THE FAMILY PHONE PLAN

Pick your family's phone age, know what to say, and hold the line when "everyone has one."

In one 20-minute sitting, you'll leave with a written phone rule, word-for-word scripts, and a 7-day plan to start.

YOUR FAMILY RULE | SCRIPTS | 7-DAY PLAN

THE PROBLEM IN 60 SECONDS

~10 The average kid gets a smartphone at about 10. (Wait Until 8th)

That's what's normal. That doesn't make it smart.
Look at how fast it moves:

42% 42% of 10-year-olds already have their own smartphone. (Common Sense Media)

71% 71% of 12-year-olds do. (Common Sense Media)

68% 68% of teens keep a device in bed or within reach at night, and 29% sleep with it in the bed. (Common Sense Media)

A smartphone isn't a calculator with a camera. It's the whole internet in a pocket. Many of the apps on it use features like infinite scroll and variable rewards, which are designed to keep people watching. (Center for Humane Technology)

That's a lot to hand a 10-year-old and expect them to manage alone.

> If you haven't handed over a phone yet, you're not behind. You're making a decision that most families slide into without ever really deciding. The next page is where you make that decision on purpose.

PICK YOUR FAMILY'S RULE

A Wait Until 8th (our recommended default)

No smartphone until your child finishes 8th grade, around age 14.

- More than 150,000 parents have signed the Wait Until 8th pledge. (Wait Until 8th)
- The pledge activates once 10 families from the same grade and school sign, so your child isn't the only one waiting. (Wait Until 8th)
- A basic phone or watch for calls and texts still counts. You're delaying the smartphone, not all contact.

Why that timing? It covers elementary and middle school, which is when the "everyone has one" pressure is loudest. The American Academy of Pediatrics also suggests waiting until at least 13 before social media accounts, and says readiness depends on the child. (AAP)

B Your own age, with reasons

If a different age fits your family, write it down along with why. A rule you can explain holds up better than a rule you're making up in the car.

OUR FAMILY'S SMARTPHONE AGE: _____

WHY THIS AGE: _____

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

WHAT WOULD MAKE US REVISIT IT EARLY (BE SPECIFIC): _____

SIGNED: _____

THREE CONVERSATIONS (WORD-FOR-WORD)

1 With your kid

> "We've decided you'll get a smartphone after you finish 8th grade. It's not because we don't trust you. Phones are built to be really hard to put down, even for adults, and we want you to have these years without that fight. You'll still be able to reach us and your friends."

WHEN THEY SAY "EVERYONE HAS ONE":

> "I get it, and it feels unfair. Not everyone has one, though. More than 150,000 families are waiting too. Let's find the ones at your school."

WHEN THEY SAY "I'LL BE LEFT OUT":

> "Tell me exactly what you're missing, and we'll solve that specific thing, like group plans, a watch for texting, or rides. We can fix being left out without handing you the whole internet."

2 With your co-parent or grandparents

> "We're waiting on a smartphone until after 8th grade, and it really helps if we all say the same thing. If they ask you, please say 'That's your parents' decision, and I agree with it.' Please don't give them an old phone or a tablet with the internet on it without checking with us."

3 With another parent at school

> "We're planning to wait on smartphones until after 8th grade. It's a lot easier when a few families do it together. Would you be open to talking about it? There's a pledge that only activates once 10 families in the same grade sign up."

FIVE HOUSE RULES BEFORE ANY DEVICE

Set these before any device comes into the house, including tablets, laptops, and game systems. It's much easier to start with rules than to take something back later.

1 **Devices charge outside bedrooms.** Pick one charging spot in a shared room, like the kitchen or hallway. This applies to every screen, including school laptops.

2 **Screens go to sleep before your kid does.** Choose a time when devices go to the charging spot each night. Write it here: _____

3 **New apps need a parent's yes.** Nothing gets downloaded without a quick conversation about what it is, who's on it, and why they want it.

4 **Meals and car rides are screen-free by default.** Those are the moments when conversations actually happen.

5 **Parents follow the charging rule too.** Kids notice what we do far more than what we tell them.

OUR EXTRA RULE: _____

BRIDGES, NOT BANS

Waiting on a smartphone doesn't mean your child can't be reached. These options let kids call and text without handing over the whole internet.

01

Kid smartwatch

Calls, texts, and location, with no app store and no social feeds. It works well for walking home, practices, and after-school logistics.

02

Basic phone ("flip" or talk-and-text phone)

Calls and texts only, with no browser and no feeds. A good fit for middle schoolers who need more independence.

03

Shared family phone

One phone that stays in the kitchen and gets borrowed for a specific trip or event, then comes back to the charging spot.

How to choose: Pick the least powerful device that solves the actual problem. If the problem is "I need to call you after practice," a watch or basic phone solves it.

Each of these is a step toward a smartphone, not a punishment. You're building trust in stages.

YOUR 7-DAY START PLAN

One small action each day. You'll be set up by next week.

☐	**DAY 1**	Fill out your family rule on Page 3 and sign it with your co-parent.
☐	**DAY 2**	Set up one charging spot outside the bedrooms. Move every device there tonight, including yours.
☐	**DAY 3**	Have the kid conversation from Page 4. Keep it short and calm, and let them be upset.
☐	**DAY 4**	Send the grandparent and co-parent script to anyone who might hand your child a device.
☐	**DAY 5**	Look up whether your child's grade and school has a Wait Until 8th pledge at waituntil8th.org. If not, start one.
☐	**DAY 6**	Send the school-parent script to two families you already know.
☐	**DAY 7**	If your child needs to be reachable, pick a bridge option from Page 6.

Done? You've gone from "I should probably do something" to a written plan, a united front, and your first allies.

SOURCES + WHAT'S NEXT

1. **Wait Until 8th.** Average age of first smartphone about 10; pledge to delay until the end of 8th grade; 150,000+ parents; activates at 10 families per grade and school. waituntil8th.org
2. **Common Sense Media,** *The Common Sense Census: Media Use by Tweens and Teens* (2021). Smartphone ownership: 42% of 10-year-olds, 71% of 12-year-olds.
3. **Common Sense Media,** *The New Normal: Parents, Teens, Screens, and Sleep* (2019). 68% of teens keep a mobile device in bed or within reach; 29% sleep with it in bed.
4. **Center for Humane Technology.** Persuasive design features such as infinite scroll and variable rewards. humanetech.com
5. **American Academy of Pediatrics,** Center of Excellence on Social Media and Youth Mental Health. Suggests waiting until at least age 13 for social media accounts, with readiness varying by child. aap.org

WANT TO GO DEEPER?

The Family Phone Plan covers the basics. If you'd like the full research, scripts and plans behind it, the Wild Not Wired Playbook goes deeper: plans for every age from 6 to 13 and up, word-for-word scripts for the hard conversations, a gentle reset if your kid already has a phone, and a 30-day kickoff with printables for the fridge.

No rush. The Family Phone Plan is plenty to get you going, and the Playbook is here whenever you want it.

See the Playbook → wildnotwired.com/playbook

STAY WILD. STAY CURIOUS.

WILD IN TRAINING