# 10 Tips for Safe Cell Phone/Smart Phone Use

**1. Get Educated and Prepared.** Talk to your kids about the dangers and consequences associated with inappropriate cell phone use. Discuss topics including sexting and texting while driving. Make sure you get caught up on the lingo of popular acronyms and initialisms. Ask your kids to save any abusive or problem messages to show an adult.

**2. Select Appropriate Phone Features.** If your child is under 10, they probably don't need a phone with unlimited social networking or email capabilities. Likewise, the actual phone itself doesn't need built-in features like a web browser or video messaging. For a young child, look for basic phones. Review all pre-programmed apps and phone capabilities beforehand.

**3. Use Parental Controls.** If your child's cell phone has access to the internet, find out if your service provider offers some sort of parental control feature to which you can subscribe.

**4. Limit Usage.** Designate time slots for talking — perhaps after homework and chores are completed, or before dinner. Don't let constant calls interrupt family time. It's easy for a chatty teen to cuddle up to a phone at bedtime, so check periodically.

**5. Consider Monitoring Services.** Perhaps your child is older, but you're still not comfortable with him or her texting and emailing unmonitored. SafetyWeb is an online resource that provides parents with comprehensive alerts and reports on their child's cell phone calls and text message activity. This allows you to keep track of when they are using the phone (during school hours or late at night), and who they are communicating with most frequently.

**6. Wait – Before Answering.** Instruct your child not to answer calls or text messages from numbers they don't recognize. If it is important, the caller will leave a message and then he can decide how to respond. Explain how to block calls from unwanted numbers.

**7. Pre-program numbers.** To help keep your kids safe, make sure their cell phones have all important phone numbers preprogrammed into it so they can always get a hold of someone if they're in trouble. Remember "ICE" (In case of emergency)!

**8. Stay Organized.** Always keep your child's cell phone charger in the same place. It's best to find a central location — like maybe the kitchen counter, or a table by the door. Mark the end of the monthly billing cycle on a calendar to remind her how long those dwindling minutes have to last.

**9. Practice Privacy.** Tell your teen to use caution when giving out a phone number. Make sure they don't publicize their number on the Internet or social sites like Facebook and Twitter.

**10. Be Careful of Download Overload.** Fun ringtones, games, and backgrounds – oh my! But, be careful. These features can come with potential bugs or hidden fees.

***Source: Kid Internet Safety Guru***

# *Some Great Apps for Education and Safety*

## Smart AppLock Pro

This app locks any application or service on the smartphone that you don't want your child to have access to. Using this, you can lock market, you-tube, and camera; pretty much anything that is on the phone. For example, you can use it to block settings that you do not want your kids to go in and enable WIFI anywhere. There are other app lockers if you don't like the interface of this product.

## PhoneSheriff

This not only monitors the texts on the smartphone, it also provides GPS tracking so you know where they are. You can also set timing controls, so that you decide which times of the day the phone can be used. This is great for homework time and bedtime.

## Evernote

A must-have for forgetful students, Evernote makes sure you'll remember upcoming exams, homework due dates, sports practices, and any other obligations you have in your busy life. With this app, students can create notes in text, audio and in image form to keep all your important information organized and accessible. You are able to make use of print services through the application as well enhancing your mobility. You can even take a photo of the classroom whiteboard and create a document that is both searchable and sharable, so you can pay full attention in class without scribbling notes the entire period.

## myHomework

It's not uncommon for middle and high students to have a homework assignment due in every class, every day, for a week straight. With myHomework, students can track classes, homework, tests, and assignments in one user-friendly tool with a simple interface. Assignments can be organized by due date and color-coded by priority. An organized calendar display and class schedule lets students get a good look at the big picture and plan accordingly.

## gFlash + Flashcards & Tests

For the average student, there's no such thing as too much studying. With the gFlash + Flashcards & Tests applications, you can squeeze in extra study sessions at any time—riding home on the bus or waiting for an afterschool sport or activity to begin. The app allows students to create, download, and alter flashcards on a wide variety of different subjects, so you can be fully prepared for your next big test.