A Family Guide to Safe AI Use for Kids

Artificial intelligence (AI) is becoming part of everyday life, from homework help to creative play. This guide offers practical strategies to support healthy habits that help kids explore AI safely and responsibly.

1 Clarify What AI Can and Cannot Do

Kids don't need a technical lesson, just a simple explanation. It helps to spell out the difference:

- AI can give ideas, summarize information, explain concepts, or help kids explore new topics.
- AI cannot understand feelings, guarantee accuracy, or replace real learning and effort.

Setting these expectations early helps kids see AI as a tool rather than a shortcut or a source of absolute truth.

2 Highlight Privacy and Data Awareness

To help children learn simple digital-safety rules, remind them:

- Never share personal details like their name, school, address, or feelings with AI tools.
- Some AI conversations might be stored or reviewed depending on the platform.

3 Discuss Emotional Boundaries

Kids sometimes treat AI like a friend. To help prevent misunderstandings and establish boundaries:

- Encourage real-world friendships and conversations;

- Watch for signs of emotional over-reliance; and
- Remind kids that AI doesn't have feelings, opinions, or memories.

4 Use Conversation Starters

To open the door to ongoing, healthy dialogue with kids, ask:

- "What do you think AI is good at?"
- "How do you know if an answer is trustworthy?"
- "When is it better to ask a person instead of a tool?"

5 Provide Examples of Healthy AI Use

Show kids what responsible use looks like:

- Brainstorming ideas for a project
- Practicing vocabulary or math facts
- Exploring new topics out of curiosity
- Getting feedback on writing after they've drafted something