Allow access to the internet within the family space. Having computers or gaming consoles in common rooms is recommended. Talk with your child about what they learn online and how/who they engage with.
Communicate

Keep the communication channel active, talk to your child about his/her experiences, apprehensions and learnings.
Try not to enforce rules upon your children unless it is absolutely necessary. Try and be a friend and gradually make changes in their routine with their consent.
Make efforts to ensure that your child has access only to age-appropriate online sites.

- **G+**: General Audience
- **8+**: Age 8 and older
- **13+**: Age 13 and older
- **15+**: Age 15 and older
- **18+**: Age 18 and older
Using parental controls on connected devices is recommended. This is to monitor online activities, sites searched and the amount of access time.
Form a Group

Get together with other parents and form a group. Share concerns if any and discuss about the best practices to help your children. Be a #DigitalChampion!
Be Alert

Keep close watch on your child’s behaviour. Monitor if he/she is becoming moody, detached or short tempered. Be alert to the lack of interest in studies and falling grades. If you notice such behavioural changes, closely monitor his/her online activities, talk to school authorities and consult a child psychologist if needed.
The world of the internet has opened the flood gates of knowledge for both children and adults alike. Expression of views, reaching out to millions through social media and gaining in-depth knowledge about anything and everything are some of the aspects that go into making today’s children tech-savvy. But like all other things, there are many myths involved. As a direct result, concerns for parents are ever increasing. Let’s demystify some of the common myths!
Most parents believe that their child knows all about the internet.

64 per cent children between the age of 9 and 16 believe that they are less aware about the online space than their parents.
Parents need to spend time to understand the internet, the risks, benefits and safer online strategies for their children.
Parents do not have to worry if they install security application on their children’s device.

No online security solution is bulletproof.
Parents will always have to mentor and monitor activities online even if they have a security app installed.
MYTH
Children become more violent if they are allowed to spend too much time online.

REALITY
The content, not the device, that drives the child to spend excessive time online directly correlates to his/her social behavioural change.
Parents and caregivers must keep a check on what content is being viewed.
**MYTH**

Children find pornography interesting.

**REALITY**

A majority of children are disgusted by pornographic images and if they come across them, they usually close them and quickly move to another page.
It is necessary to sensitize children in schools on gender equality. Parents also need to have open discussions with children as they come of age.
Girls meet strangers, strangers harm girls. If girls have a mobile phone they will go online, meet boys and will run away with them.

Most children, especially girls do not engage with a stranger online, simply because they believe in the motto ‘a stranger is danger’. The digital/online space is important for children’s learning and digital skills are important in today’s world.
Transparency in communication between parents and children will ensure that the parents are made aware of their child’s online friends, by none other than their children themselves!
“Social media made my child a bully!”

Bullying has always been an issue among children and youth. The internet and social networking sites have only scaled and magnified this problem.
Solution

Parents, teachers and caregivers must make their children aware about how bullying hurts and what the consequences may be. Awareness and sensitization on the severity of laws concerning cyber-bullying helps.
"No using computers or smartphones before exams!"

It is commonly believed if children are not allowed any access to the internet during examination time, it will radically sanitize their online activities and also encourage them to spend more time on their studies. But children, if they want to, will always find a way to access the internet from any other device.
Instead of suddenly taking away their smartphones, it is better to sensitize them to restrict their internet usage, especially during examinations.
**MYTH**
The more they know, the safer they are.

**REALITY**
The more ‘controlling’ and ‘teaching’ about online safety and security happens, the more children are interested to learn how to bypass them.
It is far more important to learn alongside children and not just teach them the values and ethics. Dialogue is key and answering questions, as well as engaging in conversation around news and media reports. Remember the online world is just a mirror reflection of the offline world.
There is no need for a security or anti-virus software if the users open email attachments only from friends and known persons.

The email ID of a friend may get spoofed or hijacked by someone to gain access to your system.
It is safer to always install updated antivirus/security software.