



Monthly Parenting Tip from the ACFC

OCTOBER 2026



FREE LIFE-CHANGING ONLINE PARENTING COURSES

In these video-based, interactive classes—available 24/7—you'll learn a consistent, encouraging style of parenting that will benefit you and your children for a lifetime. With this self-study course, you have the option of when to participate based on your own schedule and at your convenience. Gain additional insight from your online group leaders as they provide support and feedback.

Choose from four available courses:

- **Active Parenting: First Five Years:**
For parents of children from birth to age 5
- **Active Parenting 4th ED:**
For parents of children ages 5 to 12
- **Active Parenting of Teens:**
For parents of preteens and teens
- **Crossroads of Parenting & Divorce:**
For divorced and divorcing parents

Continue your experience as an “active” parent by reviewing what you learn in the class in your accompanying parent guide. Each guide contains additional information, activities, and worksheets to help you practice what you learn.

Visit [ACFCcares.com](https://www.acfccares.com) for more information and to start your Active Parenting journey today.

Creating Healthy Technology Boundaries for the School Year

Summer often brings increased screen time and relaxed rules around technology. As school begins, families benefit from revisiting expectations for phones, gaming, social media and online entertainment. Shift your mindset from purely enforcing restrictions to thinking about how technology can support family goals. Establish clear baseline guidelines, such as:

- Keeping mealtimes completely device-free.
- Establishing a dedicated, technology-free family connection time each evening.
- Ensuring schoolwork is completed before recreational screen time.
- Charging all devices outside of bedrooms overnight to protect sleep.

The Active Parenting Principle (Collaboration instead of Control for Cooperation): For preteens and teens especially, collaboration works better than control. Invite teens into the conversation and discuss the reasons behind the rules. Explain that healthy technology habits are not about punishment but about protecting sleep, mental health, academic success and family relationships. Model balanced technology use themselves, children are much more likely to follow suit.

Strengthening Family Communication During Busy Seasons

As schedules become busier, family communication often becomes shorter and more focused on logistics:

“Did you finish your homework?”
“Don’t forget practice tonight.”
“Did you turn in that form?”

While these conversations are necessary, families also need time to connect on a deeper level.

Set aside a few minutes each day after school or during dinner to ask open-ended questions like:

- What was the best part of your day?
- What was the most interesting thing you learned today?
- What challenged you today?
- Who helped you this week?
- What are you proud of?
- What are you looking forward to tomorrow?

The Active Parenting Principle (Active Listening): Active listening is one of the most powerful tools a parent has. When parents listen first and talk second, children learn that their thoughts and feelings truly matter. This builds long-term trust, creates stronger family relationships, reduces daily conflict and keeps families connected throughout the busy school year.

To learn more about effective parenting skills, visit the Active Parenting Online Video Library. These helpful videos are offered free of charge by the ACFC in partnership with Active Parenting. Guidance and help are available for parents of children of all ages. To access the Online Video Library, go to the **ACFC website**, click on the Active Parenting tab, and follow the instructions on how to view the videos.