



Smartphone License: Digital Citizenship Education

Introduction to the PACT and the License*

Dear Parents and Students,

We live in a world where our physical and online lives are closely interconnected (the so-called “onlife”). Smartphones and other internet-enabled devices have become essential tools in our daily lives, significantly shaping the way we live, interact, and learn. With their power and widespread use comes great responsibility: every action we take online can leave a lasting impact on our real lives.

This makes it crucial for us to foster a strong **awareness of how to use technology with care and respect**. At the heart of the **Smartphone License** project is the signing of a symbolic pact between parents and children.

Why is this Pact Important?

The following pact represents a **shared commitment** between parents and children; it serves not only as a guide for managing technology responsibly but also as an **opportunity** for them to **grow together** as informed digital citizens.

On one hand, **parents** recognise the potential of the internet and commit to being present for their children as they navigate a rapidly changing digital landscape filled with both risks and opportunities. This represents a promise of education and protection. On the other hand, **students** acknowledge their responsibilities as users, understanding the challenges and consequences that can arise from misusing technology. Therefore, their commitment embodies a pledge of trust and responsibility.

Why a Smartphone License?

The Smartphone License issued to students isn't limited to their personal devices; it extends to **all internet-connected devices**, including smartphones, PCs, tablets, smart TVs, video game consoles, and voice assistants, regardless of whether they belong to the students themselves or to their friends and family. This license symbolises the shared responsibility between students and their parents, acknowledging the increased awareness and skills that students have acquired.

Essentially, this license represents a **loan of responsibility** granted to students, which can be suspended or revoked if devices are misused. It serves as an educational tool, presenting an opportunity for students to learn and develop a deeper understanding that using technology responsibly is not just a privilege but also a commitment to themselves and those around them.

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Patente per l'uso consapevole dello smartphone

THE PACT

You have access to internet-connected devices (smartphones, tablets, PCs, smart TVs, gaming consoles...), but such powerful tools come with great responsibility: essentially, you've been given something that no generation before you has had from birth. However, this responsibility does not lie solely with you: you're under age and so it's your parents or the people caring for you who also pay for the mistakes you make.

Keep an eye on me, but let me have a go.

Child's pledge to parent (or other guardian):

1. I have access to internet-connected devices; I need to be **responsible** in how I use them and look after them properly.
2. I will only **block** outsiders from accessing these devices, not you.
3. I'm creating my **digital identity**, something that I will build bit by bit and, for better or for worse, will stay with me for my whole life.
4. The amount of information that will come my way will be huge. The only filter I have will be my **upbringing** and my own **awareness**.
5. I will not use technology to lie, make fun of or deceive another human being and I **will not involve myself** in conversations that may be hurtful to anyone, especially me. I will not be profiled as a victim or tormentor.
6. I will not send, disseminate or ask for images of my private parts or anyone else's. I'm aware that it could ruin my life, or other people's lives, in the future. A **bad reputation** from any mistakes I might make online would haunt me forever.
7. I will learn how to use an internet-connected smartphone **without becoming dependent on it** and without it taking over my life. Being in control can help others, too.

Parent's pledge to child:

My own upbringing has given me the information I need to protect you in the physical world, but I don't have enough information to defend you in the ever-evolving digital world.

Just like in the physical world, I pledge not to leave you to fend for yourself in the digital world either.

If, in the future, there's something you don't understand or something happens that you don't know how to deal with, talk to me about it and we'll find a solution together.

We're not born digital, but life is a training ground for all solutions.

The advice you're about to read is meant to help you think; remember that your brain is the best antivirus in the world.

1. The smartphone licence is a **loan based on responsibility**. Whether you keep your licence or not will depend on your behaviour: after all, your driving licence gets taken off you if you make a mistake. By law, **I am the one who will also be responsible** until you come of age.
2. Learn to communicate well with digital tools, too: you've no idea just how much **what you say or write determines what people think of you**.
3. You're quick at typing but remember that **speed** does not always equate to **intelligence**.
4. The things that will stay with you over your lifetime are **memories** and **experiences**. Live your life and don't just watch other people's on a screen.
5. Social networks will be companions that help you broaden your knowledge; don't become a **slave** to them.
6. In a world where it's all too easy to leave a trace, but all too difficult to erase those traces permanently, remember that **your digital life counts just as much as your physical life**.
The virtual is real.

Place and date signed _____

Signature of parents or other guardian

Signature of child

