

Thinking about Intentional Tech for Families

There's no one right way to do family tech

We want our children to feel safe, connected, and supported. Technology can be useful, creative, and genuinely fun. It can also crowd out the things we care about most: sleep, play, friendships, and time together.

You don't have to be anti-tech to be intentional about tech.

Being intentional simply means *you* decide what role technology plays in your family, instead of letting it decide for you.

Questions to help inform tech decisions

Whether it's a new game, a first phone, or one more episode, explore these questions.

What is this for?

Connecting with friends, creativity, learning, unwinding, or just filling time? These are all important, and knowing the purpose can help us stay intentional.

What does it make room for, and what does it crowd out?

Check sleep, homework, movement, play, conversation, and time with friends.

How do we feel afterward?

Energized, calm, and creative? Or wired, irritable, and down? Notice the pattern, for kids and for adults.

Is this the right fit for right now?

What works for a 14-year-old isn't right for a 7-year-old, and what worked last year may not work this year.

Shared family values

Technology decisions are easier to navigate when grounded in your family's values. Values help guide your choices and create a shared language for talking about technology at home. Here are some examples to get you started. Borrow them, adapt them, or create your own.

People come first. We make time to be present with one another.

We protect connection. Devices go away during meals and conversations.

Technology serves us. We decide when, why, and how we use it.

Kindness counts everywhere. We treat people online the way we would face-to-face.

We ask for help. If something online feels uncomfortable, we talk to a trusted adult, and no one gets in trouble or feels shame for telling.

Trust grows with responsibility. We build independence through honest conversations and age-appropriate boundaries.

Five small steps to explore

- 1 **Choose one screen-free time or place.** Try dinner, bedtime, or family outings. Experiment with one manageable change.
- 2 **Get curious, not critical.** Ask your child questions! *What do you enjoy online? Can you show me? Has anything online ever surprised you?*
- 3 **Explore your family values.** Identify what matters most to your family, such as sleep, connection, creativity, or independence, and consider how tech is influencing these areas.
- 4 **Make space for offline connection.** Choose one activity to protect this week, whether it's outdoor play, time with friends, creativity, or family time.
- 5 **Talk with other parents.** Share questions, challenges, and ideas. We don't have to figure it out alone!

ONE QUESTION TO TAKE HOME

What do we want more of in our family, and how can our tech habits help make room for it?

Progress, not perfection. Connection, not conflict.

Let's keep the conversation going!

The **Intentional Tech Coalition** brings Concord families and community members together to support thoughtful, healthier technology choices at home and at school. You don't have to figure this out alone. We'd love to hear your ideas and help you connect with other families.

Learn more or get involved: intentionaltechcoalition.org

More connection. More intention. People before screens.

