TIPS FOR YEARS 9-10 PARENTS

Monitoring without hovering
By the middle years of high school, students need to take greater responsibility for their screen use. Continued use of technical parental controls allows passive monitoring. Ask them about their screen use and whether they feel it is safe and healthy.

Check in, while giving your teenager space
Parents at this stage shift from supervising school work to checking in and being available when needed. Check in from time to time about what your teenager has finished, what they still need to do and whether they would like help. Also, consider simple ways for your teenager to show you what they are working on, e.g., having a shared folder or a regular time to show you their school work.

Help them set up a space to concentrate
Help them set up a space that makes it easier to focus on homework and take proper breaks. This might mean keeping their phone in another room during homework time or, if they have separate devices, using one for schoolwork and another for games. Remind them to turn off game and social media notifications on the device they use for school and homework.

Share your teenager's digital world
Take an interest in the movies, clips and games your teenager enjoys. Watch or play alongside them sometimes, where appropriate. This helps you understand their world and connect over what matters to them. Try to keep conversations open about the group chats they are part of.

Support thoughtful use of technology
Encourage your teenager to use digital tools, including AI, to explore ideas, deepen their understanding and practise skills, rather than simply finish a task. Talk with them about when a tool helps them think and learn, and when they may be relying on it too much. Ask your school how you can support the approach to technology your teenager is learning in class.

Model the habits you want to see
Teenagers notice what adults do. If you want phones away during family time or study time, try putting your own phone away too.

Keep devices out of bedrooms at night
A family charging area outside bedrooms can make it easier for teenagers to switch off. For desktop computers, consider removing keyboards and mouse. Research shows that avoiding screen use an hour before bedtime helps improve sleep.

Leverage the school community
Read school newsletters to stay up-to-date with the latest research around screen use. Participate in school-organised forums to help shape community standards for screen use that is consistent for your teenager and their friends.

Other resources

- Family tech agreement (eSafety Commissioner)
- Parental controls (eSafety Commissioner)
- Best practice toolkit (Screens in Education)

Best Practice in Screen Use for Education