

Starting A

Social  
Media

# CONVERSATION

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Support  
Resource For  
Adults

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Information



## **Don't ban or forbid if they tell you about a problem they're having online.**

Kids across the country are trying to solve their own problems online because they predict, often correctly, if they tell the adults in their lives they will either lose phone privileges, or be banned from using the platform.

Parents need to think of social media and devices like a swimming pool for our kids. Lots of fun, new skills to be learned, time to play with their friends, and no deep end until you're ready to swim in it. But at the same time, if your child is being repeatedly splashed and dunked, you don't respond by taking away the swimming pool. "That's it. Someone else is acting inappropriately so you can never swim again."

No. You respond by helping them with the problem, and then encouraging them to go back to having fun and building their skills and relationships with their friends. We need to respond in the same way with social media.



## **Don't ground them from their device unless they've done something incredibly serious.**

It's the parenting go-to. "That's it. No more phone!" But what many parents fail to realize is how extreme this punishment is, and how little it teaches kids about how to deal with their challenges. When we take away a device, we take away their connection to friends and family, their music, their entertainment, their search engines, their alarm clock, their safety and ability to communicate with us when they're away from us.

A kid in grade nine once told me, "My mom installed a bunch of tracking stuff in my phone, and she reminds me to take it with me when I leave the house and it makes me feel safe. And then she grounds me from my phone, and I have to leave the house without it and it scares me."

At the end of this document is a Charter of Rights and Freedoms for kids. Use this to set out choices and consequences, and you'll have a better path forward.



## Learn how they're using their device to navigate the world.

Don't learn from Google, or other parents. Learn from your kid! Many kids will use their device to help manage anxiety, often through simple games. Some kids will use them to manage the stresses of being in school - a classroom environment all day is tough for introverted, anxious, or shy kids! Teens might use their phone to find out who's going to be at a party, so they know if it's a place they want to be.



## Model good device etiquette yourself.

We hold our kids to a standard of etiquette and use that we don't seem to hold ourselves to. Of the over 140,000 kids I've spoken with, almost all have told us they have a parent who is always on their device. All of them say that their parent often doesn't hear what they're saying because they're involved with their phone. Their TikTok (which is their television, along with YouTube) screen time is the same as your Greys Anatomy binge or WWII documentary screen time. And please stop texting and driving. It scares your kids.



## Stand up for them.

When kids and their use of social media is brought up at the next family gathering, stick up for your kids. Make sure that they, and you, aren't on your device inappropriately. But if your kid needs a brain break, a barrier, a chance to chill, support them! And if the convo turns negative about "kids these days" talk about the cool things they've learned, and maybe taught you. Take pictures with them. Maybe encourage everyone to join in creating a TikTok.

This is a different world. Our kids DO have devices. They DO have social media. They ARE impacted by technology all around them. You may believe the way you grew up was better, but this is the way they're growing up. Our kids need us to stop listening to other adults about how they're using social media and start listening to them.

# WHO IS JO PHILLIPS

For me, it's all about kids. Hanging out with them, learning from them, helping them. I deliver the acclaimed program "Starting a Social Media Conversation", listening to kids talk about how they use social media and the challenges they face, and shifting in whatever direction the kids take me.



## Resume

- BA Psychology  
*University of Calgary*
- Certified Youth Resilience Coach  
*Youth Coaching Institute*
- Former Co-Founder/CEO  
*Jo(e) Social Media Inc*
- Former Founder/Executive Director  
*Journey Youth Creative*
- Founder  
*JoOutLoud*
- Executive Director  
*Rural Red Deer Restorative Justice*
- Parent of three



## Summary

I am uniquely qualified to do what I do. I have a BA Psychology & am a certified Youth Resilience Coach through Youth Coaching Institute, LLC . I've worked since 2020 with kids through digital media camps & clubs (led by the kids!) & since 2015 in schools listening to kids talk about their challenges and opportunities.

I co-founded & ran a social media agency for 11 years and am a legitimate expert in Facebook, X, LinkedIn, TikTok, Instagram, YouTube and Pinterest with a shout out to Snapchat.

I was a full time solo parent of 3 now grown kids.

I am an expert in the field of social media & kids, with experience from all sides of the conversation.



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Facebook, X, Instagram, Threads, Snapchat,  
TikTok, YouTube, Pinterest, LinkedIn

# MY KID'S CHARTER OF RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS

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## RIGHTS

Safe home, food, clothing, respect, security, connection with others

## FREEDOMS

Phone, Xbox, rides to school, brand name clothing, junk food, movies,  
friends over, Spotify premium, rides to friends houses,

## RESPONSIBILITIES

Clean room, responsible social media use, tells an adult when something is  
going wrong, checks in with mom, Snap Map Ghost Mode OFF for mom,  
speaks respectfully when disagreeing

## BENEFITS TO ALL

Clean house, less anxiety, more security, easier relationships



## HOW TO USE THIS TOOL

SIT DOWN WITH EACH KID IN YOUR FAMILY. EACH KID WILL HAVE A DIFFERENT CHARTER BASED ON WHO THEY ARE, AND HOW OLD THEY ARE. THE CHARTER SHOULD BE UPDATED EVERY YEAR.

Make a list of their rights. The things they are guaranteed, that will never be taken from them. These would include a safe home, food, water, connection with others, education, privacy.

Make a list of their freedoms. These are the things that aren't guaranteed. These would include favourite snacks, rides, subscriptions, spending money, video games, friends over, going to friends houses, after school activities, data, access to a vehicle and more.

Make a list of their responsibilities. These will be age and child specific. Depending on their age, it can include specific chores, specific behaviours, school related responsibilities, hygiene, etiquette and more. With regards to social media, include "must tell a trusted adult if something is going wrong".

Post the Charter where everyone can see it. When a responsibility isn't met, you can remove a freedom. Choice, consequence. Once a freedom is removed, talk together about a path toward earning that freedom back.