

Stay Connected

Illinois Attorney General's Office



Stay Informed

High Tech Crimes Bureau



Parenting in the Digital Age

Attorney General Lisa Madigan's Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force (ICAC) is often asked for recommendations regarding the age for technology or app use.

What age should I provide a phone to my child?

Giving a child a phone is a personal decision which should take into consideration the child's age, maturity and need. If the phone is solely for pick-ups, check-ins or an emergency, a basic flip phone or watch with pre-programmed numbers may be sufficient. If you are considering a smartphone for your child, we recommend you review the device's settings since most are set for adult use, which means videos, language, searches allow for content that is rated for 17+. If you need help in reviewing settings, we recommend working with representatives from where you purchased the device or service plan. It is also important to [set up restrictions for downloading apps](#).



At what age should my child use a social media app?

The rules (or terms of service) for almost all social media is for ages 13 and older. We encourage families to consider this when establishing their own rules for social media use. Regardless of the age that you determine is appropriate for your child, we highly recommended that the profile age be set to under the age of 18 (minor) and a guardian help establish and monitor the account. Additionally, when reviewing an app for your child, consider the [emotional impact](#) it may have on them and their relationships with others.

Considering waiting for a smartphone?

You're not alone. If you decide to wait to give your child a smartphone, read more about the [Wait Until 8th](#) campaign. This organization empowers parents to support one another in their communities should they choose to wait to provide their child with a smartphone.



What to know about Apple's New iOS 12

Apple released their new operating system (iOS12) on September 17th with several new features. Of note, are tools that help monitor a child's online activity. Check out [Common Sense Media's](#) review of the new parental controls.

E-Info Hotline

The E-Info Hotline provides assistance to children, teens, parents and school personnel dealing with cyberbullying and internet safety issues. If you believe that you or someone you know needs assistance, please call **1-888-414-7678** to contact an Internet Safety Specialist in the Attorney General's Office..

Resources:



Pew Research Center  released the most **popular apps for teens.**

American Academy of Pediatrics  DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™ Consider a **Family Media Plan.**

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