Technology Management for Families

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First here, then anywhere.
Norms for Today

• Assume good intentions
• Be curious
• Ask questions
• Share the floor
• Use devices with intention
Example: Using devices WITHOUT intention:

#DeviceFreeDinner
Human Solutions

- **Use technology and watch with your child** whenever you can. This allows you to discuss and explain things as they happen and connect them in real life. Plus, it’s great bonding time!
- **Set rules.** For instance, can they take the iPad without asking? Is it their device or yours? Specific times and places to use? Consequences?
- **Have clear expectations**, and you can even rehearse with little kids: "You can play Toca Nature until you hear the timer go off. When you hear this sound, flip the cover shut! Let's practice!" With older kids, find stopping points that feel logical and less arbitrary than time limits.
- **Talk about commercials** and their purpose. You can also play a game to guess what’s being sold.
- **Encourage creativity and not just consumption.** Provide children with opportunities to code and create so that media experiences are empowering.
- It’s **never too early to talk about digital citizenship**, how to behave online, and what to do if something upsetting happens.
Managing Technology

Maturity of Child

Technology Solutions

Human Solutions

Gradual Release of Responsibility
Technology Solutions

5 Tools for Using Phones Less (and More Mindfully)
• “Digital Natives” is a term coined in 2001 by Prensky based on observations only
• No scientific studies have shown that this generation has more than superficial knowledge of technologies
  – For example: In a study on whether digital natives are more ‘technology savvy’ than their Middle School science teachers, Wang, Hsu, Campbell, Coster, and Longhurst (2014) conclude that this is not the case.
  – Analyzing data from the Federal Communication Commission's Broadband Survey about the Internet skills of adults of varying ages, [Hargittai] found that among people 50 years old and younger, there was no relationship between age and Internet know-how. Rather, higher income and higher education were related to higher web-savvy.
• Prensky has since retired the term “Digital Natives” in favor of the term “Digital Wisdom”.
The average age children are getting smartphones in the U.S. is approximately 10 years old and about 75% of kids ages 12-17 have a smartphone.

For those who haven’t taken the plunge but are getting asked by their child for a smartphone, ask yourself these questions:

– Does your child show a sense of responsibility, such as letting you know when they leave the house?
– Does your child show up when they say they will?
– Does your child tend to lose things, such as their backpack or homework folder? If so, expect they might lose an (expensive!) phone, too.
– Do you need to be in touch with your child for safety reasons?

Remember: a device is a responsibility, not a right!
Why Children Engage in Social Media

• **Self-expression:** you can create things with media

• **Family or friends:** you can consume media with them

• **Friends or fitting in:** you can communicate with them

It’s the SOCIAL in social media!
Why Children Engage in Social Media

• Regarding kids' motivation and interest in the various apps, this is a great sentiment shared in one of the focus groups:

Adults don't get it, they think I'm addicted to technology, but I'm not. I'm addicted to my friends.

• Also echoed by Danah Boyd, researcher and author: "It [tech] has become the primary place where young people can hang out with their peers. Kids want to be on these sites because that's where their friends are.

• It’s the SOCIAL in social media!
Does Social Media Alienate Tweens/Teens?

• Social media can strengthen relationships.

• It can be used to do good in the world, such as organizing around a cause or using an app like Sit With Us to be inclusive.

• Most kids are just having fun, according to the Pew Research Internet Project:
  – 57 percent of all teens have made new friends online.
  – 84 percent of boys who play networked games with friends feel more connected when they play online.
  – 68 percent of teen social media users have had online friends support them through tough or challenging times.

• Have the talk about how to use responsibly:
• "Dig Cit conversations should be as ubiquitous as the tech in their hands." - Merve Lapus - CSEd team
Social Media Red Flags

- Age-inappropriate content
- Public default settings
- Location tracking and sharing
- Real-time video streaming
- Ads and in-app purchases
- "Temporary" pics and videos
- Subpar reporting tools
- Anonymity
- Cyberbullying/negative culture
Multitasking and Mental Health

• Facts:
  – Switching between two tasks rapidly is known to decrease performance.
  – Teens are usually better at switching between two tasks but it still tires the brain and performance drops.
  – The hippocampus (part of the brain that’s responsible for learning and memory) was impacted when the brains of rats were stimulated by multiple screens. It took mice 3x as long to learn a maze, and brain changes remained.
  – Balancing screen use for school and home can be hard to manage and can lead to more multitasking.
  – If performance decreases, it can cause depression.

Source: Christakis and Ramirez, et al., 2012
Media Balance for Children
Guiding Principles for Managing Technology

• Norms:
  – Have clear expectations.
  – Make sure you and your child are on the same page and know the rules.

• Literacy & Conversation
  – Talk about commercials and their purpose.

• Use with Intention
  – Use and watch technology with your child whenever you can.
  – Encourage creativity and not just consumption.
  – Be a good role model.
Resources/Links

• **Common Sense Media**
• **danah boyd**
• **The Art of Screen Time** by Anya Kamenetz “As noted in *The Art of Screen Time*, it’s best to enjoy screens, not too much and mostly with others.” “Blending scholarly evidence and the experiences of numerous families, *The Art of Screen Time* is a well-researched and reassuring guide to raising kids in a world where technology is everywhere.” — danah boyd, author of *It’s Complicated: The Social Lives of Networked Teens*
• **There are no digital natives, only children: the importance of building a Digital Health foundation in elementary school.** By: JP Connolly
• Cal Newport - deep thinking, not superficial tech (TED talk and books), *How to Break Up with Your Phone* (book)