Guide for Parents

Recommendations for Children and Teens technology use:

Setting limits + building and nurturing relationship

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Early childhood and technology use

Research has shown that technology use impacts children development.

Overuse could *reduce*:

- social-emotional and relationship skills,
- focus and attention capacity, impulse control, sleep,
- language development and communication,
- empathy
- academic achievement

Overuse could *increase* behavioral difficulties and aggressive behaviour

Technological **devices should NOT be used to control or regulate a child's emotions.**

Doing so will **obstruct development of emotional regulation**.

Steps for Offering Co-Regulation
Using your presence and calm to reset
your child's distressed brain

1 Regulate yourself
2 Get close
3 Make eye contact
4 Listen
5 Be curious & seek to understand
6 Show empathy
7 Listen again
8 Offer warm affection *(with consent)*

Early childhood and technology use

Children's cognitive, language, and social and emotional **development depends** on the quality and quantity of **HUMAN INTERACTIONS**, their **relationships** and **sensory-motor experiences** (opportunities to move and explore the world through senses) .

1. [0-2 years : NO screen time](#)
2. [2-6 years: Less than 1 hour a day of cartoon watching on TV, monitored and with parents](#)

Moreover, avoid your technology use while spending time with children (breast feeding, playing time, bed time , while eating together). - **Time for building and nurturing relationship with your children.**

Elementary age children and technology use

6-10 years old - No more then one hour a day of a good content monitored and with parents. Age appropriate, non violent, and positive role model movies, sport and educational videos and games.

- **Continue being with young kids when they use electronic devices.** Make 'out of technology time' bonding and speak with them about things you are watching together. It promotes learning, your relationship and shows your child that you care about what matters to them.

- It will **increase the chance that your children speak with you about their technology use, even later when they became teenagers and start using it independently** .

Elementary age children and technology use

Set and write technology use rules, and consequences for not respecting them,

together with your children, such as:

1. Children have to ask for permission before turning on devices.
2. Around 1 hour a day and at least one day a week without technology.Video games are allowed just during weekend
3. Turn off devices during meals and at least 1 hour before bed.
4. Turn off TVs and other devices when not in use.
5. We prioritise our relationships. No technology use during play time with friends or family, **before school and during short car rides**.

You can stick the rules on the fridge or some other visible place at your home.

It is important that **you model expected behaviour.**

*P.S: **No** Tv in the child's bedroom, personal devices, independent technology use or social media use.*

In This House

TECHNOLOGY IS A PRIVILEGE NOT A RIGHT
ALL TECHNOLOGY MUST BE PARENT APPROVED
We value people more than technology
DEVICES DON'T COME TO THE DINNER TABLE
THERE IS NO TECH BEHIND CLOSED DOORS
CHORES AND HOMEWORK COME BEFORE TV OR VIDEO GAMES
TURN IT *Off* IS NOT A NEGOTIATION
WE BREAK IT WE HELP PAY TO REPLACE IT
WE USE TECHNOLOGY APPROPRIATELY
OR WE LOSE IT

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Psychological effects of smartphones and social media overuse on teenagers

Research has shown that excessive use of **smartphone** and **social media** is associated with **different mental disorders** and decreased psychological well-being. Results demonstrate comorbidity between **overuse** and**:**

- **Depression, anxiety, OCD, sleep disturbances,**
- **attention deficits and impulsivity, emotional regulation,**
- **lower academic achievement, isolation, stress, impairment in communication and relationship with friends and family**
- **body-image concerns, feeling insecure and inadequate, strong comparison with others, "phubbing" (attending to one's phone when in the presence of others)**.

10-16 years old : Still good content - age appropriate, non violent, and positive role model movies, sport and educational videos and games. As they will start using devices also in your absence, **teach them responsible technology use.** Continue watching movies and playing games together and regularly talk with children about yours and theirs device and media use.

Before giving a personal device to your children, it is really important to:

1. Speak with children about: internet risks, safety, privacy, media's influence, healthy coping strategies to regulate emotions and psychological consequences of technology overuse.
2. Explain to children that what goes online stays online for ever and that they should never share personally identifiable or sensitive information or send inappropriate photos.
3. Put together privacy, parent control settings and apps at the highest level of security explaining that it is important and you are doing it for making sure they are safe.
4. Parents need to explain to children that they must have all passwords as from time to time they are going to check if children are safe and that they respect the rules.
5. Download together, age appropriate apps you approve, and then block the apps download on their devices and possibility to delete history.
6. Limit certain websites (porn and those that promote violence, for example).

School-age children and teenagers technology use 10-16 years old

Set rules regarding independent use of their personal devices such as:

    a.   **10-13 years -** not more than 90 minutes a day and at least one day a week without technology, except for school and homework. Video games just during weekend.

    b.   **13-16 years** - it would be better if teens use technology not more then 2 hours a day, except for school and homework.

    c.   Which apps children/teens can use and which content they can and can not watch.

    d.   No TV in the children/teens bedroom and live all devices in living room one hour before sleep. Do not use devices during meal time with family, before school and during short car rides, put a cell phone on silence.

    e.   If you see anything disturbing let a parent know immediately

    Still it is important that **you model expected behaviour.**

Moreover, agree with your children also about **consequences** for not respecting the rules, such as one day, or one week, without devices, except for school and homework. If they break any of the agreed rules it is really important that **every time you put agreed consequences in action.**

School-age children and teenagers technology use

Before a smartphone :

1. Wait at least one year so you can see if they respect the rules while using their computer. It is better if they use it **independently just for school and homework.**
2. If they would like to use it for something **not school** related, they should **ask permission and agree with you about it**.
- As your child has access to the internet at home and school, **if they're following the rules when utilizing computer, the chances of them using a smartphone safely and effectively are high.** If they don't it means they are not ready yet and you can give them a cell phone without internet access.

Social Media NOT before 13

- Firstly, just one social media (for example Whats App). If they demonstrate they do use it in a responsible way (after at least one year) maybe they could have another one.
- **Before they start using it** explain to your children that: **social media is not real life** and the **influence it** can have on us particularly on our **self-esteem and body image**.
- That they should not waste their time for passive scrolling but **use social media for conversation with friends**.
- That social media is run by a tech company **collecting data to turn a profit, while using algorithms that push specific content in front of you.**

Social Media Contract for Teens

13-16 years old

Before teens start using social media, sit with them and set

the rules for their use and **consequences** for breaking the rules,

such as:

1. Less than 1 hour per day
2. Be kind, empathic and respectful toward others
3. Speak or chat or be followed just by people you do know personally
4. As what goes online stays online, never share personally identifiable or sensitive information or inappropriate photos.
5. If you see or anything disturbing happens let a parents know immediately

Teenagers till 16 need our supervision and help to make right decisions and to repair their mistakes. If they have been following the device and social media rules demonstrating responsibility and maturity, **starting from 16**, they deserve **our trust** and **their privacy**.

SIMPLY ROOTED FAMILY

Social Media Contract for Kids

READ AND CHECK ALL:

- I will not post anything I don't want a grandmother or teacher to see
- I will never post anything that is illegal, such as underage drinking, trespassing
- I will never post my current location
- I will not cyberbully or post anything hurtful
- I will never talk to anyone that I don't know in person
- I will understand that everyone has their own views and I will not be offensive
- I will avoid posting things that I will regret in the future, such as comments out of anger

THESE RULES ARE TO KEEP ME SAFE, AND I WILL FACE THE CONSEQUENCES IF I FAIL TO FOLLOW THESE RULES

Sign Here:

Boundaries + Emotional validation = Emotional regulation

When you set boundaries to children they are probably **going to get angry.** That is OK , it is normal that children feel their feelings.

When this happens is important to sit down with them, listen and **validate their emotions**.

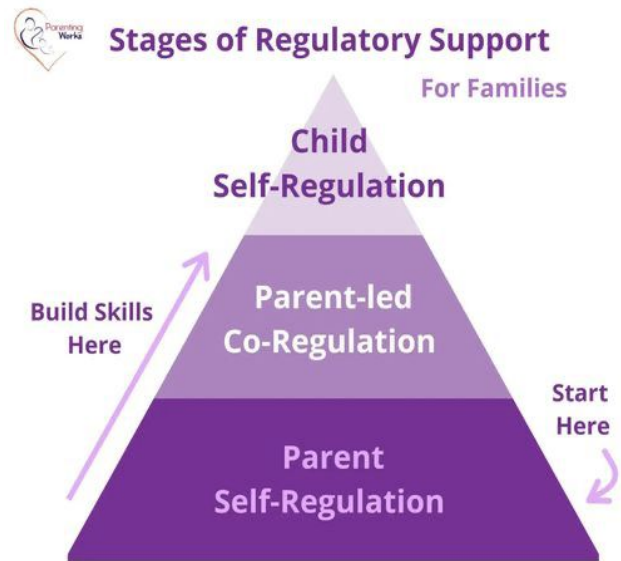However, we should **not be permissive but hold the boundaries**.

That is how we **teach emotional regulation**.

Validating emotions does not mean tolerating behaviour.

We **should not tolerate aggressive behaviour**.

Also, **we should not punish children for their anger** or any other emotion,

otherwise to be loved children will **learn to repress their emotions** which in a future

can bring to development of mental health conditions, such as **depression**.

From the other side if we **do not hold boundaries because they get angry** and if we

tolerate aggressive behaviour children will probably

learn that **with aggressive behaviour they can get what they want.**

Stages of Regulatory Support
For Families

Child Self-Regulation

Parent-led Co-Regulation

Parent Self-Regulation

Build Skills Here

Start Here

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In order for your child to learn how to regulate their own emotions and behaviors, they need to consistently experience co-regulation from you and witness you modeling self-control and coping skills. In other words, co-regulation is the foundation of all self-regulation skills!