

## TIP OF THE MONTH

Our electronic devices have become a way of life. We provide them to our children, sometimes just because all their friends have one. I'd like to offer some advice on monitoring your child's phone or other electronic device. I always advise regularly checking your child's device, their messages, photos, and social media. Make sure your agreement with them requires them to provide you with all the passwords for the device and any apps they have on their device. There are apps like Kik and Snap-Chat that allow users to delete content upon sending a message or photo. My advice is, do not allow these apps, as there is no other benefit to using them other than the easy deletion. Of course messages and photos can still be deleted from a normal text message. My advice is to tell your child that they are not allowed to delete them prior to your inspection. Technology has made it easier for our children to communicate things out of earshot. They are no longer tied to the kitchen phone with a cord that allows everyone in the house to hear their conversation. Because of this, there may be things that you would never suspect your child of being involved in, but they may very well be. Checking the device does not mean you aren't giving your child any privacy, but you are making sure they are following the guidelines that you the parent, have set for them. It also gives you an insight into the things they are doing throughout the day, who they are talking to and what they are saying. It is our job as parents to make sure our children are acting in a responsible manner. If your child knows you will inspect their device on a regular basis, it may deter future problems.

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