



# Tech and Privacy

**MY 9-YEAR-OLD** got a video camera for her birthday, and she's turned into one of the paparazzi: taking video of her brother throwing a tantrum, grabbing shots of people in the bathroom, etc. How do I set appropriate limits while encouraging her creativity?

—Karen V., Falls Church, VA

**AHHH, TECHNOLOGY AND TWEENS!** You may not love it, but you can't avoid it. You're correct (and wise) to set limits with the video camera, because as your daughter moves into the cell phone stage, she'll need a foundation for appropriate usage. Act now before the teen years when your influence over her choices fades.

Set up a family meeting and start positive: Discuss how powerful technology is and what opportunities it affords. Ask your children about the wonderfully exciting things they can do with their video camera (e.g., record plays, capture memories, etc.). Then explain that power also requires responsibility.

Talk about how privileges are earned and can be lost. Ask your children for their thoughts about appropriate and inappropriate uses of a video camera.

Guidelines to set: Individuals must know they are being videoed and agree to it; videos need parent permission to be uploaded or e-mailed; videos where some participants are unhappy, videos used to make fun of a third party, and videos with nudity or embarrassing moments are unacceptable. Make a list of family expectations (for everyone, not just your daughter), emphasizing that the rules also apply at friends' houses.

**AGGRESSIVE ACTION:** My kindergartner's teacher and another student's mom both recently told me that my son has been aggressive with other children. How should I address this with him?

—Sarah S., Lafayette, IN

**WHILE IT IS DIFFICULT** to hear that your child has hurt a classmate, your situation is common. Like all children, your son may be seeking power and attention and trying out various ways of achieving this. These strategies can help you start to redirect these negative impulses.

**Connect:** Ask questions. Invite him to talk about what he's thinking or feeling, without punishing or

reprimanding. He may be resistant at first, or may have no idea how he's feeling. That's OK. Helping him realize what he is experiencing is part of the process.

**Focus on strengths:**

Your son is able to use words to communicate. Point out—often!—when he's doing so positively.

**Identify the negative:**

Help your son notice when his words are hurting, but don't use this time to punish. Instead, help him meet his needs for power or attention in more constructive ways. For example, "Wow, those words made me feel sad. I see you want to play longer, but those words won't help you get what you want. Let me help you tell me you're angry without hurting my feelings and find a better way to ask for more playtime."

**Build bridges:** Help your son draw a picture or write a note to the boy he hurt, or have the boys get together with parental supervision, and then apply these techniques during the playdate (e.g., noticing when he's being kind, helping him use his words more respectfully, etc.). **P&C**

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Do you have a question for Michelle? E-mail it to AskPC@scholastic.com.