

Dear Parents/Guardians:

This week we will be learning about how to use apps responsibly, especially when making in-app purchases.

A Pew Internet study in 2011 <http://www.pewinternet.org/2012/05/15/downloading-apps-for-children/> found that many parents downloaded apps for kids. Furthermore, they downloaded more apps for entertainment than for educational purposes. A more recent study by Common Sense Media <https://www.commonsensemedia.org/research/zero-to-eight-childrens-media-use-in-america-2013> illustrated that children's access to mobile devices is much higher than it was two years ago. In fact, over the past two years, children's use of mobile media has almost doubled and the time children spend using mobile devices has tripled. That is why this lesson is more important than ever!

Did you know that even though many apps are free, they include in-app purchases that allow kids to buy additional upgrades? During our lesson, students will learn about the importance of parental gates in apps, which prevent kids from engaging in extra buying or following links outside of an app without parent permission. Students will also learn that parents have to use credit to set up accounts for in-app purchases. They will learn how to be responsible with mobile devices and to not buy extras without asking for parental permission. If you would like to watch the video we viewed in class, please visit this link: <http://econedlink.org/tool/447>

As a parent, you also have the option to set up family sharing. On an Apple product, you can use the iOS family set up, which requires parental approval of both app downloads, as well as in-app purchases. On an android, adults can set up Google Play family sharing.

Finally, whenever you want to research an app, visit Common Sense Media (<https://www.commonsensemedia.org>). Common Sense Media is a non-profit organization that provides consumer education to parents on media. An activity you can do with your children is to use their app reviews <https://www.commonsensemedia.org/app-reviews> to research some apps. Doing research before downloading and buying apps will help you live happily ever after!

Sincerely,

Teacher's Name