



Transforming

Tech Habits

“What is called our experience is almost entirely determined by our habits of attention.” William James

“Tech Positive” Parenting

- Not “if”, “when”. It’s a journey, not a destination.
- Media literacy is more important than tech competency
- It’s a tool not just for entertainment. Model that.
- What are my hopes and dreams for my family?
- Is this the childhood I want for my kids?
- Establish Family Rules around tech use
 - Meal times, Night times, Locations, Parental oversight and access
- *Resources: Screenwise by Devorah Heitner PhD, Taming the Beast by Jason Ohler*

Kids on Tech

- Young children: pro-connection to nature, family, self. As media free as possible.
- Tween: Executive functioning (self-control, working memory, mental flexibility) is weak until about 15 years of age. Limited access, tech time *with* parent. <https://waituntil8th.org>
- Teen: more access, but parental mentoring and monitoring.
- Cars, alcohol, and screens: all require clear and regular communication to prepare your children.
- Tech impact on self image and True North (self knowledge) vs Magnetic North (cultural comparison).
- Engage them in conversation about what they think is appropriate tech use.
- Be aware of their sensitivity to stress-causing media.
- *Resources: Raising Generation Tech, Jim Tayler, Ph.D.*

Creating Intentional Family Culture

- Family culture is how you interact, what you do, your values. Aligning with Waldorf gives children a consistent experience of the world.
- Team Family: We’re in this together and everyone is important. We are our biggest fans.
- Weekly Family Time: Tech-free connection time.

Parenting the Screen

- Be relevant and educated.
- Learn from other parents and be willing to converse.
- Consider a “sensible” phone: text + calling only.
- If a smart phone, learn to use the parental settings.
- Establish a Phone Use Contract with them. See examples under online resources.
- *Resources: CommonSenseMedia.org, Screenagers “Tech Talk Tuesday” emails,*

Personal Habits

- Tech-free day - to create space for self and silence
- Tech-free zones & times - bedroom, dining room, before breakfast, etc.
- Phone hacks - notifications off, use airplane and do-not-disturb mode. Arrange home screen based on what you want in your life: fewer distractions, more creativity.
- Creative Practice - creating beauty with your hands.
- Body practice - to reconnect to the physical.
- Mindfulness practice / Daily Review Exercise
- *Resources: Hands Free Life by Rachel Macy Stafford, Bit Literacy by Mark Hurst, The Sweet Spot by Christine Carter Ph.D., Hamlet’s Blackberry by William Powers.*

Slow Tech Media Diet for Children - Developed by Diana Graber and Patti Connolly - Adjustments/additions by Ben Kiocek

Age	How much screen time?	Non-participatory media	Participatory media	Participatory media	Participatory media	Participatory media	Participatory media	Participatory media	Participatory media	Participatory media
0-2 yrs.	Extremely limited if at all	None	<i>Participate in video calling (FaceTime, Skype, etc.)</i>	<i>Play educational apps, non-violent games (Minecraft)</i>	<i>Write emails and texts</i>	<i>Use family computer/tablet to read, watch videos, do homework, etc.</i>	<i>Have own smartphone</i>	<i>Social media (Facebook, Instagram, Snap, WhatsApp)</i>		
3-6 yrs.	Very limited, co-view with parent	None to little educational content with parent Fri-Sat.	With parent	No	To family with parent typing	No	No	No		
7-9 yrs.	Limited, co-view with parent	Educational content with parent Fri-Sat.	With parent initiating contact	Play with parent on weekends (15 min. limit)	To family with parent as child learns to type	No	No	No		
10-12 yrs.	Gradually increase, co-view with parent	Educational content with parent reviewing first, Fri-Sat.	With parent initiating contact	Play with parent on weekends (30 min. limit)	Limited with parent, as child improves typing	Read e-books, research with parent (30 min. limit)	No. Voice- or text-only phone possibly , w/ parent supervision.	No		
13-14 yrs.	Increase with limits and agreements	Age appropriate on weekends	With parent aware who child is talking with	Play on weekends (30 min. limit)	To family and friends they know in "real" life	Read e-books, research for school, complete homework	Maybe, with clear rules	Age appropriate social networks		
15-18 yrs	None at night and during school. Limits and agreements	Age appropriate on weekends	With parent aware who child is talking with	Play on weekends (60 min. limit)	To family and friends they know in "real" life.	Read e-books, research for school, complete homework	Yes, with clear rules	Age appropriate social networks		

Slow Tech Parenting Guide - By Patti Conolly

Slow Tech Parents...

- Understand that children develop the thinking and social/emotional skills needed for engaging in digital technology very slowly.
- Know that it takes years to model and teach their child these needed skills so that he/she will become an ethical, balanced, creative digital citizen.
- Have different expectations of how each of their children will engage with tech devices, depending on how old each child is and what her developmental needs are.
- Are lovingly firm about their values concerning tech use.
- See screens as tool, not just entertainment. Learn the difference between passive consumption of media (TV, DVDs, etc.) and participatory media - especially interactive apps and games. Show their child how to use their tech tools when the need arises just like they teach her to use a hammer or a broom.
- Know that for their children to develop healthy habits in using screens they gradually let them use them to learn how. (It's similar to learning how to dress. We don't wait to teach our children to dress themselves until they can do it completely on their own. We gently guide them to do more and more of it themselves until they can complete the myriad of tasks in dressing independently. The child shouldn't be on screens for hours each day, but it can't be zero either.)
- Are engaged in participatory media with their child by co-viewing/helping them figure it out.
- Say "tell me" instead of "show me". It's so easy to quickly pull up a definition, video, etc. Instead they encourage their kids to let a thought or question incubate.
- Know that it's healthy for all of use to watch an age-appropriate movie just for fun, or to watch one's favorite sports team play a game, and to listen to age-appropriate music that interests us - all with healthy limits.
- Know that when their child initiates a connection with them they need to respond with full attention. For example, they limit their own smartphone use for communication when with their child.
- Keep aware of what out there in the virtual world - the latest trends, safety issues, etc.

Slow Tech Parents Create Boundaries

- Designate "Device-Free Times" for **everyone** in the family -mealtimes bedtimes, family outings, and visits to grandparents. For sleep to be restful they shut down all devices one hour before bedtime.
- Ban handheld devices in all bedrooms.
- Have a family computer in the busiest room in the house and place the charging station for all devices in one central location.
- Watch only one device at a time together when they are viewing. All eyes on one screen!
- Create clear boundaries for their children on how to use technology based on age, academic need, and types of devices (See "Slow Tech Media Diet for Children" handout).

Family Screen Culture Plan

Why do you want to change relationship to screens? What are your concerns? What are you hoping the outcome will be?

Strategies: Which ones appeal? (check all that apply and pick the easiest one to focus on first)

Reducing screen time:

- More family-time Airplane mode when with people Leave at home on walks
 Screen-free times/days Screen-free zones _____

Introducing screen time:

- Supervised screen learning Digital communication with family Family media time
 Create a contract Weekly tech talks Educational apps/games _____

Barriers: What are the likely barriers to implementing this strategy?

Strengths for overcoming the barrier. How have you overcome similar barriers in the past? What personal traits do you have?

Resources: What do you have or need to actualize this strategy? For reduction, what substitutions can you use, e.g. have a good book handy to use in place of going onto the screen, or activities like crafts, board games?

Social Support: Who can help you when you need support, a different perspective, etc.? Co-parent, therapist, relative, neighbor, friend.

1st Step: What do you need to do first, second, third to get started?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Commit to do this by _____ (*date*). Connect with your social support on that date to talk through how it went.

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Personal and Family Commitments

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Personal

- I choose _____ to be my tech-free day
- I have turned off non-essential notifications on my phone.
- I am taking time to sit quietly, away from screens. Even just 10 intentional minutes a week.
- I acknowledge that my kids will model my behavior, good and bad.
- I use my phone in ways that serve my highest good.
- _____
- _____

Family

- Moderate use of tech in home. Don't go overboard.
- People before screens. Put the device away when you are with someone.
- Learning: Real world first, then books, then internet. Build knowledge and understanding, not information.
- The dinner table is a media-free zone.
- No phones in bedrooms.
- Screens off 1 hour before bedtime.
- Tech use only in the Family Tech Zone (a public easy to supervise area in the home).
- All screens will be monitored. We will use it together while kids learn.
- No texting and driving. The kids can call it on the parents.
- _____
- _____