

Growing up Social

Raising relational kids in a screen-driven world

The Developing Brain

Knitting the brain is an ongoing process for the first 25 years of life and is most sensitive in the youngest years. Maria Montessori called it the absorbent mind.

Technology effects the neuro developement and can cause an early attachment to pleasure leading to addiction, decreased empathy, concentration and intelligence.

The Americcan Academy of Pediatrics recommend no screen time for children under the age of two and over the age of two 2 hours a day.

Screen - driven?

- Is technology bringing your family together, or driving you apart?
- Are children getting enough time learning/practicing social skills?
- Are young children spending time exploring the physical world?
- Is screen time interfering with responsibilities, relationships, or hygiene?

“It does not take long for the brain to learn to use technology, but attention, empathy, social skills, and concentration do not come quickly”

**Screens are not the problem;
the problem is the way we
constantly use them.**

Technology benefits: quick decision making, visual searches, tracking objects, access to information

Dangers: addiction, increases cortisol, cyberbullying, security dangers

The answer is **BALANCE!**

A+ Child

Your home is a training ground...

The following traits are necessary to be developed outside the use of technology and we need to be intentional and mindful in forming the whole child through our interactions with them.

Affection

- Devices connect us to people around the world, but can separate us from the people around us.
- People are becoming less affectionate in general
- Online “likes” are conditional affection. Children need to experience unconditional love from God and parents.
- Digital world makes a child more me-centered than other-centered

Appreciation

- Technology can become addictive, lead to indulgence, and ingratitude.
- Communication can be limited and misunderstood through a device. Often neglecting the grace and courtesy of greetings.
- On a device if they don't like something they move to the next icon rather than enduring a challenge. This can lead to hedonism: living and making choices based on what bring me pleasure rather than what is right.
- God is our example in parenting - sometimes He says no, sometimes wait, and sometimes yes.

Anger Management

- Coaching children through anger and other emotions are important aspects of forming their character.
- In human relationships we are able to learn and practice virtue. Devices inhibits their ability to see the emotions of the other or distract them from taking the time for deep meaningful friendships.
- Emotions are processed in real life not online or in texts.
- A child raised on computers has little patience for the pace of real life

Apology

- Modeling mercy in the flesh not on through a device allows them to learn empathy.
- Children know when we have done something wrong. When parents apologize to their children for harsh words or unfair treatment, they are doing the most effective teaching. It increases the child's respect for the parent.
- Age appropriate apology expectations are in the book

Attention

- Growing children require order, quiet, and uninterrupted time of concentrated work to develop their muscles of attention, focus, and deep thinking.
 - “When we go online, we enter an environment that promotes cursory reading, hurried and distracted thinking, and superficial learning.”
- Be a filter for your child. Your brain knows how to dismiss “information overload” but your child’s brain does not. Instead you will see their body respond with whining, irritability, and careless movements.

Taking back your home

- Only you can decide how much is too much.
- Whatever is decided, set clear boundaries.
- If you need to reel in the technology use, start by taking responsibility (example: “As parents, we failed to set technology guidelines for you...)
- Be prepared for a difficult switch away from screens

Parents and screen time

- Set the example by limiting your own screen time
- Children learn from imitating.
- It is ok to be unavailable!
- “The phone is never off, so you are never off; We are not designed to be vigilant 24/7.”
- No child wants to compete with screens for their parents’ attention.

**How can we guard our “facetime”
with God, our spouse, and our
children...**