


Chapter 11

Digital Parenting: Strategies for Monitoring and Guiding Children's Online Behavior


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ABSTRACT

Parenting in the digital age includes online guidance and security. This chapter discusses digital parenting basics like setting boundaries, fostering open communication, and improving digital literacy. It highlights parents' capacity to combine oversight and autonomy to help kids develop ethical online behavior. The discussion also covers AI, VR, and the Metaverse, preparing families for the digital age. The chapter stresses schools and communities' joint involvement in digital education and their responsibilities for online safety and equity. Proactive digital parenting may ensure that children use technology appropriately, critically, and ethically while maintaining a good balance between online and offline activities.

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THE DIGITAL AGE AND PARENTING CHALLENGES

1.1. Understanding the Digital Environment: Opportunities and Risks

The digital era has revolutionized the ways in which children acquire knowledge, interact socially, and engage in entertainment. Contemporary children, in contrast to earlier generations, are digital natives—born into an environment where cell-phones, social media, and online gaming are fundamental components of everyday existence (Kincl & Štrach, 2021; Reid et al., 2023). Although these improvements offer several advantages, they also pose distinct obstacles for parents attempting to navigate their children's online interactions.

A key advantage of the digital landscape is the availability of boundless information. Educational platforms, interactive learning applications, and online courses enable youngsters to cultivate talents beyond conventional classroom settings. Technology enhances creativity via digital art, music production, and content development (Fauchart et al., 2022). Furthermore, the internet facilitates global connectedness, allowing children to cultivate relationships and share ideas with peers throughout the globe.

Nonetheless, in addition to these benefits, the digital realm presents numerous hazards for youngsters. A primary concern is cyberbullying, wherein adverse online interactions can adversely affect a child's emotional well-being (Li et al., 2024). In contrast to conventional bullying, cyberbullying can be incessant, manifesting continuously through social media, chat applications, and online gaming platforms. Parents must identify indicators of distress, like social retreat, worry, or abrupt behavioral changes.

A significant concern pertains to privacy and data security. Children frequently disclose personal information online without comprehending the ramifications. Social media networks and websites amass extensive user data, rendering youngsters susceptible to identity theft, online fraud, or exploitation (Chang et al. 2023). Instructing children on privacy settings, appropriate sharing, and the significance of robust passwords is essential in the contemporary digital environment.

Screen addiction is an escalating issue. Excessive screen usage can adversely affect a child's mental health, sleep patterns, and physical activity levels. The dopamine-driven characteristics of social media, video games, and streaming services can foster reliance, hindering children's participation in offline activities (Thiele, 2025). Formulating screen time regulations and promoting equilibrium between digital and tangible experiences are vital techniques for fostering good digital habits.

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