

Guidelines for media parenting in the digital age



Media are part of every family's daily life: to play, to be entertained, to communicate, to learn, to work...

While the media present many opportunities, they are also at the center of parents' concerns. How can we set media rules where everyone is involved? How can we avoid the media being a subject of discord? How can we guide our children's practices? Can we spend a pleasant moment together with the media? These are questions that we need to think about as a family, because **we have a role to play in the media education of our children from an early age.**

- 💡 These guidelines address the family as a whole, meaning also grandparents, cousins, siblings, friends etc.
- 💡 Agree with your children on rules that you can uphold in everyday life and stay in dialogue.

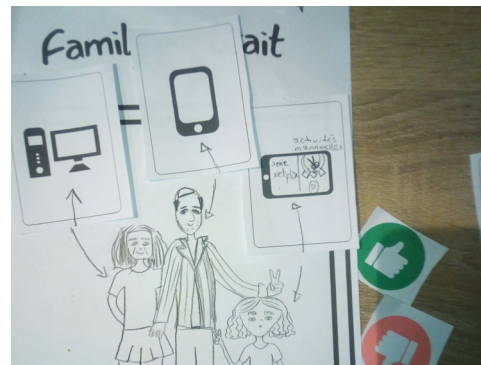


Guidelines on screens and medias, for families, designed by parents

183 parents met and a hundred «picto-rules» resulting from the discussions

This brochure was produced as part of the «Keep in Touch» (KIT) project, an innovative European project that develops tools to support the digital uses of 3-6 year olds, in a school-family coeducation. KIT is the result of a partnership between five educational organizations from Belgium, Germany, France, Italy and Portugal, all of which are convinced that digital tools are wonderful tools for sharing and developing creativity if they are properly mastered and understood by educators, parents and children.

In order to co-create the guidelines you are discovering today, the KIT project partners met 183 parents in Belgium, Germany, France, Italy and Portugal. They all shared their own media practices in their family context. The «picto-rules» that make up this brochure are the result of these meetings: after having shared their concerns about media and screens in their family, the parents were invited to create their own «picto-rules» for families.



Media offer opportunities

Are your children attracted to screens? Use it positively:

- Media can be used in many ways: active, interactive, generating experiences to share together
- Encourage family exchanges, try out creative and enriching activities

Looking for creative digital activities to play together with your kids? Explore the Keep in touch toolkit.



www.keepintouch-project.eu/
kit-of-digital-atelier/

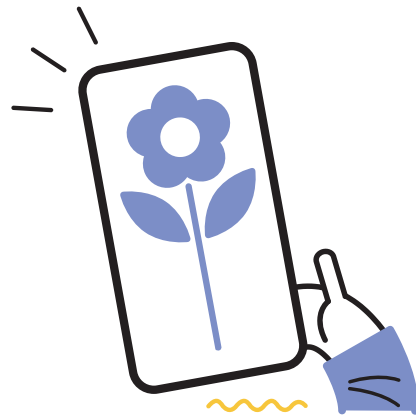
Identify together which emotions the media content generates and discuss it



Be creative! Invent for example a story together and tell it in photos or video



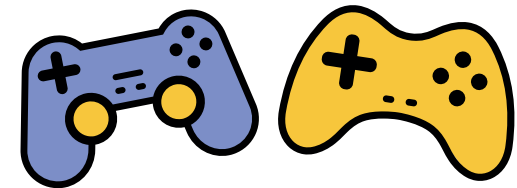
Going for a walk or a visit? Give the smartphone to your child to take pictures on the way



Keep in touch! Use social networks to send and receive news to/from your family



How about playing together: for example share a video game as a family



Media is one activity among many

Remember that media and screens are only one type of activity that you can offer your children.

To ensure that media activities are not systematically their first choice:

- encourage your children to alternate activities, such as cooking, crafting, painting, building, imitating, playing with a friend
- media should be in balance with other activities

Work out a schedule with your children:

- let them choose which activities they want
- media activities will be one of them

Spend less passive time on the smartphone and more active time with your loved ones



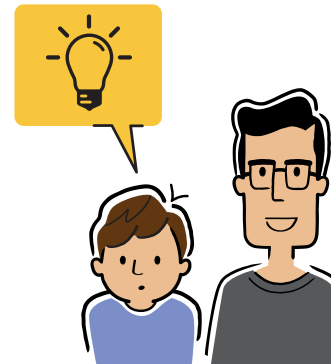
Alternate with outdoor or indoor activities



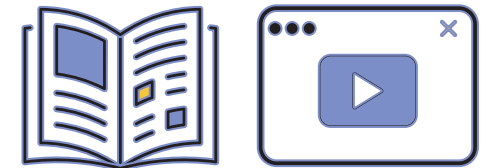
Keep a balance between virtual and physical presence in relationships



Screens are not the only way to deal with boredom: think of alternatives to do together



Explore stories using different media: books, videos, audios,...



Together is better!

Support your children in discovering and learning about media and screens: watch videos and play games together. Ask questions, ask about their emotions, take an interest in your children's practices, without judging them.

By building a relationship of mutual trust towards your children's media use, you will encourage them to ask you questions if they have any doubts, and to alert you in case there are any problems. If, on the other hand, you show no interest or suggest that the activity is silly or harmful, your child may tend to hide their screen activities from you and keep you at a distance.

If there are problems discuss and find solutions together



Take an interest in your children's digital practices



Discuss about whom your children play or communicate with online



Make sure your children ask permission to install new applications



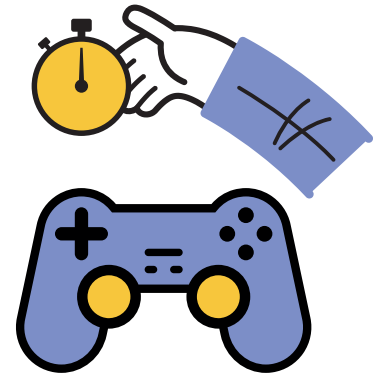
Don't just say NO, but explain and choose rules together



Children need clear rules and parents are their models

When it comes to media practices, make sure that a clear framework is in place and discuss with your children what is allowed and what is not. For example, think together about the advantages and disadvantages of spending a lot of time in front of screens. **Try to establish clear, understandable and realistic rules for you and your children.** Remember that as parents you are the role models for your children. Be a good example for them by keeping to the framework yourself.

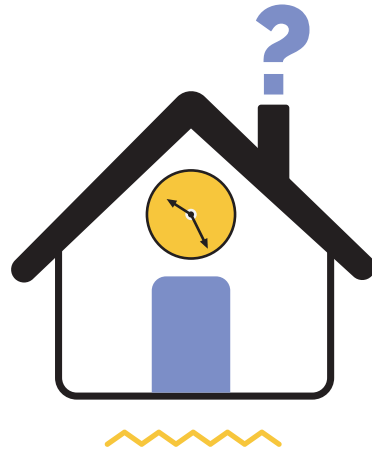
Inform your children how much time is available before starting any activity



Avoid screens at mealtimes to encourage dialogue



Agree on places and times for media use



Screens should be turned off long before going to sleep



Set clear rules for media use time depending on the activity



Choose appropriate activities

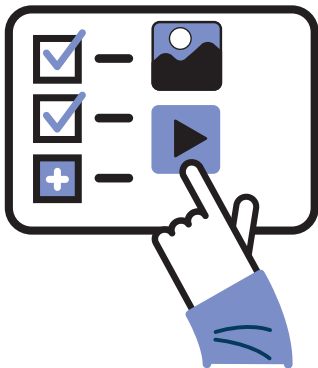
The digital world offers us an endless range of contents and activities.

Make sure that the ones you choose for your children, or that your children choose for themselves, **are appropriate in terms of age, interest and content** and can bring them something positive (educational or even to have fun).

Children under the age of 3 should not use media alone.



Help children to choose appropriate contents



Select contents according to the children's age, respect recommendations



Block the access to violent content



Offer suitable content from platforms dedicated to children



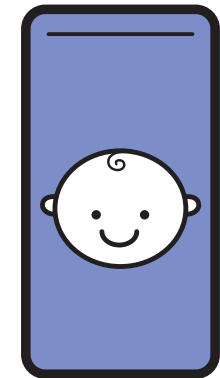
Teach children about consent and image rights

You can explain to children that **image rights are about not taking, using or distributing images of other people without their consent**. Teach them to ask: «Can I take a picture of you? Can I publish this video of you?»

Children should be able to say no. Think together about situations where it would be unpleasant if someone used their photo without permission.

If you want to share pictures or videos, avoid open environments on the internet (like social media that anyone can access) but select more private channels and tools.

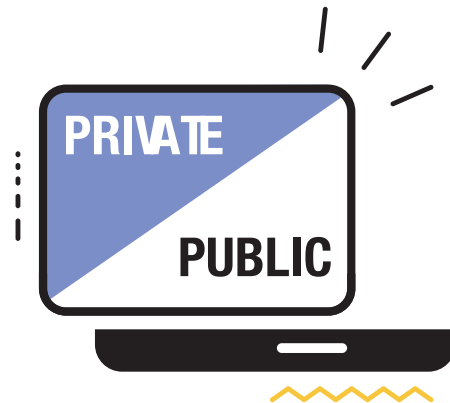
Be a role model and think before you publish images with your children in it



Before posting online, think about who can see it



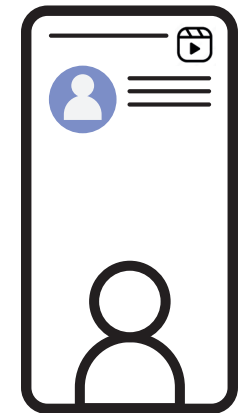
Be careful where and of whom you choose to post photos/videos



Teach to ask permission to whom you film or take pictures of



Make sure children know and use their rights



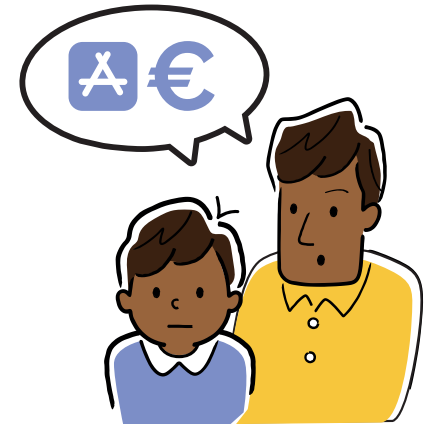
Be aware of online risks

Supporting your children's media use means that you accompany them for the good and the bad. Introduce your children into suitable online activities, children can make their first steps on the Internet using search engines specifically designed for children or adapted platforms.

Internet brings many possibilities but also risks: using social media or online gaming platforms means sharing content with strangers, you can come across inappropriate images, ...

Encourage your children to ask you if they have any doubts and be always available in case of worries. Never judge them in case of misuses: they should not feel ashamed and hide things from you.

Discuss the value of things and be aware of in-app purchases



Make your children aware of risks : fake friends, scams, inappropriate websites, ...



Discuss with your children and avoid judging in case of misuses



Use platforms for children



Stay available



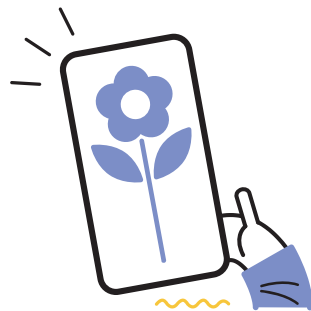
Select the guidelines for your family

Discuss as a family and select the guidelines that you think are most interesting to implement in your family. Select and cut out the guidelines. And why not imagine and draw your own rules?

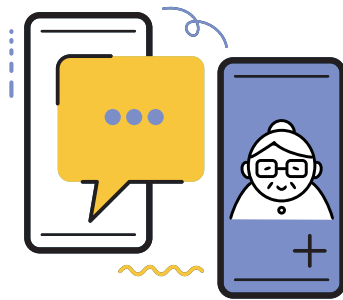
Be creative! Invent for example a story together and tell it in photos or video



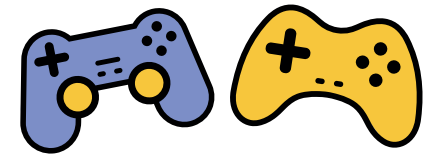
Going for a walk or a visit? Give the smartphone to your child to take pictures on the way



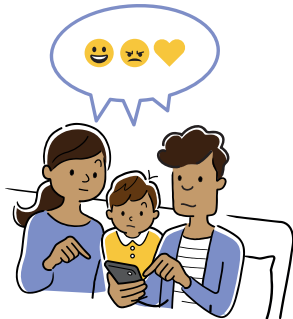
Keep in touch! Use social networks to send and receive news to/from your family



How about playing together: for example share a video game as a family



Identify together which emotions the media content generates and discuss it



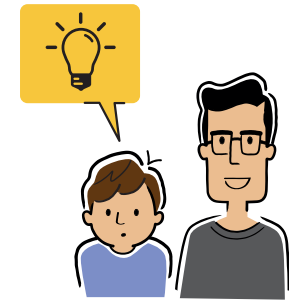
Alternate with outdoor or indoor activities



Keep a balance between virtual and physical presence in relationships



Screens are not the only way to deal with boredom: think of alternatives to do together



Explore stories using different media: books, videos, audios,...



Spend less passive time on the smartphone and more active time with your loved ones



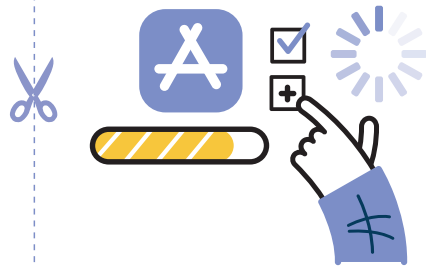
Take an interest in your children's digital practices



Discuss about whom your children play or communicate with online



Make sure your children ask permission to install new applications



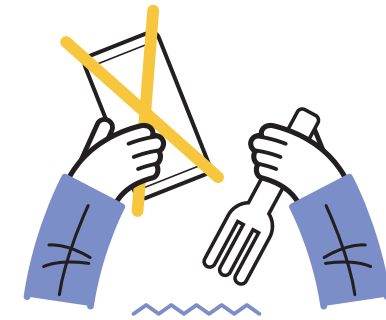
Don't just say NO, but explain and choose rules together



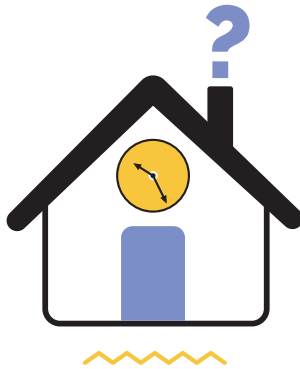
If there are problems discuss and find solutions together



Avoid screens at mealtimes to encourage dialogue



Agree on places and times for media use



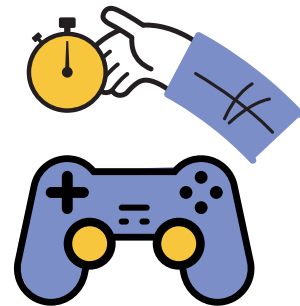
Screens should be turned off in the evening and at least overnight



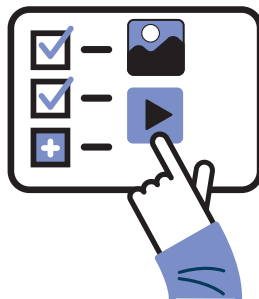
Set clear rules for media use time depending on the activity



Inform your children how much time is available before starting any activity



Help children to choose appropriate contents



Select contents according to the children's age, respect recommendations



Block the access to violent content



Offer suitable content from platforms dedicated to children



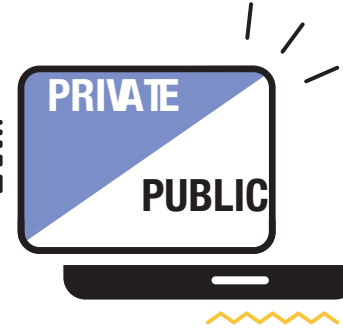
Children under the age of 3 should not use media alone



Before posting online, think about who can see it



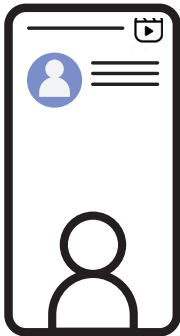
Be careful where and of whom you choose to post photos/videos



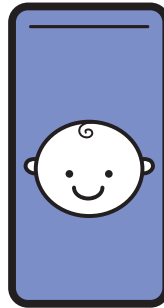
Teach to ask permission to whom you film or take pictures of



Make sure children know and use their rights



Be a role model and think before you publish images with your children in it



Make your children aware of risks : fake friends, scams, inappropriate websites, ...



Discuss with your children and avoid judging in case of misuses



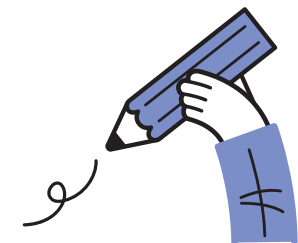
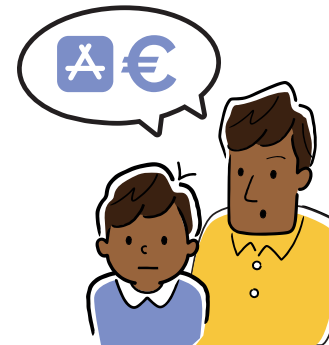
Use platforms for children



Stay available



Discuss the value of things and be aware of in-app purchases



Poster of our family's guidelines

Stick the guidelines you have chosen together on this poster. Keep this page within sight of all family members (on the fridge for example) and everyone will be able to use the media in a more relaxed and caring way. If conflicts arise, come and read all our tips again and discuss them together. Communication is the key!





A production by Média Animation in collaboration



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.