



FAMILY'S INTRODUCTION TO SMART DEVICES

UNDERSTANDING HOW TO ENTER THE WORLD OF SCREENS WITH YOUR FAMILY THE RIGHT WAY



MENTAL HEALTH

While it is easy to hand over a tablet during moments of boredom or distress, we now know that doing so isn't always what's best for our kids' mental health.

Here are some things to remember and understand while raising your family in today's tech-obsessed world.

FAMILY GOALS

THE IMPORTANCE OF FACE-TO-FACE CONNECTIONS

Feelings of loneliness and hopelessness have been reported by adolescents in recent studies leading to heightened anxiety, depression and even suicidal thinking. The antidote to loneliness is **Oxytocin**, chemical released during face-to-face interactions that makes one feel loved and important to others.

FOCUS ON HEALTHY COPING

The quick "fix" of distraction used by screens inhibits our kids from building resilience, developing self-soothing techniques, leaning on creativity and learning to struggle through discomfort.

FOCUS ON BALANCED LIFESTYLE

Prioritizing physical activity, social interaction, academic motivation, healthy sleep habits and relaxation *without* screens is important when entering the world of tech.

Big Tech companies are aiming to create screen addiction: they have literally studied the psychology of dopamine/reward centers in the brain and how to keep consumers hooked

Social Media is highly addictive and extremely negative for the developing brain, emotional growth, mental health and safety.

SAFETY

It is important to have conversations with your child about safe internet use:

- Not "friending" a stranger
- Limiting online chatting
- Not sharing private information
- Not sending/accepting inappropriate photos
- Digital footprints do not disappear

Predators are found on video game platform and popular social media platforms to target young kids

Keeping devices in communal areas and out of bedrooms decreases the chances of inappropriate online behavior.

SOCIAL MEDIA USE

Not suggested until the age of 16, we know social media is not going away, so it is important to teach appropriate social media use and keep it to a minimum.

Some suggestions include:

Introduce one social media platform at a time with a small time limit to start off (less than an hour)

Some negatives that come with social media include:

- Screen Addiction
- Unrealistic Comparisons
- FOMO
- Lack of Sleep
- Overload of Dopamine
- Lack of Motivation
- Cyberbullying
- Victim Fishing
- Self Diagnosing
- Predators: kidnapping/trafficking, nude photos, sextortion
- Early Exposure to Pornography (avg age is 8 years old)
- Encouragement of Dangerous Behavior
- Heightened Anxiety and Depression
- +More

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