



Technology & Social Media Use Tips & Resources

Unforeseen and Undesirable Consequences of Technology Use

- Heightened technology exposure is changing the way our children and teen's brains are wired. Unlike an adult's brain, a child's brain is still developing, and as a result, impressionable. The brain (frontal cortex) is not fully developed until mid 20s
 - Video Games: [Glow Kids](#) references a 1998 study that found playing an old school 2D Video Game increased dopamine in the brain by 100% (that's more potent than the drug morphine). Details experimental trial using video games for pain management in Veterans.
 - Dopamine is an important chemical messenger in our brain, most commonly associated with the brain's pleasure and reward system, that is responsible for facilitating communications in our nervous system.
- Early childhood media use is related to behavioral issues, attention issues, decreased school performance, obesity, poor body image and risky behaviors. *[NIH](#)
- The incidents of anxiety, depression and other psychological disorders increase as children use more technology.
- Sleep disturbance. Screen use interrupts healthy sleep/wake cycles especially with tech use before bedtime. (See research on blue light effects).
- Heightened state of stress and overstimulation (there is more info flowing into our lives than ever before).
- Impacts a child's self regulation and self-soothing skills (i.e tech is used to pacify fussy toddler or sulking teenagers). Tech use at the wrong time is negatively impacting youth's opportunity to learn how to self-soothe and regulate difficult moments.

Parenting & Caregiving Tips

- Children learn from the adults around them - when can you unplug?
 - [Family Media Plan](#)
 - [10 Commandments for a Tech-Wise Family](#)
<https://www.restoringheartscounseling.com/2020/10/14/tech-wise-family/>
 - [Proactive Parenting Plan](#)
<https://digitalfutures.wpenginepowered.com/wp-content/uploads/DFI-Proactive-Parenting-Plan.pdf>
- Decrease Tech to Improve Sleep
 - Explain & educate on the effects of technology on sleep
 - Tech use stalls deep sleep; deep sleep helps lift mood and improve focus
 - Remove Electronics from bedroom (get a real alarm clock)
 - Create the habit of reading/journaling before bed.
 - Stop using [blue-light](#) devices at least 1-2 hours before bedtime.
 - Turn on "Night Mode"
- Set up a charging station outside of your child's bedroom to improve sleep (**reduces sneaking/late night access**).
 - If your child sneaks tech, you may need to keep in your bedroom
- Designate media-free times together (family meals, car trips) and media-free locations (bedrooms, kitchen table)
- Communicate guidelines to other caregivers (grandparents, daycare, friend's parents)

- Have your child/teen ask permission before going online, downloading a new app etc.
- Try out apps on your own device before allowing your child to download them. This will give you a good idea of its content and also the type of commercials that might pop up.
- Protect your Phone Content - [Vault & Hidden Container Tips](https://digitalfutures.wpenginepowered.com/wp-content/uploads/Vaults-Hidden-Content-Containers.pdf)
(<https://digitalfutures.wpenginepowered.com/wp-content/uploads/Vaults-Hidden-Content-Containers.pdf>)
- [Gabb Phone](#) is a great first phone option, no access to social media
- Social Media: withhold access until graduation of 8th or even further, if possible
- Turn privacy setting “on” on social media platforms
- Turn device location setting “off.” If using a parent tracking app you can still turn off location for social media apps within the app setting itself
- Go over safety with your children/teens
 - What to do if someone asks for private information or asks/sends images
- Check your child's device daily (devices are privileges not rights)
 - There are **NO** parental controls for Snapchat, TikTok, youtube etc. Begin talking to your children at a young age about [good pictures versus bad pictures](#)

Educational Book Recommendations For Parents/Caregivers/Educators

[Glow Kids: How Screen Addiction is Hijacking Our Kids & How to Break the Addiction](#); Kardaras

[The Tech-Wise Family: Everyday Steps for Putting Technology in Its Proper Place](#); Andy Crouch

[Reclaiming Conversation: The Power of Talk in a Digital Age](#); Sherry Turkle

[Growing Up Social: Raising Relational Kids in a Screen-Driven World](#); Gary Chapman

[Disconnected](#); Tom Kersting

[iGEN](#); Jean M. Twenge, PhD

Book Recommendations for Children

[Good Pictures Bad Pictures](#); Porn-Proofing today's Young Kids; Poyner and Jenson

[Good Pictures bad Pictures Jr](#); Jenson

Documentaries (for parents/caregivers/educators)

[Childhood 2.0](#): For anyone who wants to better understand the world their children are navigating as they grow up in the digital age. Featuring actual parents and kids as well as industry-leading experts in child safety and development, this documentary dives into the real-life issues facing kids today — including cyberbullying, online predators, suicidal ideation, and more.

[Netflix's The Social Dilemma](#): This documentary explores the dangerous human impact of social networking, with tech experts sounding the alarm on their own creations.

*you have to have a netflix account but a great unpacking of the content can be found [here](#):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yGi2YKZZNFg>

[BeAppSavvy Resource Page](#):

<https://digitalfutures.wpenginepowered.com/wp-content/uploads/BeAppSavvy.pdf>

Web & Social Media Educational Recommendations

[Protect Young Eyes](#): Led by social media expert, advocate, dad Chris McKenna, showing kids, parents, & teachers how to be great w/tech @ schools and churches everywhere.

Follow along on [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#)

[Officer Gomez](#) shares his experience working as a SRO and all his tips and experience with technology, social media and what students are sharing with him on his Facebook page.

[Code 9 Parent](#) - is an online program for parents on social media and cyber safety around apps and games your children use. Follow along on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)

[Bark](#) - is a parental control phone monitoring app to help keep kids safer online. Bark monitors social media, text, and email on Android and iOS devices. They offer tips and resources on their [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) platforms.

[Common Sense Media](#) - Common Sense Media is the leading source of entertainment and technology recommendations for families.

Device Recommendations

[Gabb Wireless](#) - Get your child a phone you can feel good about. Gabb Wireless is dedicated to providing a safe cell phone network for kids. Follow on [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#)

Parental Control Recommendations

"Parental control services are not a safety guarantee."

- [Parental Control Solutions Doc](#):
<https://digitalfutures.wpenginepowered.com/wp-content/uploads/Parental-Control-Solutions.pdf>
- [Family Media Plan](#)
 - <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/fmp/Pages/MediaPlan.aspx>
 - A tool developed by the American Academy of Pediatrics to create a personalized Family Media Use Plan that can give you a snapshot of how much time each child is spending on daily activities, such as sleeping, eating, homework, physical activity, and media use. It also includes AAP recommendations on screen-free zones, media manners, and much more.
- [Bark](#)
 - Bark is a parental control phone monitoring app to help keep kids safer online. Bark monitors social media, text, and email on Android and iOS devices.
- [Our Pact](#)
 - Is a free service for setting time based restrictions on iOS and Android devices. Parents can install it on a child's device, and control the settings from their device or from a web site to set device bedtimes, schedules, and block or grant access to apps at a moment's notice
- [Circle](#)
 - A \$99 box that hooks up to your Wi-Fi router and monitors the activity of every device connected to your home network. You can set time limits on apps, restrict access to certain apps or turn on/off Wi-Fi access. Add-on program will take these controls on the go at \$9.95 per month and covers up to 10 devices.