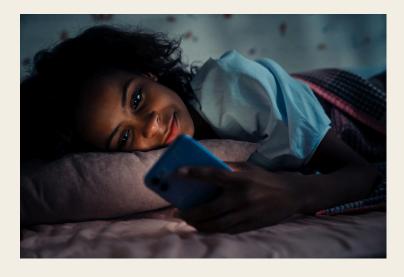# PROTECTING OUR KIDS
Tips for Keeping our Kids Safe

Black children face unique online dangers from social media due to [racism](), [algorithmic bias]() and [cyberbullying](). These factors disproportionately expose Black youth to [anti-Blackness,]() [violence,]() [discrimination,]() and [mental health struggles](). Meanwhile Tech companies have been given a free pass to allow even more hate-speech by the federal government, state-based advocacy still provides a meaningful path to hold these companies accountable.

Still, Black parents can take several steps to protect our children from the negative impacts of social media while helping them navigate the digital world with safety and security in mind. Parental controls are a needed first step – but not nearly enough.

On the next page, we provide a comprehensive approach that includes conversations, community support and digital literacy to equip our children with the tools to find ways to highlight Black excellence and minimize social media harm.

PROTECTING OUR KIDS
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1. **Guide Their Social Media Use & Encourage Offline Activities.**
   - Use parental controls to r**estrict harmful content** and follow their social media accounts. (Quick steps for each platform here!)
   - Set clear rules about **which platforms they can use and how much time they can spend on them.**
   - Limit screen time and encourage **offline activities like reading, sports, and family time.** Talk about the importance of real-life connections and having interests outside of social media.
   - Create **tech-free zones** (like during meals or bedtime) to ensure healthy digital habits.

2. **Teach Digital Literacy & Critical Thinking**
   - Encourage them to **think before they post,** reminding them that what they share online can have real-world consequences.
   - Help them recognize **biased, racist, or harmful content**, especially when it's disguised as humor or "just a joke."
   - Encourage kids to **question what they see online**—not everything is true just because it's viral.
   - Teach them about **misinformation,** propaganda, and the ways social media can manipulate opinions.

ONYX IMPACT

3**. Talk About Online Safety & Privacy**
   a. Teach them to **never share personal information** (address, school, location) with strangers online.
   b. Discuss the risks of **cyberbullying, predators, and scams** targeting Black youth.
   c. Show them how to **adjust privacy settings** to keep their accounts secure. (Quick, steps for each platform here!)

4. Protect Their Mental Health & Self-Esteem
   a. Talk about how social media can **distort reality** (filters, unrealistic beauty standards, curated lifestyles).
   b. Encourage **self-love and confidence** by reminding them that their worth isn't based on likes or comments.
   c. Limit their exposure to harmful content that **reinforces negative stereotypes** about Black identity.
   d. Let them know they can come to you **without fear of punishment** if they see or experience something upsetting online.

5. Address Racial Stereotypes & Online Hate
- Prepare them for the **racial biases and discrimination** they might face online.
- Teach them to recognize r**acial gaslighting** and coded language used to undermine Black voices.
- Encourage them to **block, report, and disengage** from racist content instead of internalizing it.
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6. Encourage Positive & Uplifting Content
- Introduce them to Black influencers, creators, and activists who promote positive representation.
- Encourage them to follow pages that focus on Black excellence, history, and community success stories.
- Help them create content that reflects their passions, creativity, and authentic self.