



EDUCATEEMPOWERKIDS

LESSON: USING TECHNOLOGY FOR GOOD



BACKGROUND

Technology in our modern day has been both a blessing and a curse. It's offered opportunity for tremendous advancement while at the same time often stifling meaningful social connections by allowing us to ignore one another easily even while in the same room. It's important for all of us, particularly children to know where, when and how it is appropriate to use technology in positive ways.

PREPARATION

Review the objective of the lesson and understand why it is important to talk to your family about using technology for good. Read over the lesson first and try to anticipate what your family needs to address and what questions they might have. Think about your own interactions online and in text. Ask yourself if you are using technology for good the majority of the time.

OBJECTIVE

Our children should understand that they have the power to use technology positively and for useful purposes.

Technology and devices can be used to help us find out the world around us, keep in touch with family, publicly praise others and even find out about ancestors! Social Media can be used to uplift those around us and contact those we've lost touch with. If children are taught to use media wisely and for positive purposes, they can be an example to their peers. Parents should be setting a good example with their media habits.

OTHER POINTS TO MAKE

- Anyone who spends time on media should be prepared to take responsibility for what they post.
- We should take inventory of how much our online presence is positive and uplifting versus negative and unkind.
- How we represent ourselves online can affect us personally and professionally.
- Social media interactions can often lead to misunderstandings between friends. It's difficult to read tone or intent when it's not an in-person interaction. Serious conversations are best left to face-to-face talks.
- Social media sites often allow anonymity which can sometimes lead to individuals being much more negative than they would in person or even bullying.



QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY

- How often do you text? How often do you post on social media?
- How many of those texts/posts are complaining, gossiping or sharing shallow information?
- How many are complimentary, sharing useful information or uplifting other people?
- Do we spend time on our devices for fear of missing out (FOMO)?
- Do the adults in our home spend too much time on their devices?
- What are some positive ways to use media? (emailing a Senator, signing and circulating petitions, reaching out to inspiring people, helping a friend who is having a bad day, telling the world about a good deed, and thanking a teacher)

ACTIVITIES

- Challenge your family to make their media interactions more positive. Set a goal to post only positive things for one week. Encourage family members to share uplifting, informative or humorous examples.
- Figure out how much time your family spends on media. Do you feel like it is an appropriate amount of time? Come up with a plan to decide what media is okay and how much time family members should be spending on each.
- Find a game on one of your devices that encourages you to interact with the other people in the room.
- Find an app or trivia game you can play as a family.

FOLLOWING UP

- Meet together as a family to talk about the efforts you have made to have more positive media interactions. What has been the response? How was it different from a typical post response in the past?
- Can you recognize the signs that you exhibit when spending too much time on screens? (Irritability, withdrawal, lack of attention, problems with impulse control)



GLOSSARY TERMS

Media: Includes advertising, television, magazines, social media and other images we are exposed to on a daily basis.

Social Media: Includes Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, Twitter, or any other photo and media sharing sites.

Devices: Phone, tablet, computer, gaming consoles or any other mechanism that allows one to interact with others via the internet.

FOMO- Fear of missing out: Worrying that others might be having fun or taking part in something one is missing. It drives those who have it to constantly check devices in an attempt to stay connected.