

BOSS BATTLE LABS

GUIDE TO RAISING HEALTHY DIGITAL ADOLESCENTS

A toolkit for families and communities navigating adolescence & technology together.

BETTYRAY.NET

© 2026 Boss Battle Labs

WELCOME



“Good thing we never argue about screen time,” said no parent, ever.

Managing kids and screens is one of the most complicated issues facing parents today.

Most of us start in the same place: setting time limits and rules about where and when devices are allowed. These boundaries matter, but without a clear foundation, they can start to feel arbitrary to both kids and parents, especially as kids grow. Even thoughtful rules can be hard to sustain when expectations differ across friend groups and families.

This guide takes a different approach. It is designed to help your child build the skills they’ll need to navigate digital life with confidence, awareness, and responsibility.



Inside, you will find a simple, flexible process to help you:

- Clarify your values as a family
- Understand your child’s strengths and growth areas.
- Create clear, realistic agreements
- Support learning and repair when things change, or don’t as planned.

You can start where you are, and adjust was you go. This is a judgment-free zone!

© 2026 Boss Battle Labs

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE



This guide is designed to be practical, flexible, and easy to use in real life.

You can move through it step-by-step, or focus on the sections that feel most relevant right now.

Start where you are
You don't need to have everything figured out before you begin. Each section is designed to help you take one step forward.

Expect to revisit
Your child will grow and your family's needs will change.
What works today may need adjusting later. (That's totally normal!)

Make it your own
There are a lot of activities in here. Use what fits your family, and adapt what doesn't. There's no one "right" way to do this.

Keep it manageable
You don't need to do everything at once.
In fact, small, thoughtful steps usually work better than big overhauls.

Focus on progress, not perfection
This process is about building skills over time.

As you move through the guide, you may choose to involve your child in different ways depending on their readiness. The next page will help you decide what that can look like for your family.

© 2026 Boss Battle Labs

SHOULD YOU INVOLVE YOUR CHILD, OR NOT?

Every child is different. So is every family.

Some kids are ready to take ownership and help shape agreements. Others still need more structure and support.

This guide is designed for both.

Many families start with more structure and gradually involve their child over time. Choose the approach that best fits your child today.

Parent-Led

Adults do the worksheets and help your child build readiness.

Use this approach if your child:

- Struggles to follow through consistently
- Becomes dysregulated around screens
- Needs clear, predictable structure

What it looks like:

- You set clear expectations and boundaries
- You explain the "why" in simple terms
- Your child is informed, but not responsible for decisions yet

Guided Collaboration

You involve your child in parts of the process.

Use this approach if your child:

- Can reflect (even a little) on their behavior
- Is open to conversation, but still needs support
- Is starting to take some responsibility

What it looks like:

- You invite input on specific areas
- You offer choices within clear boundaries
- You stay in the role of guide, not negotiator

Shared Ownership

You and your child co-create agreements together.

Use this approach if your child:

- Follows through most of the time
- Can reflect on what's working and what's not
- Is ready to take responsibility for outcomes

What it looks like:

- You build agreements together
- You both make commitments
- You revisit and adjust as needed

© 2026 Boss Battle Labs



The GUIDE model

1. Ground your family values

Clarify your priorities, and reflect on your own digital habits.

2. Understand your child(ren)

Identify your child's strengths, needs, and growth edges.

3. Involve your circle of support (Optional)

Connect with other parents to explore shared expectations.

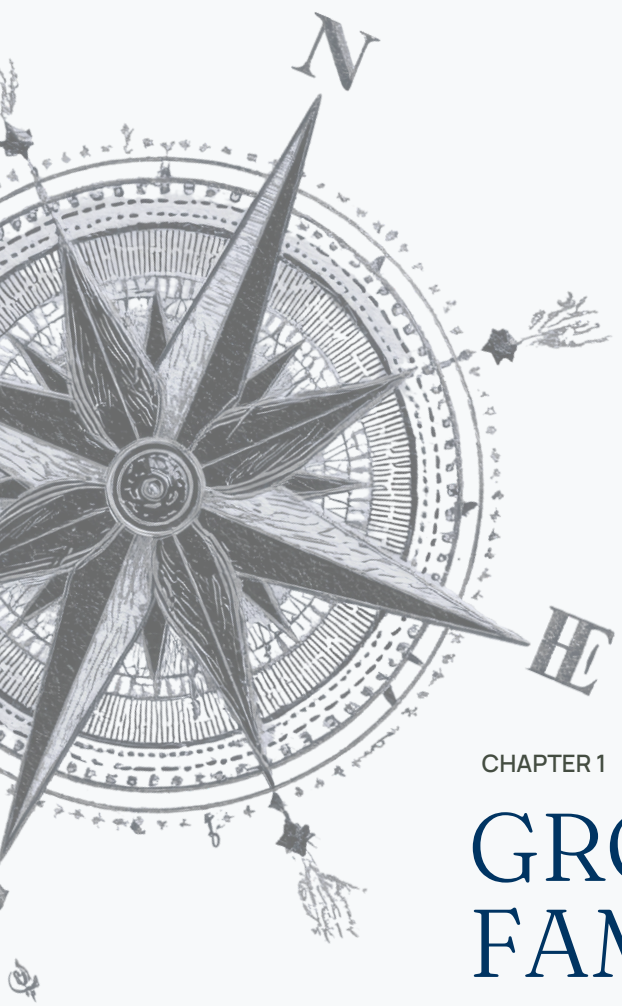
4. Define clear agreements

Turn insights into clear, realistic agreements for your family.

5. Encourage repair and growth

Support reflection and update agreements as needed.

You can complete each of these steps on your own, or involve your child, depending on their readiness.



CHAPTER 1

GROUND YOUR FAMILY VALUES

Technology is woven into modern life. Before making rules, it's important to name your family's values, hopes, and priorities.

Technology should support those goals, not compete. Start by identifying what matters most so that, as your child grows, your device rules can continue to support these priorities. You will reflect on:

- The values that matter most
- The habits you personally model around technology
- The relationship with technology you hope your child develops

LOOKING AHEAD

Understanding your child's strengths, temperament and developmental needs can help you create expectations that are both supportive and realistic.

In Chapter 2, you'll reflect on:

- Your child's strengths
- Challenges they may encounter
- Areas where they may need more guidance

© 2026 Boss Battle Labs

Activities: Family Values

IDENTIFY FAMILY VALUES

Circle 5–7 values that matter most in your family.

(These are helpful to return to, when parenting gets tough.)

Accountability	Critical Thinking	Play
Academics / Learning	Curiosity	Quality Time
Adventure	Empathy	Resilience
Athletics / Physical Health	Ethical Decision-Making	Responsibility
Balance	Financial Security	Safety & Security
Belonging	Growth Mindset	Self-Awareness
Boundaries	Honesty	Self-Respect
Communication	Integrity	Service
Creativity	Nature / Outdoors	Travel

Others?

Choose 3 core values you most want your child to experience in your home.

TECHNOLOGY'S ROLE

How could technology support these values? How might it detract from them?

PARENT SELF-REFLECTION

When do your kids see you on-screen most often?

Kids learn more from what they see than they do from being told. No judgment – this exercise is to notice patterns and think about what kind of use you want to model.

© 2026 Boss Battle Labs

Activities: Family Values (cont'd)

TRUST-BUILDING

What's currently working—and what feels challenging—about your child's technology use?

How can you turn judgment or fear into curiosity? It is easy to judge kids' tech use, especially when we see them obsessing over it at the expense of the real world. But when we keep an open mind and invite conversation, it builds trust and makes it less likely that they will go underground and try to hide it from you.

CONNECT WITH YOUR CHILD AROUND THEIR VALUES

Ask your child:

"What do you enjoy most about [insert their favorite screen activity]?"

Really listen and be curious. Even if you don't understand 99% of what they're talking about, you can use it as an opportunity to connect and learn more about their experience. Avoid lecturing; this is to build mutual trust.

REPAIR IF NEEDED

If you and your child have experienced a lot of conflict over screens in the past, you might want to reset.

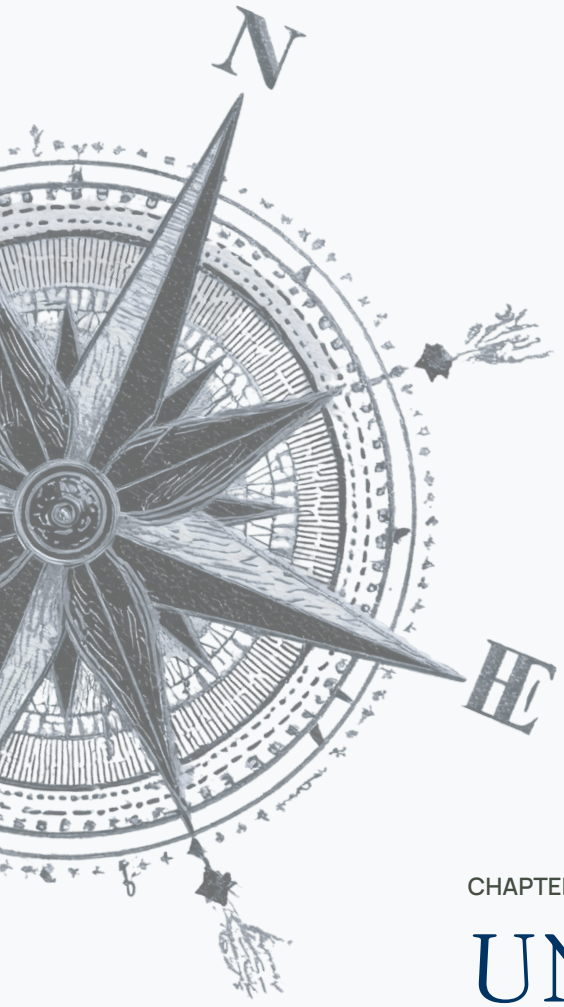
As kids get older, it can be helpful to have a baseline of trust so they feel like they can come to you if anything happens online that they don't know how to handle. This can take time to rebuild.

You might start by saying something like:

"We have had a lot of conflict over screens in the past. I can tell that you are getting older and that you should have more independence. But that requires trust. So let's work on rebuilding that trust so you can have more independence."

Scheduling regular time together just for fun can help here, too. It can be so easy to get in to a cycle of lecturing and arguments, but fun and trust will go a long way towards building respectful connection as they get older.

© 2026 Boss Battle Labs



CHAPTER 2

UNDERSTANDING YOUR CHILD(REN)

Every child has different strengths, personalities, and challenges, both online and in real life.

Technology can amplify these tendencies. It can also be a powerful distraction from meaningful growth.

This section invites you to reflect on your child's strengths and growth edges can help you create expectations and goals that are both supportive and realistic.

The intention here isn't to label your child; it's simply to understand them better so you can design a meaningful approach to technology that protects them and supports healthy development.

LOOKING AHEAD

The next step is to zoom out and consider the broader environment your child is growing up in. You'll explore how your community and/or family can work together to create expectations that support meaningful digital (and real world) development.

© 2026 Boss Battle Labs

Activities: Understanding Your Child

YOUR CHILD'S STRENGTHS

What strengths do you see in your child right now?

Every child has strengths that can help them navigate the world. For example, a curious child may love learning and exploring online resources. A thoughtful child may be especially sensitive to how their words affect others. Recognizing these strengths can help you build on them. Circle all that apply.

Adventurous	Good listener	Patient
Brave	Hardworking	Persistent
Confident	Helpful	Problem solver
Creative	Imaginative	Resilient
Curious	Independent	Responsible
Empathetic	Kind	Takes initiative
Good friend	Observant	Thoughtful

Others?

YOUR CHILD'S GROWTH EDGES

Where might your child still need support?

Circle all that apply.

Confidence	Frustration tolerance	Peer pressure
Conflict resolution	Impulse control	Screen balance
Emotional awareness	Online kindness	Self-control
Focus	Online safety	Self-image
Follow-through	Organization	Assertiveness

Others?

IDENTIFY POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

What kinds of challenges do you think your child might encounter with greater digital access?

Circle all that apply (and add your own!)

Algorithm rabbit holes	Influencer pressure	Online grooming
Bullying	Inappropriate content	Oversharing
Chat conflict	Less interest in real world	Response pressure
Gaming urges	Online drama	Social comparison

© 2026 Boss Battle Labs

Activities: Understanding Child (cont'd)

FROM MANAGING TO SUPPORTING

Where might you step back slightly (or a lot!) and allow your child to take the lead?

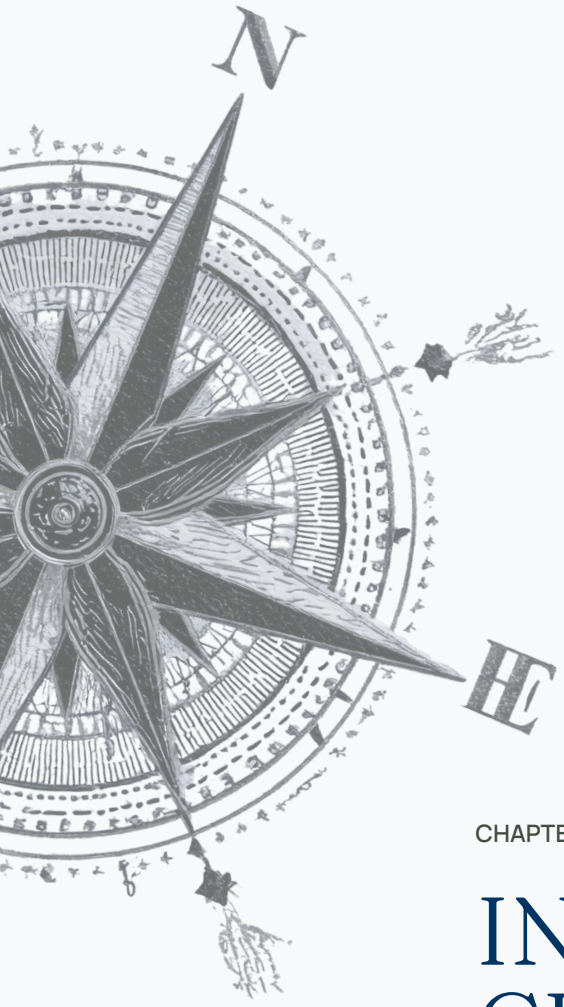
As your child grows, your role begins to shift from managing everything for them to supporting them in taking more ownership.

GROWING RESPONSIBILITY

Based on your child's strengths and growth edges, where might they be ready for more responsibility? (Is there a role for friends here?)

What support will help them succeed?

© 2026 Boss Battle Labs



CHAPTER 3

INVOLVE YOUR CIRCLE OF SUPPORT (OPTIONAL)

Many families try to navigate digital life on their own.

This works well when kids are young. But eventually, two things happen. 1) kiddos hit puberty, and 2) their peers get online.

This can cause a lot of strife, especially if their friends' families have different agreements. This section supports you in having meaningful, judgment-free conversations with extended family and friends to find alignment and support kids' healthy growth.

Note: This does not require a large group. In fact, smaller circles often work best. Most families find that 3–6 households is the ideal size.

LOOKING AHEAD

Once you've identified a small group of families who are interested in these conversations, the next step is exploring shared norms.

© 2026 Boss Battle Labs

Activities: Circle (Optional)

IDENTIFY YOUR CIRCLE

List 3-6 families connected to your child.

Examples:

- close friends or regular playmates
- neighbors
- extended relatives
- sports or activity families
- families in a faith or community group

SIGNALS OF ALIGNMENT

Which families feel like a good fit for these conversations? List those families who:

- are open to discussing technology
- value communication and collaboration
- are willing to experiment and learn
- understand no one has it figured out
- share a general commitment to kids' wellbeing

STARTING THE CONVERSATION

How will you start the conversation? Choose one approach:

- Invite a family to dinner
- Host a small parent gathering
- Bring it up at school or in your neighborhood

Use this invitation, or draft your own below.

"We've been thinking about how to navigate devices with our kids and wondered if you'd want to compare notes or explore creating some shared norms together."

© 2026 Boss Battle Labs

Conversation Pages (Optional)

Guidelines

Before beginning these conversations with other parents, it can help to agree on a few simple guidelines.

- Speak from your own experience
- Listen first to understand, before being understood.
- Assume good intentions
- Avoid judging other parenting styles
- Remember that every child and family is different

Remember, this is a judgment-free zone! The goal is to explore connection and learn from each other.

Round 1 — Identify shared values

Purpose:

To have a safe and open conversation about our values and identify where these are shared.

Each parent takes turns to briefly share:

- What qualities do we most want kids to develop as they grow up with technology?

Follow ups:

- What behaviors do we want to encourage?
- Are there values that several families share?

Example: respect, responsibility, honesty, balance

© 2026 Boss Battle Labs

Round 2 — Where are we struggling?

Purpose:

To identify the struggles that do (or could) occur when families are not synced up.

Each parent takes turns to briefly share:

- Where do we see the biggest challenges b/c rules are not consistent? (eg "How come Ava gets to play Roblox and I don't??")

This question can be tricky, so be sure to focus on kindness and shared intention.

Example: kids have different screen rules, access to different platforms or devices.

Round 3 — Brainstorm and draft 1-3 possible agreements

Purpose:

Explore any possibilities for agreements across families.

Prompt:

- Is it possible to find at least partial agreement across two or more households?

Important note:

- Partial agreement is preferable to no agreement,
- And! It is 100% OK if families don't agree. This step is looking for alignment where it exists, not to force anyone's hand where they are not comfortable.

Example: sync up on gaming time, plan more real-world activities, use shared designations (eg creative time vs "brain rot" time)

© 2026 Boss Battle Labs

Round 4 — Making repairs

Purpose:

To make a plan for how to respond if someone breaks an agreement

Prompt:

- How do we want to respond if/when something goes wrong?

Follow ups:

- How can we keep connection strong?
- What helps kids learn without feeling ashamed?
- When should parents communicate with each other?

Example pause before reacting, name what happened without blame, repair the relationship (apology, conversation) revisit agreements if needed, focus on learning, not punishment.

Round 5 — Maintaining connection

Purpose:

to make a plan for how to keep agreements fresh, and to iterate them as needed.

Prompt:

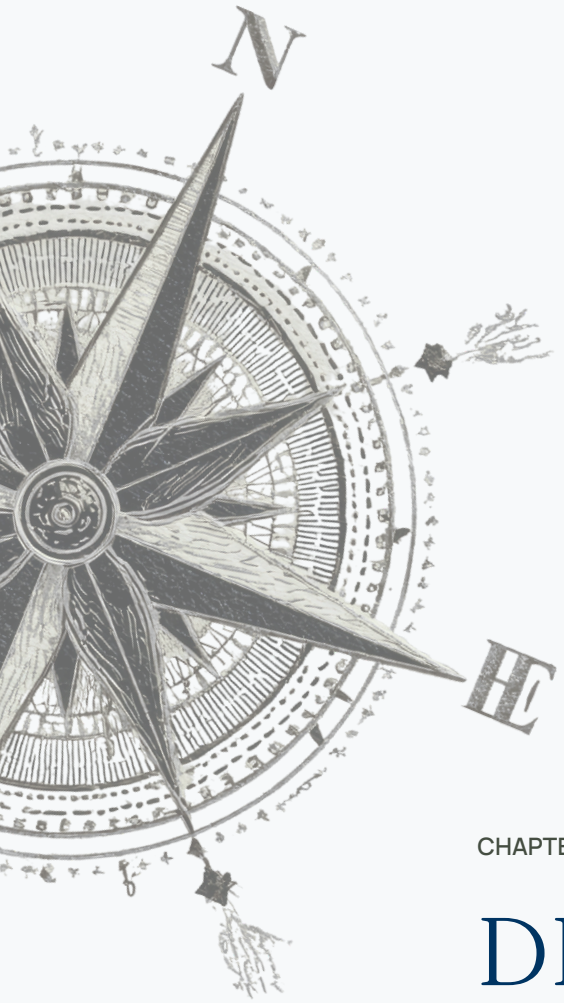
- How will we stay aligned and support each other over time?

Follow ups:

- How often (if at all) do we want to check in?
- What's the easiest way to communicate as things come up?
- When something feels off, how do we want to reach out to each other?
- What would make this feel supportive, not burdensome?

Example parent group chat for short-term comms; monthly check-in re: agreements.

© 2026 Boss Battle Labs



CHAPTER 4

DEFINE FAMILY AGREEMENTS

Technology becomes more useful when it is guided by clear, shared expectations.

Clear agreements are foundational to helping families move out of constant negotiations (read: arguments) to shared understanding. Creating structure reduces friction, and gives children a sense of what is expected while still allowing room for growth.

If you've not had clear agreements before, this chapter can help create a system that is flexible yet strong.

Start by gathering ideas from your reflections and/or conversations with other families, and shape them into agreements that fit your child's development and your family's routines. If your child can and wants to have input, give them opportunities to participate. Research shows that co-created rules get better compliance.

LOOKING AHEAD

No system works perfectly. In the next section, you'll explore how to respond when agreements are tested by focusing on repair, reflection, and learning over time.

© 2026 Boss Battle Labs

Activities: Family Agreements

GATHER IDEAS

Brainstorm expectations or intentions that feel important for your family.

These might come from your list of values, your child's strengths/growth edges, and conversations with your kids and/or other families. It can be useful to push your child's growth edges.

Families with younger kids, and/or those who struggle with boundaries often prefer more concrete agreements that don't leave room for negotiation:

- Complete homework and chores before devices.
- Daily time outside or with in-person friends
- No devices in bedrooms or the car.
- Time limits on passive screen use.

Once your kids are older and/or are capable of understanding why agreements are helpful, you can take a more nuanced approach, for instance:

- Maintain respectful communication.
- Prioritize creativity, communication and active learning over passive scrolling

This is a brainstorm, You'll have an opportunity to refine later. This list may be helpful as you revisit agreements over time. Use the additional "Notes" pages below, as needed.

© 2026 Boss Battle Labs

Activities: Family Agreements (cont'd)

GIVE YOUR CHILD A CHANCE TO WEIGH IN

When kids have the opportunity to co-create rules, they are much more likely to respect them.

This can feel like a crazy idea, especially if your child is constantly fighting you. Reframe the conversation by saying something like the following:

- "What we've been doing hasn't been working. Let's try something else. I want your input so we can balance your wishes with the rest of the family's needs."

Or

- "You are growing up and it's time to give you more freedom. But you also need to show more responsibility. Here is what that looks like. Which of these responsibilities do you want to start with?"

Capture your child's input here or use the "Notes" page below.

SHAPE YOUR AGREEMENTS

Turn your expectations into clear, simple agreements.

Agreements should be realistic, connected to your values, and specific enough to avoid confusion.

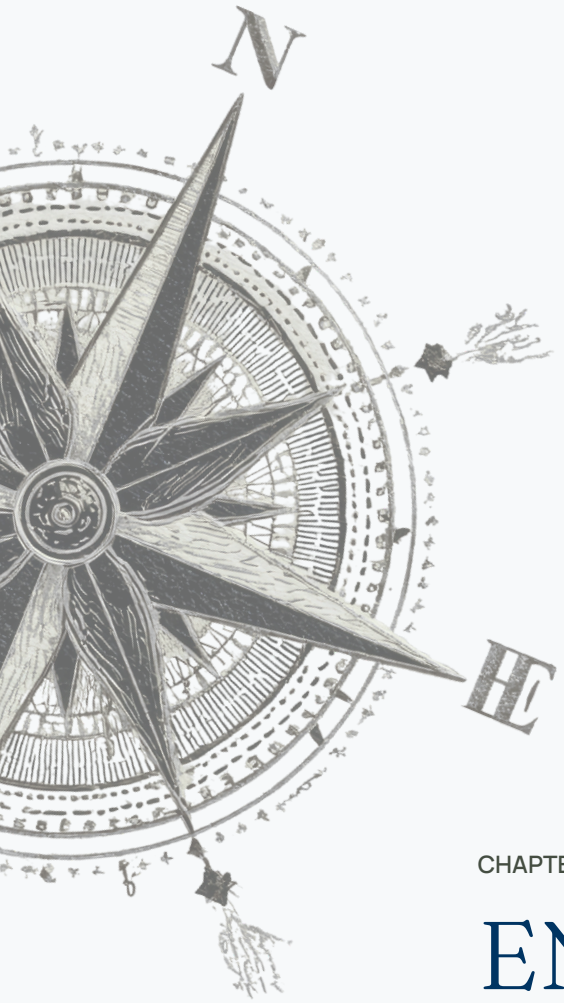
Examples:

- Devices are put away during meals and overnight
- We use kind and respectful communication online and in-person
- We prioritize creative and social screen use

© 2026 Boss Battle Labs

Notes

© 2026 Boss Battle Labs



CHAPTER 5

ENCOURAGE REPAIR AND GROWTH

No agreement works perfectly. As kiddos grow and test limits, challenges and mistakes are part of the process.

What matters most is how families respond when things go wrong.

This approach focuses on repair—helping children understand what happened, take responsibility, and rebuild trust—while also allowing agreements to evolve over time.

In this section, you'll focus on:

- responding calmly when something goes wrong
- repairing connection and trust
- learning from mistakes
- adjusting agreements as your child grows

LOOKING AHEAD

Over time, these moments help children build judgment, responsibility, and resilience.

© 2026 Boss Battle Labs

Activities: Repair and Growth

PUT ON YOUR OWN OXYGEN MASK

What helps you find calm and connection when your child makes a mistake?

OUR APPROACH TO REPAIR

How do you want to respond when an agreement is broken?

Ask your child(ren) to weigh in, too.

LEARNING. FROM MISTAKES

As a family, discuss how repair might look.

Examples:

- Talk through what happened
- Make amends
- Take a break and reset

UPDATING AGREEMENTS AS NEEDED

When something isn't working, how will you revisit or adjust your agreements to accommodate new needs?

© 2026 Boss Battle Labs

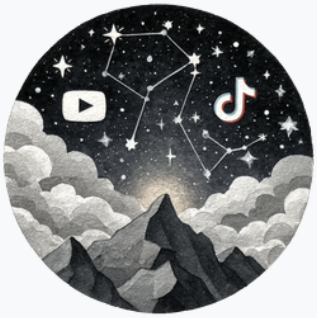
Notes

© 2026 Boss Battle Labs

Notes

© 2026 Boss Battle Labs

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



BOOKS

Behind Their Screens: What Teens Are Facing (and Adults Are Missing)

by Carrie James and Emily Weinstein

Talk to Your Boys: 16 Conversations to Help Tweens and Teens Grow into Confident, Caring Young Men

by Christopher Pepper and Joanne Schroeder

PODCASTS

Ask Lisa Podcast with Dr. Lisa Damour

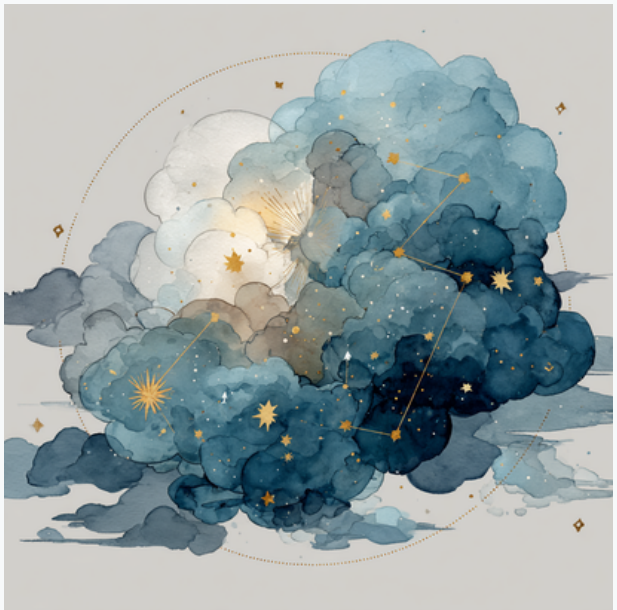
DrLisaDamour.com

Connected Parenting with Jennifer Kolari

Connected Parenting

Growing Strong Roots: an Occupational Therapist's Perspective on Parenting, Self-Regulation, and Resilience

Growing Strong Roots



JOIN BETTY'S PARENTING PROGRAM

Interested in ongoing support? Betty holds regular support groups for parents who are navigating these tricky waters. The program is 6 weeks via Zoom. Please reach out for more info.

bettyray@gmail.com
@bettyray on IG

415-518-0357
bettyray.net

© 2026 Boss Battle Labs
This guide is designed for personal and family use. For broader sharing or reuse, please contact Boss Battle Labs.