

*SOCIAL MEDIA  
AND  
PROTECTING  
YOUR CHILD'S  
SENSE OF SELF*

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## *SCOPE OF THIS TALK*

- Our children will all use social media to some degree during their lives, they are technology natives
- This is a complex topic and focus for this talk today is supporting your relationship with your child while setting healthy limits

*SOCIAL MEDIA IS ATTENTION ALCOHOL,*  
*DEREK THOMPSON, THE ATLANTIC, SEPT. 17. 2021*

INSTAGRAM



*"Here is a fun product that millions of people seem to love; that is unwholesome in large doses; that makes a sizable minority feel more anxious, more depressed, and worse about their bodies; and that many people struggle to use in moderation."*

FACEBOOK



*"In 2020 The company's own users told its research team that its products were akin to a mildly addictive depressant."*

# *IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA*

"Evidence from a variety of cross-sectional, longitudinal and empirical studies implicate smartphone and social media use in the:

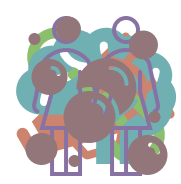
- increase in mental distress,
- self-injurious behaviour and
- suicidality among youth;

**there is a dose–response relationship**, and the effects appear to be greatest among girls."

**Smartphones, social media use and youth mental health**

Elia Abi-Jaoude, Karline Treurnicht Naylor and Antonio Pignatiello

CMAJ February 10, 2020



# *SOCIAL MEDIA TAKES ADVANTAGE OF OUR COGNITIVE VULNERABILITIES*

**Creating urgency** - notifications, banners, vibrations etc

**Encouraging constant seeking** – infinite scroll, recommendations, links

**Engaging with negative content** – brains are velcro for negative

**Comparing ourselves with others** – our brains pay close attention to info about ourselves, trying to help us fit in socially

**Isolating us in bubbles** – curating our feed, limiting our perceptions

Source: <https://www.humanetech.com/youth/social-media-and-the-brain>



# *WHEN ARE THEY READY?*

Age recommended for using:

User guides say age 13.

Instagram? 15

Tik Tok? 15

Snapchat? 16

Ages based on recommendation from  
Common Sense Media



*THE  
SOCIAL  
DILEMMA  
– BONUS  
CLIP*



# Warning Signs

- **Unsuccessful control** child has a hard time stopping use of tech
- **Loss of interest in other activities or preoccupation with screens**
- **Interference with family time**
- **Screen time is a source of conflict**
- **Withdrawal** child becomes frustrated when cannot use screens
- **Screen time is increasing**
- **Deception** child sneaks screen time

*What is your child's emotional relationship with media?*



# *WE CAN DO BETTER*

Former Facebook employee and whistleblower Frances Haugen testifies during a Senate Committee on Capitol Hill, in Washington on Oct. 5

Facebook choosing "profits over safety".



# *DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH*

## YOUNGER CHILDREN

- Clear parental limits
- Family media plan
- Tech free time

## ADOLESCENTS

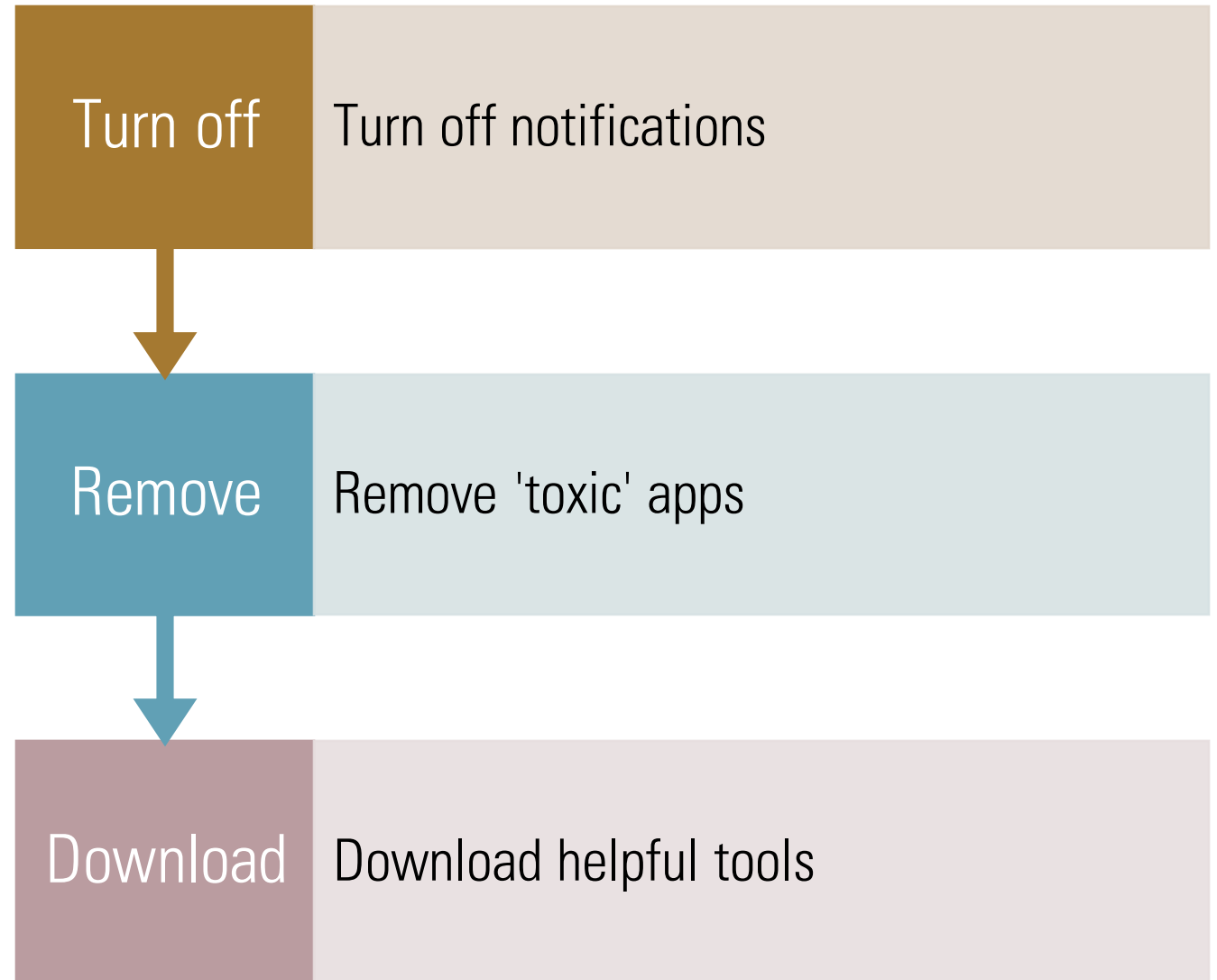
- Open discussion focused on positive engagement and guidance
- Harm reduction

**Modelling a positive relationship with social media**

# Media Smarts – 4 Ms of screen time

Minimize	Minimize screen time, especially for younger children
Mindful	Be mindful about media use
Mitigate	Mitigate media effects by being aware of the kind of use
Model	Model good media use for your kids

# *TAKE CONTROL - TECH STRATEGIES*



# BECOME SOCIAL MEDIA SCIENTISTS

## **ACTIVITY:**

In a notebook, create a simple chart like this one:

<b>APP</b>	<b>TIME OF DAY/TIME USED</b>	<b>OBSERVATIONS</b>	<b>HOW IT MADE ME FEEL</b>
Snapchat	Morning/30 minutes	I wanted to do my homework, but I kept getting notified to keep talking to my friend	I was frustrated that I couldn't just ignore it
Instagram	After school/An hour, in and out	A group of friends took selfies showing off new makeup	I felt bad that I can't afford new makeup, and stressed about how tired I looked



# *PLAN AND RESPOND*

- If allowing for social media or general tech use - Consider having dedicated time for mindful use rather than mindless scrolling
- Be compassionate with others in these relationships
- Set boundaries (device free dinners, separate alarm clock)

*BUT ALL  
MY FRIENDS  
HAVE TIK TOK!*



- Acknowledge the emotion
- Stance of being calm and connected
- Provide gentle firm guidance and limits
- Structure creates safety
- Develop other ways to connect

# *RELATIONSHIP IS KEY*

CHILDREN DON'T NEED YOU  
TO BE PERFECT, THEY NEED  
YOU TO BE PRESENT.

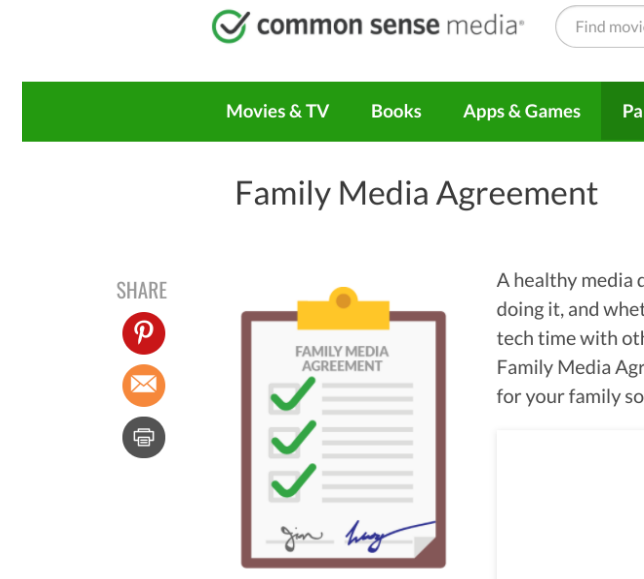


Image credit: María Medem



# HAVING CONVERSATIONS AS A FAMILY

- If parenting with a partner, find time to discuss together in advance
- Use **Yes, when** - ex. "Yes you can have tik tok, when you are 14".
- Resources -family media agreement



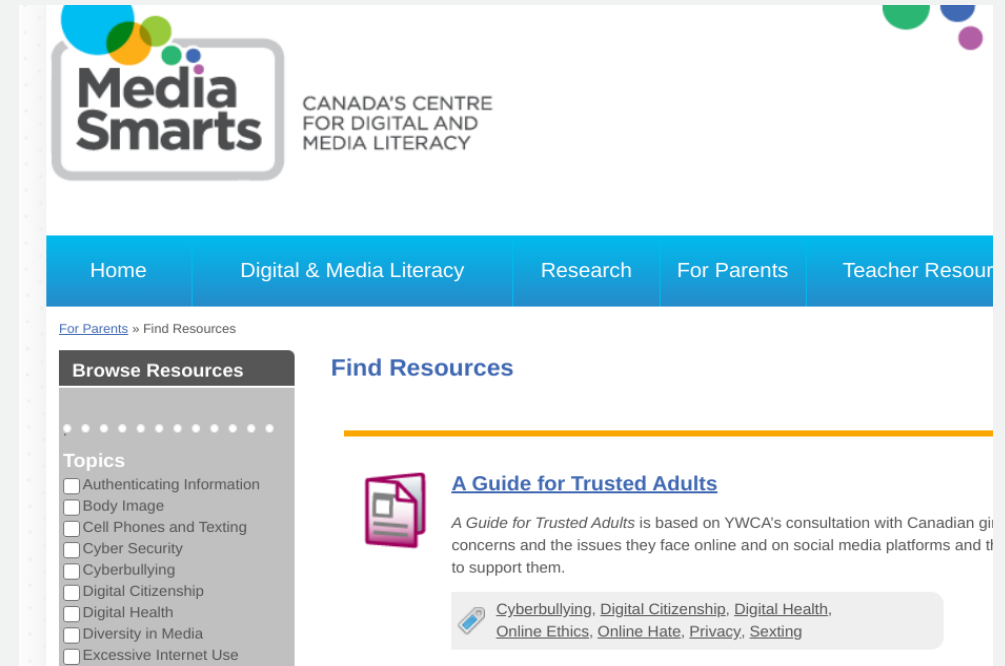


## *PROTECTIVE FACTORS*

Graphic source: <https://www.mindfulnessfirst.org/blog/a-protective-factors>

# Resources for other connected issues

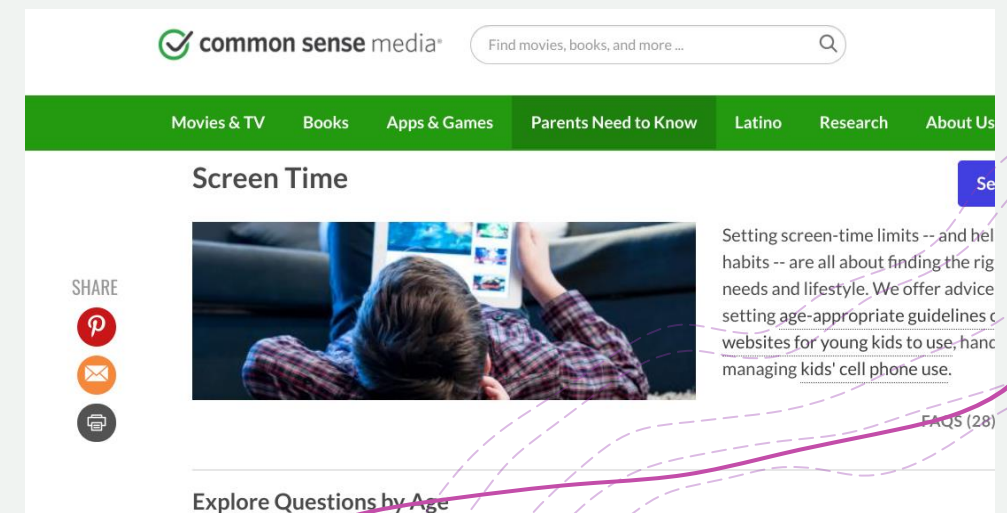
- + Cyberbullying
- + Digital Citizenship
- + Online Ethics
- + Privacy
- + Excessive Gaming or internet use



The screenshot shows the Media Smarts website, which is Canada's Centre for Digital and Media Literacy. The navigation bar includes Home, Digital & Media Literacy, Research, For Parents, and Teacher Resources. A 'Find Resources' section is visible, featuring a 'Browse Resources' sidebar with a list of topics such as Authenticating Information, Body Image, Cell Phones and Texting, Cyber Security, Cyberbullying, Digital Citizenship, Digital Health, Diversity in Media, and Excessive Internet Use. The main content area highlights a resource titled 'A Guide for Trusted Adults', which is based on YWCA's consultation with Canadian girls and young women about their online and social media concerns.



The screenshot displays the Youth Toolkit website, part of the Center for Humane Technology. The header includes navigation links for Podcast & Film, Toolkits, Course, Research, Community, and About Us. The main image shows a group of diverse young people sitting together, engaged in a discussion. The text 'Youth Toolkit' is prominently displayed, followed by the tagline 'Everyone who uses social media deserves to know how it works.' and the version information 'ALPHA VERSION - Updated August 17, 2021'.



The screenshot shows the Common Sense Media website, which provides resources for parents and educators. The navigation bar includes Movies & TV, Books, Apps & Games, Parents Need to Know, Latino, Research, and About Us. The main content area features a 'Screen Time' article, which discusses the importance of setting screen-time limits and finding the right needs and lifestyle. The article includes a search bar, social sharing options (Pinterest, Email, Print), and a 'FAQs (28)' link.



# Questions and Discussion