

This first piece, *The Best Phones for Every Age*, is from Sean Segan with PCMag.com,

Ages 8 and Under

Small children who need phones often need them because they have complex caregiving arrangements where they're handed off between adults. A phone can also be useful if your kid tends to get lost on the playground, or likes to run and hide.

Kids this young can't be trusted to hold onto a phone: they need simple, restricted-access devices that can't be lost and can only call their parents. We prefer wristwatch devices over clip-style, as it's harder to lose them. Our favorite for kids under nine is the Verizon LG GizmoGadget, which looks like a wristwatch and can call and text a restricted set of numbers. It also has a couple of cute, fun features that stop just short of games.

If you're not a Verizon user, the Republic Wireless Relay walkie-talkie is great for linking an individual parent and kid, and for kids with tight groups of best friends or group activities. We think it's best for ages seven to 12.

Ages 9 to 13

As tweens and young teens get their first bits of independence, they may need phones to tote around the neighborhood—and to text their friends. Yet tweens are still kids, and often can't be trusted with expensive devices. This is prime time to get your kid a voice phone. Ideally, you want one that works on your carrier's 4G LTE network, for the best coverage and voice quality. Unfortunately, those can be hard to find. The Kyocera Cadence is a good choice on Verizon. On AT&T, the unlocked Nokia 3310 3G is a good option.

There is currently no good, affordable voice phone compatible with Sprint, T-Mobile, Boost, or Virgin, which is frustrating. Users of those networks should consider getting a prepaid service that uses the AT&T or Verizon networks instead.

With that, here is more information about the different devices:

[Gizmo Watch](#) - Verizon

Stay informed.

Check the location of your GizmoWatch¹ right from your smartphone using the GizmoHub app.⁴ Then stay proactive by setting GPS boundaries and receiving automated alerts when your child exceeds them.

Keep in touch.

The GizmoWatch comes with the speed and reliability of the nation's largest 4G LTE network. And thanks to 2-way voice calling and messaging, your child can stay connected with up to 10 trusted contacts of your choice.²

Goals and reminders.

Count steps and set fun, encouraging goals using the GizmoWatch's fitness tracker. Then send schedule reminders using on-screen event notifications.

Compatibility meets versatility.

Whether at the pool, in the car or out on a hike, you can count on the GizmoWatch's tough and waterproof design.³ And because it's compatible with any standard 20 mm watch strap, you can pick out materials, colors and strap types to fit any occasion.⁵

Simple to set up, a blast to use.

Start right away by downloading the GizmoHub app for Android or iOS.⁴ From there, you can change ringtones, select themes and more. You can even remotely turn off the device or safeguard your privacy by selecting a PIN number.

[Relay](#)

"Relay, the Anti-Smartphone for Kids."
—Sascha Segan, PC Mag

Relay is simply more.

Finally—a nationwide cell phone alternative that kids love and parents can trust.

Put childhood back in motion

Give kids what we had—space to grow, explore, find friends and have fun. Let them wander, let them wonder. No screens, no tethers, no horizons.

Gain comfort and build trust. Relay combines the power of a phone with the functionality of a walkie talkie. Kids can check in with family, and talk with friends. It sets you both free.

Relay to Relay

Your child can contact a friend or family member with a Relay device, once you've set up a channel that connects them. No screens necessary.

Relay to Phone

Your child simply presses one button and speaks a message—then you instantly receive it on your Relay phone app. And it's just as easy for you to reply.



Chat

Want to talk with Dad only? Create new channels to talk with individual Relays or smaller groups on the same account.



Instant chat

Create a temporary chat with ANY Relay...even one not on your account. Just bump two Relays together, and go!



Music

A music player for your Relay! Create a playlist from your favorite mp3s, and listen as it shuffles through your songs.



Translate

Learn to communicate in a different language! Speak English into the Relay and listen as your words are repeated back in Spanish.



Echo

A voice changer with sound effects that transform anything you say into something funnier.



New channels coming

There's always room to grow! We'll keep turning great ideas into cool new features.

Basic phones = flip phones

[Verizon Basic phones](#)

[Sprint Basic Phone](#)

[T-Mobile](#)

[AT&T](#)

[Unlocked Flip phone](#) on Amazon

[Best cheap cell phone plans you have never heard of](#)

Finally, if your student has a smartphone, tablet, laptop, or even a desktop computer, here are the best [Best Parental Control Software](#) available.

