

Keeping human skills at the center in an AI world

Protecting the skills kids need to grow, connect, and decide

Tips for parents



Did you know?

AI can support human learning. If designed well and used intentionally, some AI tools can help people explore new concepts or practice skills.

Overreliance on AI can weaken essential human skills. If kids use AI to replace their thinking, social interaction, or creativity, they miss opportunities to build the cognitive skills, emotional intelligence, and social connections that make us human.*

AI cannot replicate what makes us human. While AI excels at processing information and generating content, it cannot exercise moral judgment or feel real empathy.

AI can disrupt human relationships.

When students use AI without clear expectations, it can create tension between students and teachers and raise questions about whether work is truly their own. At the same time, students may turn to AI instead of asking teachers or classmates for help, weakening the trust and connection that helps kids learn and grow.

Humans must stay in charge. Teachers, families, and students should be able to make intentional and thoughtful choices about how and when to use AI so that it can support, but does not replace human judgment, relationships, or imagination.

*A new direction for students in an AI world: Prosper, prepare, protect by Mary Burns et al., Brookings, 2026

What to notice

If kids prefer to do tasks quickly and with little effort. When kids do not see the purpose of a school assignment or task, or they are feeling rushed or pressured, they may try to use AI to offload their own judgment or imagination and complete their task for them.

If your kids are using AI to avoid difficult but important human moments. If your kids are using AI to resolve conflicts with a friend, make decisions about their own interests and activities, or get reassurance about their actions or emotions, they might be missing key chances to grow and connect with the people around them.

What you can do: Conversations to maintain human skills in an AI world

With your kids:

We recommend these activities for kids ages 10-14. But you know your kid best! If these are relevant to you, use them!

- **Conversation starter:** Have your kid imagine that their friend did something to hurt their feelings and writes them a note or text to apologize. Ask your kid: How would you feel if you found out your friend used AI to write the message?
- **Activity:** Pick a school assignment that your kid has received, like an essay, math problem set, or presentation. Together, talk through some of the dilemmas posed by using AI on the assignment:

- Will using AI help you think harder and learn more, or cause you think less and learn less?
- Is it okay to use AI to come up with new ideas for you?
- Will using AI decrease how much help you need from teachers, parents, or classmates? Is that good or bad?
- Is it OK for AI to help catch mistakes in your schoolwork? Can you be sure that AI's help will be accurate?

In your school or community:

- Encourage schools, parents, and students to come together and discuss what it means to be human in an AI world. With everyone's input, the school can develop a shared understanding of when and when not to use AI in the education process.



Find more in our Parent Tip Sheet Library! For more detailed information, including data sources, check out the full report: A new direction for students in an AI world: Prosper, Prepare, Protect.