



“Mummy, can I play
on your phone?”

10 TIPS FOR PARENTS OF CHILDREN
AGED 3 TO 6 YEARS

In co-operation with:



FRAUENHAUS-
KOORDINIERUNG e.V.



Information resources

www.klicksafe.eu/en/medienerziehung *

klicksafe provides information about popular apps and services that children and young people use. Parents can also find answers to questions as well as tips on media education.

www.elternguide.online

Elternguide [the parents' guide] aims to advise parents and support them with their children's media education.

www.internet-abc.de/eltern

In the parents' section of Internet ABC, parents can find lots of tips to help their children get started on the Internet.

www.medien-kindersicher.de

The portal provides information for parents about technical safety measures for their children's devices, services and apps.

www.schau-hin.info

On SCHAU HIN!, parents can find information about media education.

* The klicksafe website is also available in English: www.klicksafe.eu/en

Help and advice

www.nummergegenkummer.de

Nummer gegen Kummer e. V. offers anonymous and free telephone counselling for children, young people and parents. Children and young people can also contact the email counselling service at any time of day.

www.bke.de

The Federal Conference for Educational Counselling (bke) is the professional association for educational and family counselling in the Federal Republic of Germany.

Reporting centres

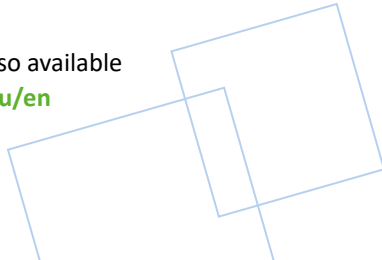
You can report any problematic content you find on the Internet here:

www.jugendschutz.net/en

jugendschutz.net is the joint federal and state competence centre for the protection of children and young people on the Internet.

www.internet-beschwerdestelle.de/en

This is a joint project between eco – Association of the Internet Industry and the Voluntary Self-Regulation Body for Multimedia Service Providers (FSM).



- 1 ▪ **Enjoy** time together
- 2 ▪ Be a **good role model**
- 3 ▪ Make your devices **childproof**
- 4 ▪ Choose a few **good apps**
- 5 ▪ Pay attention to **age ratings**
- 6 ▪ **Do not use** YouTube and the like as a **babysitter**
- 7 ▪ **Do not** post **photos of children** on the Internet
- 8 ▪ Pay attention to **warning signs**
- 9 ▪ Stay **calm** during **arguments**
- 10 ▪ Have **fun together**

10



**tips for
parents on
how to get
the best out
of digital
media**

Enjoy time together

Put your mobile phone to one side when playing with your child and give them your full attention. You'll miss these special moments soon enough.

What you can do:

- 1 | Schedule dedicated screen time for your work or leisure activities on your mobile phone, tablet or computer.
- 2 | Take conscious breaks from your mobile phone. Enjoy dinner together, for example, and let your children tell you about their day.
- 3 | It often helps if you inform family, friends or colleagues about your availability in advance: 'Today I'm only available after 8 pm!'





Children need attention

Parents staring at their smartphones while their children play in the sandpit – a sight you often see in German playgrounds.

Researchers in the USA have found out that children who feel ignored are more likely to be frustrated, hyperactive, sulk or react with tantrums.

Source: www.nature.com/articles/s41390-018-0052-6

Dad didn't see me score because he's always on his phone.

'At home, I often find it difficult to put my mobile phone away.

I'm self-employed, so my working hours aren't fixed. My 3-year-old no longer wanted to play with me because my mind was always elsewhere, on work. That's when I realised something had to change. Now I leave my mobile phone in another room!'

Anna,
language school lead and mother.

Be a good role model

Your child learns from you and copies what you do. Show your child how to deal with boredom without resorting to using a mobile phone or other digital media.

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What you can do:

- 1 | Boredom is important for a child's development and stimulates the imagination. Help your child learn to cope with boredom and don't immediately look for something to do.
- 2 | If the boredom really becomes unbearable, then make concrete suggestions!



'Mum, I'm bored!'

Ideas for indoors:

- Read a book together
- Play your child's favourite game
- Tell each other stories

Ideas for outdoors:

- Go to the forest and look at the animals
- Go to a water playground
- Go on a bike ride

Ideas for the restaurant:

- Create cut-outs out of napkins
- Build a house made of beer mats
- Fold napkins into shapes

Tip:

Perhaps screen time at home is important for you. For your work, for example. Children, however, don't distinguish between **work** and **leisure**. That's why they often don't understand why their parents spend so much time on their mobile phones or computers at home.

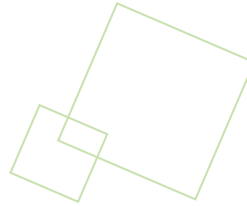
My parents always watch series when they're bored. I just want to play on the phone.

'I also need a break now and then! I like to scroll through Instagram and watch videos. I used to just let my daughter watch Peppa Pig – but there were always arguments about when enough was enough. Now we look at a book together. And that's also relaxing for me.'

Anouk, mother to a 3-year-old and an avid smartphone user.

Make your devices childproof

Make sure that all devices used by your child have age-appropriate settings. Even your own device.



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What you can do:

- 1 | The adverts in the apps on your mobile phone are tailored to you and not to your children. Please consider that these adverts may, therefore, be unsuitable for your children.
- 2 | Children might—even unintentionally—see your chats and other content or call people from your contacts from your mobile phone. Protect your chats with passwords. ('Chat Lock' on WhatsApp.)



Make your devices safe – get help here!

You can learn how to make your devices childproof with step-by-step instructions at:

→ [medien-kindersicher.de](https://www.medien-kindersicher.de)

Also available in plain language!

I'm not allowed to use everything,
but I can look at photos.

*'I hadn't really thought about the advertising thing.
Until my 5-year-old son suddenly got an advert for a horror game.
We were both shocked.
Now I can tell the difference better: My child is only allowed
to play games that work offline and without adverts.'*

Chris, father to a 5-year-old, loves Netflix series and horror films.



Choose a few good apps

A good app isn't just one that's fun, it's one that also takes your child's data protection and privacy into consideration. With paid apps, misuse of personal data and advertising is less likely.

Just watching is boring.
I'd rather do or play something.

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What you can do:

- 1 | Educational games can be a particularly good solution for 3- to 6-year-olds: digital media for learning, analogue games to pass the time.
- 2 | You can find good apps for children at:
→ tommi.kids/kindersoftwarepreis
→ studioimnetz.de/apps-kinder



Picture: Hal Gatewood/Unsplash

*'I used to think that good apps had to be free.
But now I've already bought a few apps.
They don't cost much.
And they show fewer adverts.'*

Leila, mother to a 4-year-old
who loves playing educational games.

'Mum, I'm bored!'

Play ideas for when your child is playing alone:

- Craft something out of toilet paper rolls
- Paint a mandala
- Dress up, for example, to imitate a favourite character from a game or book
- Listen to an audio book
- Rehearse a dance
- Make your favourite cuddly toy a 'cup of tea'

Good apps:

- promote development
- are ad-free
- can be used offline
- are safe: age-appropriate content, no unexpected costs, have time restrictions

Further information can be found at:

→ klicksafe.eu/en/apps

Pay attention to age ratings

Age ratings of games, films and series provide important guidance.

They protect your child from unsuitable content.

Age ratings do not, however, indicate whether or not the content is educationally valuable.

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What is that?!
I'm scared!

What you can do:

- 1 | If your child somehow comes into contact with content that scares them, they need your support. Take their fears seriously.
- 2 | Talk to your child about things that scare them.
- 3 | Discuss with your older children how they can protect their younger siblings from inappropriate content.
- 4 | Use the recommendations on
→ [spieleratgeber-nrw.de](https://www.spieleratgeber-nrw.de) for computer games and
→ [flimmo.de](https://www.flimmo.de) for films and series



Picture: CC-BY 4.0 Service National de la Jeunesse (BEE SECURE)

'It's hard! My daughter always wants to do what her big brother does. We've now agreed that there are certain games he's only allowed to play if she isn't present.'

Mehmet, father to an 11-year-old and a 5-year-old.

The **European organisation PEGI** sets age ratings for computer, console and online games:



This game is not suitable for children under the age of 3.



This game contains content that children may find frightening.

More information at: → pegi.info

In Germany, digital games are also given **USK ratings**.



Released without any age restriction in terms of content.

More information at: → usk.de/en

Films and series in Germany are given **FSK ratings**.



Released without any age restriction in terms of content.

More information at: → fsk.de

Some app stores have their own age ratings for games.

These age ratings may differ from the ratings listed here.

Do not use YouTube and the like as a babysitter

Never let your child watch series alone.
Even in harmless children's series, there can be moments
that can frighten or disturb your child.



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What you can do:

- 1 | If in moderation, there's nothing wrong with screen time.
But YouTube isn't suitable for children.
The YouTubeKids app offers more age-appropriate content.
Further information can be found at:
→ klicksafe.eu/en/youtube
- 2 | It's better to use ad-free programmes such as ZDFchen or WDR's Die Sendung mit dem Elefanten.
- 3 | Use child profiles on streaming services and protect your adult profile with a PIN.
- 4 | Try to find other solutions for every day, such as audio books.
These stimulate the imagination and leave room for play.



Picture: annca / Pixabay

Suddenly a scary clown appeared, even though I was looking at something completely different!

Screen time

Screen time for children aged 0–3 years:

- Preferably no screen media at all: picture books and listening games or songs instead

Screen time for children aged 3–6 years:

- Maximum 30 minutes per day, but not necessarily every day
- Do not leave children unsupervised
- Age-appropriate content depending on the child's interests: educational and game programmes and short videos
- Not directly before bedtime

Source: German Society for Paediatrics and Adolescent Medicine e.V.

'When I'm alone, it's often challenging.

Because I can't always keep an eye on my child.

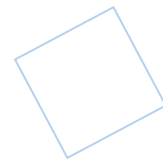
So I always found YouTube's autoplay quite handy.

Until I realised that it sometimes played videos that weren't age-appropriate.

We now prefer to use audio books.

My son can also play along.'

Kyra, mother to a 5-year-old.

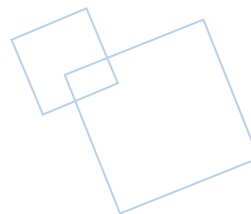


Do not post photos of children on the Internet

Use secure cloud services to share pictures of children privately with the family, for example.

If your child says 'no' to having their photo taken, listen to them.

And ask older children for their consent before sending pictures to other people.



What you can do:

- 1 | Most parents didn't have their own childhood photos uploaded online. So always ask yourself: Is that what I would have wanted as a child?
- 2 | How would you have felt when you were younger if photos of you as a child had been made publicly available on the Internet?
- 3 | Embarrassing photos or photos of (semi-)naked children must not be posted on the Internet. You never know who will view or share these photos!



Link tips

The #DenkenFragenPosten campaign from the Deutsches Kinderhilfswerk explains how to use children’s photos responsibly:

→ dkhw.de/kinderfotos-im-netz

Tips for materials:

→ klicksafe.eu/en/materialien/zu-nackt-fuers-internet

And now –10 years later– everyone is making fun of me.

Zu nackt fürs Internet?
Schritt für Schritt zu mehr Sicherheit im Umgang mit Kinderbildern und -videos im Netz.

TIPPS FÜR ELTERN

<p>1 Habe ich das Bild oder Video selbst gemacht? Falls nicht, habe ich die Urheberrechte abgefragt?</p> <p>Das Urheberrecht eines Bildes oder Videos liegt bei der Person, die es angefertigt hat. Deshalb muss diese Person um Erlaubnis gebittet werden, bevor ihre Fotos oder Videos verwendet werden.</p>	<p>2 Haben alle, die auf dem Bild oder im Video zu sehen sind, mir erlaubt, es zu nutzen?</p> <p>Bilder und Videos ohne die Einwilligung der abgebildeten Personen zu teilen, kann eine Straftat sein. Bei Aufnahmen von Kindern müssen sowohl die Kinder als auch ihre Erziehungsberechtigten gefragt werden.</p>	<p>3 Bin ich mir sicher, dass das Bild oder Video keine unangenehme oder peinliche Situation zeigt?</p> <p>Was „peinlich“ ist oder als „unangenehm“ empfunden wird, kann für jede Person unterschiedlich sein - auch Mütter und Väter!</p>
<p>4 Falls auf dem Bild oder im Video Minderjährige zu sehen sind - sind diese ausreichend bekleidet?</p> <p>Personen sind einem sozialen Kontext an Minderjährigen auch gemäß nach angemessenen oder angemessenen unbekleideten Aufnahmen im Netz.</p>	<p>5 Wäre es für mich in Ordnung, wenn wir ein Kinderbild oder -video von mir heute im Netz verfügbar wäre?</p> <p>Auch vermeintlich harmlose Aufnahmen können in der Zukunft noch einen Nachteil für die abgebildete Person bedeuten.</p>	

klicksafe

European Commission

‘When I take a family photo, I sometimes ignore my child when he says “no”. Because I know that he often changes his mind the next day and is disappointed when he isn’t in the photo. But I always ask. My son’s opinion is important to me.’

Luisa, mother to a 10-year-old.



Pay attention to warning signs

How much is too much online gaming or video watching for your child?

If you notice that your child is getting restless and tired or is overwhelmed by media consumption, then you need to do something!

Help your child listen to their feelings.



What you can do:

- 1 | Good apps and games are captivating. So it's normal for your child to find it difficult to stop using them. It isn't necessarily an addiction!
- 2 | Make sure your child gets regular exercise, sleeps well and can be happy without a screen.
- 3 | Digital games are often an easy way to escape from everyday life. Help your child find other relaxing hobbies.



Too much screen time? What you can do:

Ideas for at home:

- Play active games at home (reach for the stars, crawl round the flat like an alligator)
- Pretend to be animals and have a conversation: How would a duck talk to a bear?
- Do handicrafts
- Play dress up or pretend to be a favourite game character
- Play hide and seek
- Do puzzles, play cards or board games

When I really like a game, I don't even want to go to the loo!

'At the beginning, I just thought it was the usual reaction to playing a new game. But my child became really restless and irritable. I had to act and make a decision. Now she's only allowed to play once a week. And it works really well! Even if she didn't like it at first.'

Paula, mother to a 5-year-old.



Stay calm during arguments

Explain to your child why they are not allowed to see certain media content.

And why they aren't allowed to use all devices.

Your child must be able to understand why there are rules for media use.

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What you can do:

- 1 | Agree fixed rules with your child early enough so that there are no arguments in the family about usage times.
- 2 | Help your children to resolve disputes about media use together.
- 3 | Don't forget:
Children need rules for media use.
Sometimes you just have to be strict.



Picture: CC-BY 4.0 Service National de la Jeunesse (BEE SECURE)

That's so unfair!
Why can't I do that?

Are you at a loss?

Call the **Nummer gegen Kummer** parents' helpline:

0800 1110550 or visit the website
→ nummergegenkummer.de

Media vouchers can help to regulate media use in the family and avoid arguments about screen time:
→ klicksafe.eu/en/materialien/mediengutscheine

*'I'd had enough of these arguments!
There were always arguments about the mobile phone.
With me and also between the children themselves.
We have now established clear rules.
This also includes having fixed mobile phone times
and smartphone-free times, for example at mealtimes,
during joint activities or before bedtime.'*

Milan, father of three children,
works from home.

Have fun together

Don't forget:

Media use should be fun and shouldn't cause arguments in the family!

Explore the programme together with your child. Then you'll know exactly what your child is up to in the digital world.



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What you can do:

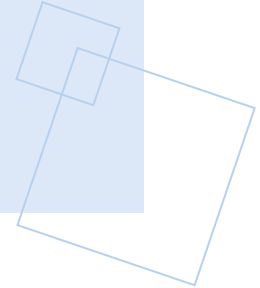
- 1 | Get involved in your children's world, create shared online experiences and talk about them.
- 2 | The earlier you introduce these shared times, the longer you can keep them. This also applies offline, when reading or doing handicrafts together.
- 3 | You can also arrange a regular timeslot for family media time together.



Shared screen time

Tips for joint activities:

- Dress up online with filters, emojis or stickers
- Try out an educational game
- Create a video together
- Draw on the tablet using your finger
- Compose a ringtone
- Take photos of each other
- Use useful tools such as stopwatches or maps in everyday life
- Go out and get to know and identify plants with an app



Playing together
was so much
fun!

'For me, the mobile phone is much more than just a phone. I like taking photos and getting ideas for my projects. My little one has already started doing this too. But we make sure that it doesn't become too much.'

Elisa, mother to a 5-year-old.



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Media Authority Rhineland-Palatinate,
www.medienanstalt-rlp.de



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