



# **Digital Safety: A Parent's Guide to Teaching "Private vs. Public" Online**





# ***Digital Safety***

## **Private vs. Public Online**

I'll never forget when my three-year-old swiped my phone and asked for pictures—he understood technology, but not its risks. That moment made me realize digital safety must start early. Kids need to learn what's safe to share and what's private, because online spaces, like the real world, can expose them to risks from a very young age.





Part One

***The 5 Key Lessons  
for Teaching Digital  
Safety Early***





# Front Porch: Physical vs Digital Space

Element	Details
<b>Core Concept</b>	Use the "front porch" analogy: your home is private, but the internet is like your front porch—anything shared there can be seen by everyone.
<b>The Lesson</b>	If you wouldn't shout your private details from the porch, don't share them online. This teaches boundaries and awareness.
<b>Why This Matters</b>	At age three, impulse control is still developing, so simple boundaries help children build a strong understanding of their digital space as they grow.





## Digital Consent: Asking Before Sharing

At work, I handle privacy laws; at home, I teach digital consent. I ask my son before sharing his photos so he learns his privacy is his choice. This habit helps kids respect others' boundaries and understand how to protect their own privacy as they grow and start using their own devices.





# Safety Secrets: Defining "Private Data"

Element	Details
<b>Core Concept</b>	Explain privacy with the "front porch" idea: your home is private, but the internet is like your front porch—anything shared there can be seen by everyone.
<b>The Lesson</b>	If you wouldn't shout your private details from the porch, don't share them online. This teaches boundaries and awareness.
<b>Why This Matters</b>	At age three, impulse control is still developing, so simple boundaries help build a strong foundation for understanding their digital space.





## "Permanent Marker" Rule: Understanding Digital Permanence

Teach kids the internet is like a permanent marker—once shared, it can't truly be erased. Even deleted posts may be saved or screenshotted.

This helps them understand permanence and encourages them to think before sharing online.



# 5

## Modeling Digital Behavior: Why We Must Show, Not Just Tell

Children learn by watching us. If we say the internet is public but stay glued to phones, the message fails. We set device-free times at home to show that real-world connections and private moments matter more than constant sharing.



## Part Two

### A Simple Home Check (Two Minutes Only)

You don't need fancy gadgets or extensive lessons. Simply watch for moments during daily life that can teach them these important lessons.



## Observe This



- **During snack time:** Do they recognize the difference between their personal food and what's meant to be shared?
- **During playtime:** Do they understand when something is for private use (like their toy) and when it's for public sharing (like a picture)?
- **During digital moments:** Do they ask questions like, "Can I share this with Grandma?"

## What your answers mean

- **3 or more "yes" answers** → Your child is on track to understand the digital world. Celebrate the little wins.
- **Fewer than 3 "yes" answers** → No worries! Each child develops these skills at their own pace. Just keep gently reinforcing the lessons.



## Part Three

### Why It Takes Time, But It Works

Teaching digital safety isn't about one big talk. It's about consistently reinforcing small habits: boundaries, consent, permanence, and privacy. Just like cognitive milestones, these lessons build over time, helping your child grow into a responsible digital citizen.



## Why this matters

The world may be full of fast-paced change, but it's the small, steady moments that help kids develop long-term safety habits. If we give them the right foundation early on, they won't just be consumers of digital content—they'll be smart, responsible creators who understand the true value of their own privacy.



## Conclusion: Digital Safety Starts Early

Just like we celebrate the moment our child sorts their first bowl of snacks, we should celebrate every small victory in teaching them about digital safety. It might seem small now, but it will lay the foundation for their understanding of a much bigger digital world in the future. Remember, it's all about offering opportunities, waiting patiently, and celebrating their growth in the digital world—one small milestone at a time.





THANK  
YOU