best-selling series of read-aloud books explains what pornography is in age appropriate ways and gives a simple plan to follow when children come across pornography.
- Brain Defense: Digital Safety® course: Arm your child with strong digital self-defense skills! Our video-based course for kids ages 7-12 will help them learn digital self-discipline, safe digital habits, porn-refusal skills, and how to be a good digital citizen.
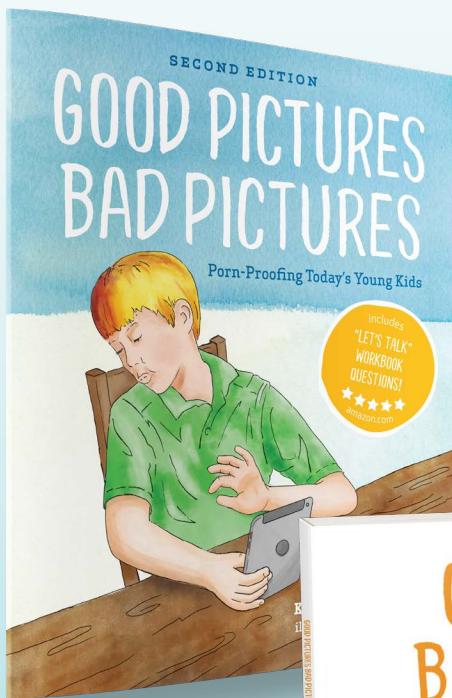
☐ **Cyberbullying and Sextortion**: These are disturbing and growing trends. Read more about these dangers in our article 3 Scary Things Haunting Your Kids Online. Make sure your kids know how to protect themselves by reporting bad behavior to you. Cyberbullying and sextortion thrive on secrecy, so bring them out into the light.of dopamine--a neuro chemical that drives people to want, seek and search for more. Even young children who are years away from puberty can be prematurely sexualized by pornography.

☐ **Screen-Time Balance**: Talk with your family about the health benefits of balancing screen time with screen free activities. Make a plan together for what will work for your family.

☐ **Appropriate Video Chat Behavior**: Talk about etiquette, like muting your mic and not flooding the chat box with memes. Also discuss what to do if someone says something mean or shares something inappropriate. Check out our article on 11 Safe Video Chat Rules You Need to Teach Your Kids.

All of these important topics are taught & reinforced in our Brain Defense: Digital Safety course for kids ages 7-11. We have a special version for families. Check it out here.
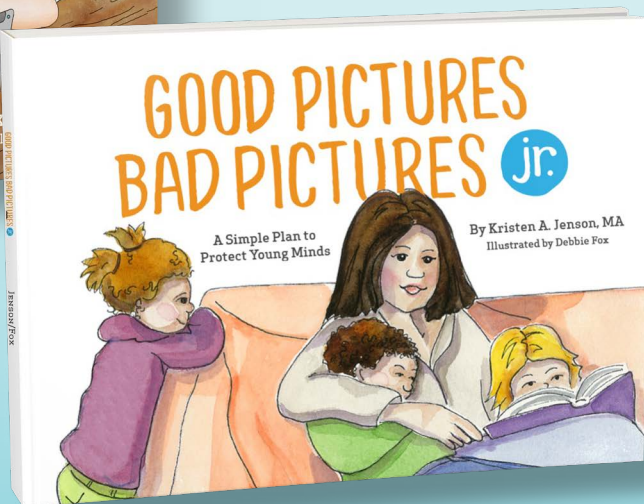
brain defense
DIGITAL SAFETY

Teach kids refusal skills for digital dangers.

Arm your children with an engaging, video-based course to keep them safe from cyber-bullying, pornography and internet addiction.
Brain Defense teaches kids, ages 7-11, healthy technology habits to protect their growing minds. Available for families, schools and community groups.

Learn more at BrainDefense.org

BRAIN DEFENSE TEACHES KIDS:

- Screen time management skills
- The importance of choosing good media
- How to form positive tech habits
- Refusal skills for rejecting pornography
- Strategies for dealing with cyber-bullying
- How to be a kind, honest digital citizen
- And much more, all taught by peer role models called the Brain Gang!

" I love-love-LOVE that you are bravely bringing this information to students."

Parent of 4th grader

" Both students and parents thanked me for presenting such helpful internet use guidelines."

Elizabeth Fresse, teacher

11 Digital Safety Videos

Parent Information Powerpoint

PARENT SUPPORT WEBSITE!

10 "Continue the Conversation" Videos

Teacher Training Video

Brain Book

Family Brain Book

My CAN DO Plan

How to be a good DIGITAL CITIZEN

Instruction Manual

Home Connection Letters

10-Point Checklist for School Safety Policies