



**"But everyone
else has one!"**

**How to talk to your tween
about delaying smartphones**



I. Start with empathy

“I know this feels unfair, especially when so many of your friends already have one.

I get how much you don't want to feel left out. It's a really tough feeling, and it's okay to be upset.”



2. Be honest about why you're waiting

“Smartphones weren’t designed with young people in mind.

TikTok and Snapchat aren’t safe spaces for kids. When this tech first came out, we didn’t know how harmful it could be.

Now we do – and I want to protect you.”



3. Explain how Big Tech really works

“These apps were built to hook you. The more time you spend on them, the more money the tech giants make.

They don't care if it makes you anxious or sad.”



4. Talk about time

“Most teens in the UK spend five hours a day on their phones. That’s 35 hours a week.

Imagine what you could do instead – football, music, hanging out in person, making stuff. It’s more freedom to do what you love.”



5. Offer other ways to be independent

“Let’s look at simple phone options, so you can stay in touch with your friends, and explore other ways of giving you more independence – like hanging out with friends more in real life, going to the cinema or the park.”



6. Reframe it as a superpower

**“Waiting a bit longer means
you’re protecting your brain – and
that’s a really smart thing to do.**

**It’s like a superpower in a world
where everyone else is getting
sucked in.”**



7. Reflect on your own habits

“I probably spend too much time on my phone too. Let’s work on it together. I’ll try to put it down more when we’re hanging out.”



8. Keep the conversation open

“This isn’t forever. Let’s talk again in a few months and figure out some family smartphone rules.

That way, when we do decide you’re ready, you’ll be able to use it in a way that’s fun and safe.”



Remember, you're not just saying no. You're saying yes to:

✨ Stronger self-esteem

✨ Deeper real-life friendships

✨ The chance to figure out who *they* really are, not what an algorithm wants them to be

For more tips like this go to:

smartphonefreechildhood.org