

GAP! Phone Conversation: **You can do today!**

1. Build a **Values** Playground

- Fill the house with irresistible alternatives: art stations, cooking projects, forts, board games, outdoor gear.
- Model the behavior you want. Reflect nightly: “What did my own screen habits model today?”
- Co-create boundaries and yeses
 - Car rides? Dinner Table? Bedroom? After school? When with friends?
 - Would a family agreement/contract work for you?
- Never lecture—explore. Uplift, inspire, always **catch them being awesome**.
- Have 1000 tiny conversations with your child: “What does a ‘real boyfriend’ mean to you?” “What is a beautiful body?” “What do you think/know about that?”

2. **Go on the Offense**: Start Small, Stay in Control

- Begin with non-smart phones or pre-set smartwatches.
- Know every passcode; retain admin access to social accounts.
- Review apps together before download.
- Master the Algorithm Together: **Sit side-by-side weekly**:
- Ask: “How does this make you feel?” / “Would Grandma approve?” / “Is it uplifting or selling something?”
- Teach: Linger = more of the same. Swipe past junk.
- Set boundaries: Zero tolerance for bullying, body-shaming, or “all-about-me” content.
- Role-play: How to report, block, or respond to rudeness.
- Safety check-in: “Tell me anytime something feels off—no judgment.”

3. Give Your Child Real **Agency**: Teen mental health suffers when kids lose independent play, roaming, and problem-solving. Counter screens with earned autonomy:

- **Give chores** & jobs → “You’re needed.” Builds grit, self-confidence, and cuts entitlement.
- Solo missions → Walk to the store, cross a busy road, cook dinner. Ask: *Could my child handle this without calling me?*
- Responsibility ladder → Start small (feed the pet), scale up (plan a family outing). Celebrate competence.

Bottom line: Bottom line: Phones are guests in your home, not residents. Lead with values, stay curious, grant real responsibility, and keep talking.