DIGITAL SAFETY CHECKLIST

Build the Foundation (Connection)

○ **Start with Family Meetings:** Have a family meeting to collaboratively create a Family Media Plan. Set clear rules for screen time, app downloads, and social media use. Seek balance, pairing screen time with sleep, exercise, and face-to-face connection.

○ **Establish Emotional Safety:** Make it clear that your child can come to you with online mistakes without the fear of losing their device immediately. Have a "No-Yelling" Plan - decide ahead of time how to handle broken tech rules using problem-solving and stay calm.

Structure & Skills (Freedom Within Limits)

○ **Balance "Freedom Within Limits":** Avoid being a "Digital Dictator" or a "Tech Doormat." Set clear boundaries while allowing for growth.

○ **Teach Digital Responsibility:** Focus on life skills, not imposing control or restrictions. **Audit Privacy Settings -** check the "Location Services" and "Public/Private" settings on every app your child uses. **Discuss the "Digital Footprint" -** explain that online posts are permanent and can impact future opportunities. Nurture critical thinking—how do we evaluate content—how do we determine what is appropriate.

Long-Term Habits and Ongoing Connection

○ **Model Healthy Habits:** Commit to "phone-free zones" (like dinner) and model balanced use by choosing offline rest or connection over scrolling during personal downtime.

○ **Be Engaged:** Ask your child to show you their favorite apps and content, review the age ratings and data privacy together. Ask open-ended questions to invite conversation and listen without judgment.

○ **Encourage Face-toFace Connection:** Emphasize the importance of real-world activities such as team sports and hobbies.

○ **Keep the Conversation Going:** Review your Family Media Plan regularly—discussing new apps and content while evaluating their risks and benefits. Celebrate positive choices.

Active Parenting

PUBLISHERS
Every stage. Every step.

OUR FAMILY MEDIA PLAN

1   OUR FAMILY VALUES

- We agree that technology is a tool for learning and connection, not a replacement for face-to-face time—the best gift we can give each other is Connection.
- We will treat others online with the same respect we show them in person.

2   FREEDOM WITHIN LIMITS (OUR RULES)

- **Tech-Free Zones:** Devices are not allowed at the table during meals or during these times: _____
- **Balanced Play:** We agree to balance screen time with offline hobbies, teamwork, and physical play.
- **App Access:** We will discuss and vet new apps together before they are downloaded.

FOR KIDS:

- **Privacy:** I will never share our full names, addresses, or school locations online.
- **The Stranger Rule:** I will not add, text, or interact with anyone online that I do not know in "real life" without checking with my parents first.
- **Respectful Interaction:** I will use the same manners online as I do in person. I will not post or send anything that is mean, disrespectful, or could hurt someone else's feelings.
- **Think Before You Post:** I understand that once I send a text or post a photo, I can no longer control where it goes or who sees it.

3   THE "NO-YELLING" PLAN

- **For Parents:** If a tech rule is broken, we will focus on problem-solving and logical consequences rather than yelling or power struggles.
- **For Kids:** If I see or experience anything online that makes me feel nervous, afraid, or uncomfortable, I will tell a parent immediately. I know I won't be in trouble for coming forward.

4   OUR COMMITMENTS

Child's Signature: _____

Parent's Signature: _____

Date of Next "Tech Check" (Family Meeting): _____