

Know the risks

Tech and toy companies make big promises when it comes to connected toys, voice assistants, and smart speakers, but the risks for young children outweigh them.

CONNECTED TOYS AND DEVICES



affect children's relationships.



disrupt children's understanding of trust.



invade children's (and your family's) privacy.



delay language development (and frustrate kids).



diminish creativity and imagination.

Use them as safely as possible

If you decide to purchase or already have a connected toy or device, here are some tips for using it as safely as possible.

- **Go for a speaker that's just a speaker; a toy that's just a toy.**
- **Avoid "always on" options.** Choose one with a "touch to talk" feature, so you can decide when the device is "listening" and recording you or your child.
- **Treat it like other technology and set limits.** The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends no more than 1 hour per day of digital entertainment per day. If your child is playing with a connected toy or device, count that time as part of their hour.
- **Communicate your limits** about where and how the toy or device can be used.
- **Opt in** to all of the parental controls and limit any data sharing.
- **Do not put them in children's bedrooms.** Keep them in a spot where you can see them.
- **Put them away (when possible).** You cannot provide consent for someone else's child, so until the tech companies stop tracking all data on children, it's best to put these away. **Don't allow your child to use it with friends.**
- **Schedule lots of time for real interactions and play!** Children need meaningful opportunities for hands-on, real life play to learn and need real people to play with them!