

Take Control

Establishing

Digital Boundaries for Your Family



About Me

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Shape of the Day

- Discussion around strategies for establishing healthy digital boundaries for your family
- Settings for safety - devices as well as apps
- Afternoon - Hands on Q and A

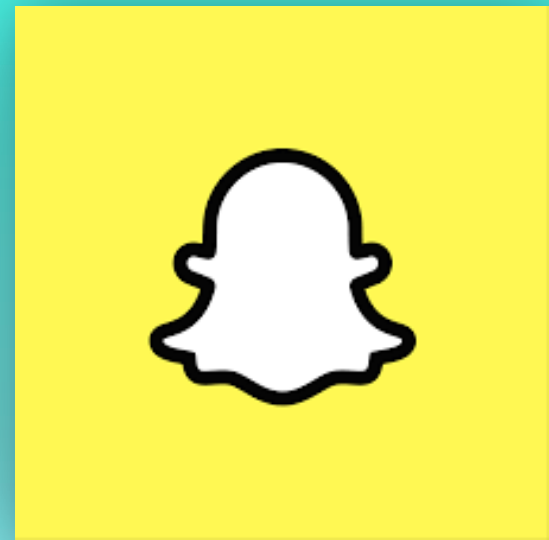


Learning Targets for Today

- What is the appropriate access to digital tools and services for my kids?
- What are some strategies I can use for engaging with my kids on their digital use?
- How can I foster a healthy dialogue with my kids around their use of digital services?
- Where can I access resources to equip me to create and maintain healthy boundaries around using digital tools and services for my family?



What Are They Using?



According to recent research, the social media platforms most commonly used by kids today are YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, and Snapchat.

YouTube is the most dominant, followed by TikTok, then Instagram and Snapchat.



What Are They Using?



Roblox:: An online gaming platform with user-created games where kids can interact with each other

Discord:: A messaging platform popular for gaming communities, allowing text, voice, and video chat

BeReal: A newer platform gaining traction where users are prompted to post a simultaneous photo at a random time each day



Teaching Digital Etiquette & Safety

- **Think Before Posting:** Remind kids that screenshots last forever.
- **No Personal Info:** Avoid sharing full names, addresses, or schools.
- **Recognize Cyberbullying:** Teach kids to block/report inappropriate behavior.
- **Stranger Awareness:** Never engage with unknown users.



Encourage Healthy Usage

Pediatric Research Study - June 2024

Results

Parent screen use, family mealtime screen use, and bedroom screen use were associated with greater adolescent screen time and problematic social media, video game, and mobile phone use. Parental use of screens to control behavior (e.g., as a reward or punishment) was associated with higher screen time and greater problematic video game use. Parental monitoring of screens was associated with lower screen time and less problematic social media and mobile phone use. Parental limit setting of screens was associated with lower screen time and less problematic social media, video game, and mobile phone use.

<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41390-024-03243-y>



Strategies for Healthy Social Media Use

- **Setting Time Limits:** Using app timers or built-in digital wellness tools.
- **Balancing Online & Offline Life:** Promoting other activities like reading, sports, or hobbies.
- **Modelling Good Behaviour:** Demonstrating healthy social media habits yourself.

<https://www.brightcanary.io/screen-time-parents-model-parent-pixels/>



Digital Parenting News

Want your child to cut back on their screen time? Check yourself first

If it seems like your child is glued to their screens 24/7, they might be learning from you. [New research](#) published in *Pediatric Research* found that parental screen use is highly associated with higher adolescent screen time and problematic social media or video game use.

This is tied to “parental modeling,” where kids learn behaviors from their parents. If they see you watching screens during meals or using your phone in bed, they don’t learn to set boundaries around device use. This is problematic because screen use during meals and at bedtime is linked to higher overall screen time and addictive behaviors, like struggling to reduce social media use and dropping everything to respond to a notification on their phone.

<https://www.brightcanary.io/screen-time-parents-model-parent-pixels/>



What parents can do: First, recognize that screens aren’t inherently bad — but kids need to learn healthy device use. Here are some recommendations:

🛑 **Set screen time limits and stick to them.** The study found that parental monitoring and limiting adolescent screen time were linked to less problematic screen use. Tools like Apple Screen Time, Google Family Link, and [apps like Unplug](#) can help.

📵 **Enforce screen-free zones at home.** Start with no phones at the dinner table and no phones in the bedroom at night. Explain why these changes matter, such as improving sleep by avoiding blue light.

💬 **Talk about device use.** If you struggle to avoid certain apps, be honest with your child. This can spark a conversation, as they might be dealing with similar issues, allowing you to brainstorm solutions together.

Keep Communication Open

- **Ask About Their Experience:** Show interest without judgment.
- **Check In Regularly:** Monitor activity without being intrusive.
- **Create a Family Social Media Agreement:** Establish rules and expectations together.



Setting Up Safety Features

- **Privacy Settings:** Ensure accounts are set to private.
- **Restricted Mode:** Helps filter inappropriate content
- **Friend Approval:** Teach kids to only add people they know.
- **Turn Off Location Sharing:** Disable Snap Maps and location settings on Instagram and Facebook for added privacy.
- **Age appropriate Parental Supervision**



What About Very Young Kids?

- According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, young children, especially those **under 18 months old, should ideally have minimal to no screen time**, except for video chatting with family, and for children between 2 and 5 years old, screen time should be limited to a **maximum of one hour** per day with high-quality programming.



What About Very Young Kids?

- **Developmental concerns:**

Excessive screen time in young children can potentially hinder their development in areas like language acquisition, social skills, and cognitive abilities due to reduced interaction with the physical world.



What About Very Young Kids?

- **Potential negative effects:**

Excessive screen time can lead to issues like sleep disturbances, behavioral problems, attention difficulties, and potential delays in motor skills development.

- **Active engagement encouraged:**

When using screens, encourage interactive play where children are actively participating with the content rather than passively watching.



7 to 9 Year Olds

- beginning to understand how their online actions affect others
- Digital tools can be a fun way to learn and play
- Start with having simple family guidelines, boundaries, and expectations



7 to 9 Year Olds

Family Strategies

- There's no "right" age for a first device, so focus on your family's needs. If you need to stay connected, consider starting with a basic phone that **only allows calls and texts.**
- Start with **shared family devices** to build trust and practice digital habits together.



7 to 9 Year Olds

Family Strategies

Match your choice of device to your budget and comfort level. This might look like having your child share a family tablet, use a basic phone for safety, try a smartwatch for simple check-ins, or learn how to use a family computer. Consider distractions and what your child can manage before committing.



7 to 9 Year Olds

Family Strategies

Create clear device guidelines that work for your schedule. These guidelines might be different for weekdays vs. weekends, or for homework vs. free time.



7 to 9 Year Olds

Digital Safety Basics

Challenges

- ◆ Sharing personal information without thinking
- ◆ Clicking on pop-ups or ads
- ◆ Wanting to chat with online gaming friends
- ◆ Password sharing with friends



Tweens

10 - 12 Years Old

- Big transitions
- More independent use of tech
- they still need your guidance to understand privacy, age restrictions, and responsible online behaviour.
- clear guidelines and open conversations will help your child build healthy digital habits that last.



Tweens

10 - 12 Years Old

- Families approach these transitions differently—some use parental controls, while others focus on building trust through open conversations.
- The key is finding a balance that works for your family and helps your child develop healthy digital habits that will stick.



Tweens

10 - 12 Years Old

- Create clear device agreements before getting new technology
- Practice responsibility with existing devices before adding new ones
- Learn to manage notifications and distractions



Tweens

Social Communication

- Work together on **safety settings**, like setting up basic protections (consider limiting contacts or blocking unknown numbers). But focus on helping them **make good choices themselves**.
- Create basic boundaries together (like no phones at dinner or bedtime)
- Show them how to handle tricky situations like group chat drama or mean messages



Tweens

Digital Safety & Privacy

- Sharing personal information without thinking through the consequences
- Downloading apps and creating accounts without permission
- Encountering inappropriate content on apps, YouTube, games, and possibly in chats
- Dealing with spam, scams, and questionable friend requests
- Sharing passwords with friends as a sign of trust
- Making unexpected in-game and in-app purchases



Tweens

Family Strategies

- Create clear safety rules that **evolve** as they show readiness
- Practice spotting risky situations together, using real examples
- Help them understand how their digital choices can have lasting effects
- Set up **privacy settings** together on their favourite platforms
- Keep payment information secure and discuss digital spending
- **Stay open** to conversations about their online concerns



Teens

13 - 15 Year Olds

They aren't just playing games or watching videos anymore—they're building friendships, expressing themselves, and figuring out who they are, all while managing the emotional ups and downs of being a teenager.



Teens

What to Expect:

- Using multiple platforms (like YouTube, TikTok, Instagram & Snapchat) as their main way to connect with friends and interests
- Building creative skills by making videos, using AI tools, and experimenting with digital art
- Creating different personas across apps (sharing different things on different platforms)
- Finding supportive communities around their interests and identities
- Feeling pressure to maintain their social media image
- Exploring deeper social connections through digital spaces
- **Learning to manage their digital footprint**



Teens

Family Strategies:

- Create an ongoing, open dialogue about social media by sharing your own experiences and asking non-judgmental questions about their digital life
- Have regular, casual conversations about social media pressures and authentic self-expression, rather than overbearing lectures
- Maintain balance by staying involved in their offline activities while respecting that online connections are meaningful to them
- Explore privacy settings together and discuss how platforms use algorithms to keep users engaged
- Build trust by showing that you understand their need for independence while staying available to help navigate digital challenges



Teens

Family Strategies:

- Have real conversations about the influencers they follow—watch some content together, ask what appeals to them, and explore how sponsored posts and advertising work in their favorite content
- Set aside time to game or watch streams together to better understand their interests and create natural opportunities to discuss more mature gaming content
- Find ways to encourage their content creation that feel safe. You could start with family-only sharing, private accounts to connect only with friends, or creative tools that don't involve posting publicly.



Teens

Family Strategies:

- Watch popular challenges or trends together and talk through potential risks. Discuss what makes something worth trying versus when to skip viral content.
- Help them develop content awareness by pointing out specific examples of manipulated images, clickbait, or misleading information they encounter
- Build their confidence in creating rather than just consuming: help them explore editing tools, learn new skills, and find positive communities around their interests



Teens

Mental Health & Well-Being

What to Watch For:

- Phone dependency affecting sleep and daily life (like family time or schoolwork)
- Mood swings tied to social media, like feeling down after scrolling or anxious about missing out
- Constantly comparing themselves to (often filtered and edited) content from their friends and influencers
- Exposure to harmful and misinformed content around issues like eating disorders, self-harm, anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues
- Getting stressed when they can't check notifications or respond to messages right away
- Unhealthy beauty standards and body image pressures



Teens

Mental Health & Well-Being

What to Watch For:

- Contact from predators on social platforms
- Receiving messages about drugs or vapes, especially through Snapchat or Instagram DMs
- Being pressured to share personal photos or blackmailed about photos they've shared (sextortion)
- Experiencing more advanced forms of cyberbullying, like having private messages shared, being excluded from group chats, or having photos edited or otherwise manipulated
- Revealing too much personal information in bios, posts, or location tags. Girls in particular report location sharing as a feature that feels unsafe and contributes to negative experiences.



Teens

Mental Health & Well-Being

- Create distraction-free homework zones while keeping reasonable ways to check important messages or use devices to submit homework, if needed
- Help them understand how social media metrics work and why they shouldn't use those numbers to define their own worth
- Show them how to spot AI-generated content and understand both its uses and risks
- Model balanced behaviour yourself. Put your own phone away during family time or in phone-free zones, and talk about your own challenges with digital balance.



Teens

Content Choices & Exposure

- Searching for or encountering adult content, like pornography, out of natural curiosity
- Following influencers who promote extreme fitness, dieting, or unrealistic beauty standards
- Boys consuming content that reinforces toxic masculinity; girls seeing content that emphasizes looks and harmful beauty standards



Teens

Content Choices & Exposure

Family Strategies:

- Have honest talks about pornography and adult content, whether they've sought it out or come across it unintentionally. Reassure them they're not in trouble, and explain why such content often portrays unrealistic and harmful ideas about sex, relationships, and consent
- Look at influencer content together and break down how posts are staged, edited, or sponsored



Teens

Content Choices & Exposure

Family Strategies:

- Show them how certain content (like extreme dieting or toxic masculinity) can be harmful, using specific examples from their feeds or your own feeds. Talk about and ask questions about why this content is interesting to them.
- Help them understand why certain games have mature ratings, focusing on understanding why this content is for mature audiences rather than just setting rules



Teens

Content Choices & Exposure

Family Strategies:

- Help them find reliable sources for topics they're interested in, especially around health and relationships



Caution

Educate Yourself of the Potential Dangers



@OURRESCUE | OURRESCUE.ORG

OUR RESCUE

**Start
Talking:**

A Guide to Keeping Children Safe Online



<https://bit.ly/3Fc4l0b>



Caution

Educate Yourself of the Potential Dangers

The Issue

- > **1 in 3 children** are first exposed to social media at age 5 or younger.
- > **1 in 3 children** can now expect to have an unwelcome sexual experience online before they turn 18.
- > The rate of online harm peaks when kids start using social media **at ages 11-12.**
- > The majority of children (87%) were first exposed to social media **before they were 13.**
- > 43% of kids exposed to inappropriate sexual content online **were under 13.**
- > Kids with disabilities or special needs and LGBTQ+ kids are **2-4x more likely** to send explicit images of themselves than their peers.



Digital Footprint

Why is managing your Digital Footprint important?

- The internet remembers everything!
- Your digital footprint can impact your future.
- Be intentional about what you post and how you engage online.



Digital Footprint

Think Before You Post

- Ask: "Would I be okay if my grandma, teacher, or future boss saw this?"
- Avoid posting anything controversial or that could be misinterpreted.
- Your online words and actions matter.



Digital Footprint

Use Privacy Settings Wisely

- Lock down social media accounts.
- Be selective about who sees what.
- Regularly review and update privacy settings.



Digital Footprint

Post Positively & Authentically

- Share achievements, hobbies, and volunteer work.
- Avoid negativity, bullying, or online drama.
- Be yourself, but in a way that reflects your best self.



Digital Footprint

Google Yourself

- Search your name to see what's out there.
- If you find something negative, try to remove or push it down with positive content.
- Control your narrative.



Digital Footprint

Build a Personal Brand

- Create a LinkedIn, personal blog, or portfolio.
- Showcase interests, talents, and achievements.
- Use a professional email address for school and job applications.



Digital Footprint

Fact-Check & Be a Good Digital Citizen

- Don't spread misinformation—double-check sources.
- Be respectful in online discussions.
- Engage in meaningful, constructive conversations.



Digital Footprint

Clean Up Old Posts

- Delete anything embarrassing or outdated.
- Deactivate unused accounts.
- Keep your online presence fresh and relevant.



Digital Footprint

Be Cautious with Tags & Mentions

- Approve posts you're tagged in before they go public.
- Don't let others define your online image.
- Stay aware of what others post about you.



Digital Footprint

Contribute to Online Communities

- Write thoughtful reviews and support positive causes.
- Join groups that align with your interests or career goals.
- Build a reputation as a positive and engaged online user.



Digital Footprint

"If it wouldn't look good on a college or job application, don't post it."



Take control of SnapChat

Safety Tips

1. Only allow friends and family to contact your child
2. Carefully choose a username
3. Sign up with your child's real age
4. Check location sharing
5. Use in-app reporting
6. Think before sending
7. Report offensive content



More Resources

<https://parents.snapchat.com/parental-controls>

<https://www.bark.us/tech-guide/app-management-snapchat/>



Take control of SnapChat

Family Centre

1. Add your child as a friend
2. Open Family Centre
3. Go through the setup process
4. Toggle Restrict Sensitive Content on

Privacy settings

1. Tap your child's profile icon in the top left
2. Tap the gear icon in the top right
3. Scroll down to Privacy Controls
4. Choose the settings you want to change



Take control of SnapChat

Privacy settings

1. Tap your child's profile icon in the top left
2. Tap the gear icon in the top right
3. Scroll down to Privacy Controls
4. Choose the settings you want to change



Take control of
SnapChat



SNAPCHAT 
FAMILY CENTER

Take control of Instagram

Parent Controls can help you

1. Set time limits
2. Schedule breaks
3. Approve or deny requests to change settings
4. See who their child is following and messaging
5. Adjust privacy settings
6. Adjust sensitive content settings
7. Control who can message their child
8. Understand when their teen blocks or shares they've reported someone
9. Be notified when their teen changes their settings



Take control of Instagram

Setting Up Parent Controls

1. Ensure you and your child have the latest version of the Instagram app
2. Send an invite for supervision
3. Have your child accept the invite
4. Follow the on-screen instructions to view or change your child's settings

A Parent Guides to Instagram



<https://www.brightcanary.io/parents-guide-to-instagram/>



<https://www.bark.us/tech-guide/app-management-instagram/>



Take control of Instagram



Instagram
Teen
Accounts

Take control of TikTok

Age restrictions

- TikTok requires its users to be at least 13 years old. Despite users having to be aged 13 and up the age ratings for TikTok are, a little confusingly, 12+ on Apple's App Store and "Parental Guidance Recommended" on the Google Play Store..
- Users must be age 16+ to use direct messaging and livestreaming features.



You can read more about their [age-appropriate policy](#) here.

Take control of TikTok

Screen time

- Daily screen time is a screen time management setting that allows you to manage your usage on TikTok. It lets you set a daily screen time limit so that you get notified when you reach that time on TikTok. You can turn this setting on and off at any time. You can also view your screen time summary in your activity centre.



See TikTok [screen time recommendations here](#).

Take control of TikTok

Parental controls and safety

- ‘Family Pairing’. These settings allow parents to control elements of their child’s TikTok account if their child is under 16.
- Parental controls don’t eliminate risk, they can be a good first step. In conjunction with their ‘Family Pairing’ settings, TikTok has also included tips from teenagers.



Take control of TikTok

Setting up Family Pairing

- In the TikTok app, tap Profile at the bottom.
- Tap the Menu ≡ button at the top, then select Settings and privacy.
- Tap Family Pairing.
- Tap Continue.
- Tap Parent or Teen, then tap Next.
- Follow the steps to link the accounts.



[More information on setting up Family Pairing](#)

Take control of TikTok



Setting up Parental Control

Take control of YouTube

Utilize YouTube Kids

Designed specifically for children, the YouTube Kids app offers a contained environment with family-friendly content. It provides robust parental controls, allowing you to customize your child's viewing experience.

It's not perfect, so monitoring it is still a good idea.



Take control of YouTube

Set Up Supervised Accounts

For children ready to explore the broader YouTube platform, consider creating a supervised account. This feature enables you to manage content settings that align with your child's maturity level and monitor their activity. Learn more about setting up supervised experiences on YouTube [here](#).



Take control of YouTube



Changing Content Settings

Social Media Safety Tips

1. Guard Your Personal Info

Think twice before sharing details like your home address, phone number, or vacation plans. Oversharing can make you a target for identity theft or unwanted attention.

Remember, once it's out there, it's tough to reel it back in.

2. Tighten Up Privacy Settings

Dive into your account settings and adjust who can see your posts, personal information, and friend list. Regularly review these settings, as platforms often update their policies. Keeping your profile on lockdown helps keep nosy lurkers at bay.

Social Media Safety Tips

3. Craft Strong, Unique Passwords

Use a mix of uppercase and lowercase letters, numbers, and special characters. Avoid using easily guessable info like birthdays or pet names.

And no, “password123” doesn’t cut it. Consider using a reputable password manager to keep track of them all.

4. Enable Two-Factor Authentication (2FA)

Adding an extra layer of security makes it harder for someone to hijack your account. It’s like a double lock on your digital door.

Social Media Safety Tips

5. Be Wary of Unknown Links and Messages

Phishing scams are rampant. If you receive a suspicious message or link, even from a friend, verify its legitimacy before clicking. When in doubt, throw it out.

6. Limit Location Sharing

Sharing your real-time location can be risky. Turn off geotagging features and avoid posting your whereabouts, especially if you're alone or in a private space. Your future self will thank you.

Social Media Safety Tips

7. Think Before You Post

Consider how your posts might be perceived and who might see them. Once something is online, it's challenging to erase it completely. Aim to share content that won't come back to haunt you.

8. Educate Yourself on Platform Policies

Stay informed about the terms of service and privacy policies of the platforms you use. Knowing the rules helps you navigate the social media seas more safely.

Use a Password Manager

Never make up your own password. They are too easy to crack.

1Password: Best overall password manager in 2025 with unbeatable security and tons of extra features.

Dashlane: Excellent password manager with standout extras like dark web monitoring and a fast VPN.

RoboForm: Affordable password manager with good security and powerful form-filling capabilities.

Your Browser's own password manager: Problem is you may use more than one browser and multiple devices.

Use a Password Generator



passwordsgenerator.net



bitwarden.com



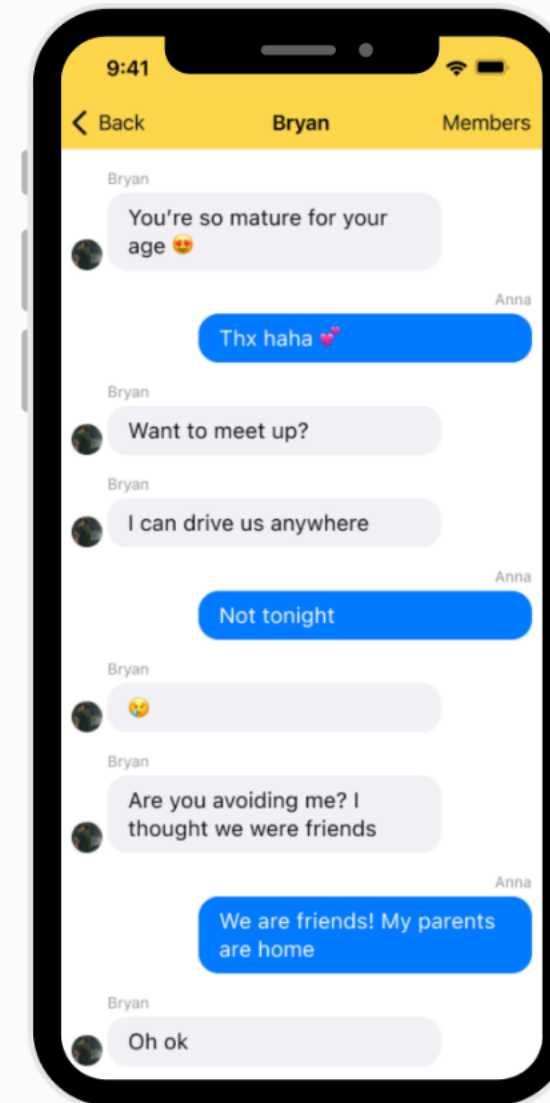
www.lastpass.com

Monitoring Services

BrightCanary 

Get alerts when your child encounters concerning content

- Remotely monitors text messages and DMs
- Scans for adult images and drug content
- Reports on your child's searches and views
- Alerts for content, including violence and self harm
- Customizable for your family's needs
- Gives you insights into your child's well-being



<https://www.brightcanary.io/>



Protecting Your Family's Digital Space

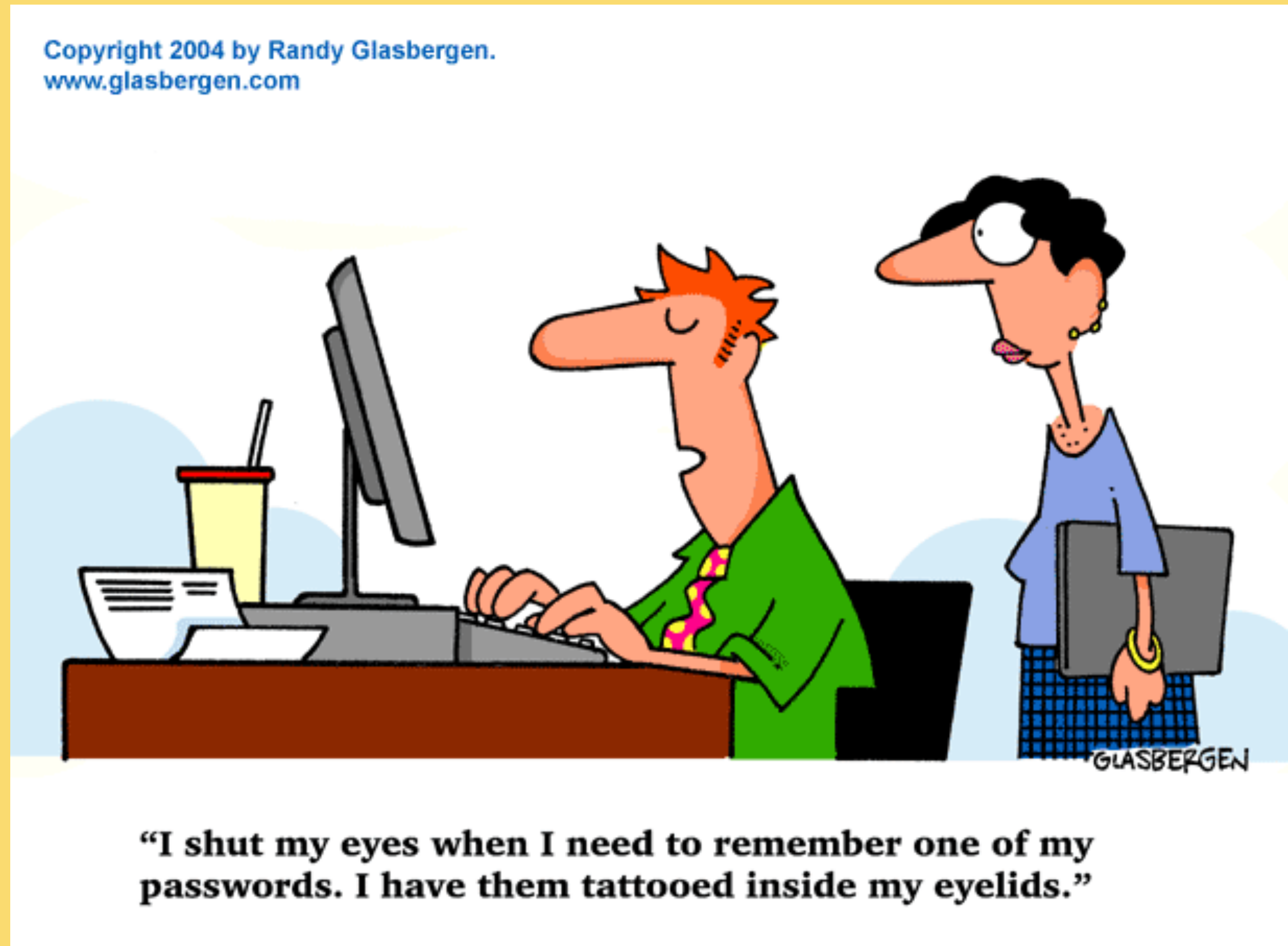
Secure Your WiFi Network

- ✦ Change Default Login Credentials
- ✦ Use Strong Encryption
- ✦ Turn Off WPS (WiFi Protected Setup)
- ✦ Keep Your Router Firmware Updated
- ✦ Disable Remote Management
- ✦ Create a Guest Network

Control Access to Harmful Content

- ✦ Use Router-Level Parental Controls
- ✦ Set Up a DNS Filter
- ✦ Enable SafeSearch & YouTube Restricted Mode
- ✦ Use Parental Control Apps
- ✦ Schedule Internet Downtime
- ✦ Monitor Your Network

Final Thoughts: By securing your home network and setting up content controls, you create a safer digital environment for your family. Regularly review security settings and adjust as needed.



Resource Links

1. Email Contact: gwtoews@gmail.com
2. [Snapchat Parent Controls](#)
3. [Instagram Parent Guide & Monitoring App: BrightCanary](#)
4. [TikTok Age-Appropriate Experience: TikTok Newsroom](#)
5. [TikTok Screen Time Settings](#)
6. [TikTok Family Pairing](#)
7. [Google Family Parental Controls](#)
8. Password Generator Tools:
 - [PasswordsGenerator.net](#)
 - [Bitwarden Password Generator](#)
 - [LastPass Password Generator](#)
9. [A Guide to Keeping Children Safe Online](#)

