

Parent-Child Conversation Guide: Talking about Generative AI

This guide helps parents begin conversations with children about generative AI (e.g., ChatGPT, DALL·E, YouTube video generators, deepfake tools) in ways that promote curiosity, ethical thinking, and safe engagement.

PART 1: STARTING THE CONVERSATION ABOUT GENERATIVE AI

Use these openers to explore what your child already knows and how they are encountering AI in their life.

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Sample Questions:

- “Have you ever used a chatbot or tool that writes stories or answers questions for you?”
- “Do you know what AI is? What have you seen or heard about it?”
- “Have any of your teachers or friends talked about AI tools?”
- “What do you think AI can and can’t do?”

Get a sense of your child’s current understanding, exposure, and attitude. Keep this stage exploratory and non-judgmental.

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Part 2: Understanding What Generative AI Is

Often times we jump into talking about things without ever really defining what it is we are talking about.

Start by sharing a basic explanation:

“Generative AI is a kind of technology that learns from a lot of information, like books or websites, and then creates new things based on what it learned—like writing stories, making pictures, or answering questions.”

Depending on age, you might show them a quick example of ChatGPT or an image generator (with safe boundaries).

Discussion Prompts:

- “How do you think this could be helpful at school or in your hobbies?”
- “Do you think it’s OK to use a tool that writes for you? When would it be helpful, and when would it be cheating?”

Part 3: Talking about Ethics and Responsibility

Focus on helping them think about fairness, safety, and honesty.

Sample Prompts:

- “If an AI gives you the wrong information, how would you know?”
- “What do you think could go wrong if someone used AI to copy someone’s art or music?”
- “How would you feel if a friend used AI to write a whole paper and got a good grade?”
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Key Ideas to Share:

- AI doesn’t always tell the truth—it can make mistakes.
- Using AI to help is different than using it to do everything for you.
- People’s ideas, voices, and creativity still matter most.
- What we put into AI systems can affect others—it matters



Part 4: Setting Boundaries and Building Skills

Help your child understand your expectations while encouraging responsible exploration.

Talk About:

- When it's OK and not OK to use AI tools for school or personal use.
- How to ask a teacher or adult if they're unsure whether AI use is appropriate.
- The importance of fact-checking anything AI tells them.
- Why it's important to keep private information out of AI chats.

Reinforce that learning how to think, question, and create is more important than finishing fast or having “perfect” answers.

Part 5: Staying Curious Together

Frame AI as something your family is still learning about together.

Sample Prompts:

- “Want to try an experiment with an AI tool together and see what it can (and can’t) do?”
- “Let’s each ask the same AI a question and see how we’d respond differently.”
- “What kind of rules do you think adults should make for how people use AI?”

Emphasize:

- Generative AI is a tool—how we use it is what matters most.
- These technologies will change, and asking good questions helps us keep learning.
- Our values—like honesty, kindness, and fairness—still apply in digital spaces.

