PARENT ONLY | MODULE 1 / FOUNDATIONS

What AI is - and is not

Before teaching safety, learn enough to recognize AI in everyday products and explain it without technical jargon.

Three different jobs AI may do

- RECOMMEND: suggest videos, songs, ads or search results based on patterns in data and behavior. Recommendations can shape attention.
- GENERATE: write text, images, audio, code or other material that looks original - including realistic but invented material.
- ASSIST OR ACT: summarize, tutor, answer questions and sometimes use connected tools or execute approved actions. The capabilities depend on product settings.

Why a confident answer may be wrong

A generative model predicts or constructs a plausible response from learned patterns and the context it receives. It does not automatically verify every statement. An answer can contain fabricated quotations, citations, statistics, images or instructions. A friendly tone is not a guarantee of expertise or care.

USEFUL WAY TO EXPLAIN IT TO A CHILD

"AI can make helpful guesses and suggestions, but it can also invent things. We check important claims with people and sources we trust."

Mini-practice (2 minutes)

A pretend chatbot confidently says "Penguins are mammals." Ask yourself: What part is a claim? How would you check it? What should your child do if a source is unavailable?

REMEMBER

Expected answer: penguins are birds. Use a suitable book, reliable reference or knowledgeable human. If a claim cannot be checked, label it unverified. Do not treat AI as a doctor, therapist, emergency dispatcher, or final authority.

PARENT ONLY | MODULE 2 / BENEFITS

Teach opportunity, not only danger

An informed child needs to know both where AI can help and where it should not replace learning, consent or human connection.

Good uses, with adult guidance and eligibility checks

- LEARN: ask for a hint, a vocabulary explanation, a simpler explanation or practice questions; then do a comparable problem unaided.
- CREATE: brainstorm fictional stories, practise foreign languages, plan a presentation or generate ideas while keeping the child's voice and judgment.
- ACCESS: use accessibility features such as text explanation, speech or translation where appropriate and safe.
- ORGANIZE: draft a study plan or break an assignment into steps without sharing private school or student data.

Four questions before accepting an answer

1. Is it a fact, an opinion, a prediction or a suggestion?
2. What is the original source? Does it really support the claim?
3. Could it omit a perspective or treat a group unfairly?
4. Can the child explain it and complete a similar task independently?

PARENT DEMONSTRATION

Pretend an AI recommends only one type of job to a student because of their gender. Discuss why recommendations may reflect bias and how to seek fairer information from trusted sources.

A polished AI answer is not evidence that the child understands the topic. Follow teacher rules, ask what must be disclosed, and assess independent learning.

PARENT ONLY | MODULE 3 / CHOOSING TOOLS

Before you approve an AI tool

Start from “Does the child need this feature?” rather than “Can the child sign up?” Review before first use and whenever major features change.

The parent approval checklist

- [ ] Current minimum age and required adult permission have been checked for the specific product and region.
- [ ] I know whether it is a chatbot, companion, tutor, recommender, generator, or agent that can take actions.
- [ ] I have looked for data retention, model-training use, third-party access, deletion limits, and privacy settings.
- [ ] I reviewed camera, microphone, location, contacts, publishing, purchases, and connected-account access.
- [ ] I checked safety features, reporting, blocking and settings for AI-generated or sensitive content.
- [ ] I can explain the purpose, limits, supervision, and the stop/help procedure to the child.

SAFE DEFAULT

Do not enable an unnecessary permission. Use fictional examples and minimal information. A “local” or “private” label alone does not establish age-appropriateness, safety, or legal compliance.

If unsure about eligibility or safeguards, do not open an account for the child. Use offline exercises instead. Avoid relationship-style AI companions for minors as a family training activity.

PARENT ONLY | MODULE 4 / RESPONDING

Protect first, teach later

A helpful adult response is calm, non-punitive, practical and sensitive to the level of danger.

FIRST WORDS

“Thank you for telling me. You are not in trouble for asking for help. We will work through this together.”

A simple response sequence

1. STOP: pause the interaction. Do not keep replying, pay, bargain, forward threatening material or ask the AI to assess immediate danger.
2. CHECK SAFETY: find out whether the child is safe now. For immediate danger or concern about self-harm, seek urgent qualified local human help.
3. SUPPORT: listen without blame; avoid demanding a full retelling or searching through intimate content in front of the child.
4. SECURE: where appropriate, review permissions, revoke access, change compromised credentials, turn on MFA, and use official reporting or recovery routes.
5. DOCUMENT SAFELY: record non-explicit identifiers, dates, URLs or threats with adult or professional guidance; avoid downloading or distributing explicit imagery.
6. ESCALATE: follow appropriate school safeguarding, platform, child-protection, health or police routes depending on the concern and jurisdiction.

REMEMBER

Avoid promising secrecy; explain if safeguarding professionals must be involved. Do not automatically delete accounts or messages when information may be needed for reporting. Local procedures take precedence.

PARENT ONLY | MODULE 5 / CONVERSATION SKILLS

Guide without interrogating

The four talks are short family conversations. Let the child choose an example and invite reflection rather than demanding personal disclosures.

A repeatable 15-20 minute format

1. INVITE (2 min): “Would you like to try a pretend situation together? You may pause or stop.”
2. EXPLORE (4 min): read the opening question; ask “What would you do?” before teaching the answer.
3. PRACTISE (5-7 min): act out only the safe response with paper, not real accounts or recordings.
4. AGREE (3 min): choose one behavior the whole family can follow.
5. CHECK IN (2 min): ask what felt useful, difficult, or surprising. Revisit later without a quiz.

Useful phrases

- “What made you think that?” instead of “That was wrong.”
- “What could we check separately?” instead of “Spot the AI fake.”
- “How could I support you?” instead of “Show me all your messages.”
- “You can tell me even after a mistake.” instead of “Why did you do that?”

PARENT MODELING MATTERS

Adults should also avoid sharing children’s photos or personal information into AI tools without appropriate permission and safeguards. Explain any protective supervision and revisit it as children mature.

PARENT ONLY | MODULE 6 / FAMILY PRACTICE

Build your own family rollout

Complete this once before the first talk; the only required outcome is a practical plan.

Choose your sequence

- [ ] Week 1: Talk 1 - Trust and verification
- [ ] Week 2: Talk 2 - Privacy
- [ ] Week 3: Talk 3 - AI boundaries
- [ ] Week 4: Talk 4 - Learning

Which AI features does our child already encounter in games, school, social media or devices? Use categories, not account names or private details.

What positive use will we encourage, and what important task will we keep human-led?

What will we do if the first trusted adult is unavailable?

REMEMBER

After the talks, complete the shared family agreement. Adults can use the scenario assessment; it is not a test for children. Review the plan after 30 days or any important tool change or incident.