ISB Recommendations for Digital Wellbeing at Home

Guidelines to help families develop their own rules for responsible use of technology at home

At ISB, we guide students' use of digital devices during the school day for specific learning purposes. To support families in their decisions for technology use at home, we offer practical, research-informed recommendations to help them shape technology use at home positively, safely, and with balance.

🌙 Prioritise Sleep and Device-Free Zones

- **Establish a no-devices-in-bedrooms policy as your primary technology rule.** If you can only enforce one device guideline, *CHOOSE THIS ONE!*
- Charge all family devices overnight at a central charging space, such as the kitchen.
- Encourage **30 minutes of screen-free time** before bedtime.

💭 **Remember:** Adequate sleep is needed to ensure attention, emotional regulation, and academic success.

👨‍👩‍👧 Be a Positive Role Model for Digital Habits

- Model **responsible, mindful use of technology to your children -** your example shapes your children's behaviour.
- Demonstrate that **family time takes priority:**
  - Avoid phone interruptions during family time;
  - Silence notifications or move distracting apps off your home screen.
- Explain your phone use purpose to children (e.g., "looking up directions") to provide context
- Focus on developing responsible digital use through **guidance rather than restrictions**

💭 **Remember:** Every family's approach to technology will be unique to their values and needs.

📱 Ensure Phones and Social Media Readiness

- ➢ Assess your child's **individual maturity and responsibility**, rather than age.
  - ○ Does your child inform you where they are and what they're doing?
  - ○ Do they follow household rules responsibly?
  - ○ Can they care for their belongings independently?
- ➢ When introducing devices, **prioritise limited-capability options for children under 10** (basic or "dumb" phones, GPS watches, or tablets without data)
- ➢ Follow **minimum age requirements**: 13+ for most social media; Many apps (eg.Whatsapp & Tiktok) recommend parent or guardian reviewing terms of service for users under 18.

💭 **Remember:** Every child develops at their own pace. Focus on maturity rather than age.

🏡 Establish Family Technology Agreements

- ➢ **Involve children** in shaping the rule; they're more likely to follow what they help create.
- ➢ Designate **screen-free zones**, such as dining tables and bedrooms.
- ➢ Create a **Family Technology Agreement** to cover device use for homework, gaming, entertainment and communications, emphasizing responsibility, safety, and digital citizenship (see templates)
- ➢ Frame the agreement as a collaborative effort, rather than a list of restrictions.

💭 **Remember:** Setting shared expectations helps everyone feel involved and engaged.

🤖 Address Artificial Intelligence Safely

- ➢ Talk about AI with your child, focusing on your own experience; discuss what it can do, where it might go wrong, and how to use it ethically and responsibly for learning purposes.
- ➢ Remind your child that AI can sound confident even when it's wrong. Encourage them to double-check facts and use their own judgment.
- ➢ Help your child understand that anything shared with AI might be stored or reused. Remind them not to share private or identifying details.

💭 **Remember:** Explore AI together! Use it as a tool for creativity and learning, while talking about fairness, honesty, and respect for others.