



KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE ONLINE

A Guide To Having A Conversation With Your Children
On Their Use Of Social Media, Internet And Mobile Phones

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IT TAKES A VILLAGE TO RAISE A CHILD

There is an Igbo and Yoruba proverb that says, "*It takes a whole village to raise a child*". This proverb exists in different forms in many African languages. In Lunyoro (Uganda), there is a proverb that says "*Omwana takulila nju emoi*," whose literal translation is "*A child does not grow up only in a single home.*" In Kihaya (Tanzania), there is a saying, "*Omwana taba womoi*," which translates as "*A child belongs not to one parent or home.*"¹

The Nigerian proverb and the similar ones held by other African tribes convey the idea that child upbringing is not the responsibility of only the parents of a child, but a communal responsibility for every member of the village where the child is being raised.

So, in this global village that the world has become, do you want the village to raise your child?

In the first place, nobody living in the twenty-first century leaves child raising to the environment they live in. They might have done that in early African villages but not today. With the rate of security threats in town today, parents are being very careful in child upbringing.

Society has long moved on from what obtained in early African villages. Children do not have to go to village streams to fetch water.

They do not need to go to the village square for *tales by moonlight*. They are not going to be attending any festivals or going to age-grade meetings.

This seems good for today's parents, many of whom are spending more time at work and having to leave a substantial part of child upbringing to teachers at school and guardians or even (house) helps at home.

Many parents also seem aided by the fact that the children of today are not as interested in playing outside as children were some years ago. Thanks to increased electronic gadgets like the television, computers, smartphones and tablets, many children today are spending more time before screens than they are spending outside.

For some parents, this is good news. They are now giving their young children devices to occupy them in order to stop them from crying or running around.

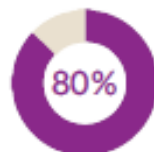
Also, today's parents who actually spend more time at work, do not seem really absent especially as their children are well occupied by afternoon, evening and late-night television programs. Little surprise why there is hardly anything more that causes rifts among siblings and between siblings and maids/house helps than the usage of television and mobile devices.



To give you an understanding of how young people are using the internet, social media and mobile devices today, look at these facts from a survey of over 2000 children in Lagos State, Nigeria. The survey was conducted in November/December 2016.



Nine out of ten teenagers surveyed own a mobile device that can access the Internet.



Over 80% of the phones the children owned were bought by their parents.



Seven out of ten boys and six out of ten girls surveyed have seen pornography online, without looking for it.



68.5% of all the children surveyed say that they would not allow an adult to read chats or messages on their phones. They overwhelmingly attributed this refusal to 'privacy'



80% of all the teenagers surveyed, are on Facebook, making it the most used social media network by the teenagers.



Nearly five out of ten boys and one in four girls have intentionally visited a pornographic website or assessed pornographic material online.



A good number of them joined Facebook when they were not yet 13- which is the ground age to join Facebook. Meaning, that they lied about their age in order to join.