



Welcome to 'Harbucks' Virtual Coffee House

Children and Smartphones Part I
March 5, 2021



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Ask the Experts...



- **Today we are asking:**
 - **How should kids use cell/smartphones?**
 - **What age are they emotionally ready?**
- **The general answer: (ease into use)**
 - **Start out: smartphone or cell: only to call/text trusted others, no internet**
 - **Older: manage not eliminate use**
- **Literature review with resources from 2016, 2017, 2019, 2020**
- **Advice on easing into social media use**



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Cell Phone Fears



- Cell phone overtaking the child's life
- Causing anxiety, depression
- Downward/upward comparisons
- Likes affect self-esteem in the moment
- FOMO
- App addictions
- Loss of interest in previously loved activities
- Exposure to pornography





What's the Difference Between a Smartphone and a Cell phone?



- Smartphones (mini-computer) allow internet access, calls/texting, downloading apps, data for browsing on the run
- Cell phone (dumb phone as it was referred in one article) only allows calls and texts
- Verizon, AT&T have family plans that turn a smartphone into a dumb phone





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Theories...



- **There are different theories about kids and smartphones/cell phone use**
- **Here are the most popular theories...**



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American Academy of Pediatrics' Theory

American Academy
of Pediatrics



DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™

- **Create a family media plan to spell out use**
- **Family values/spend time together**
- **Every child is different - follow maturity not necessarily age**
 - Age range is typically 12-14
- **Limit screen time and technology:**
 - https://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families_and_Youth/Facts_for_Families/FFF-Guide/Children-And-Watching-TV-054.aspx



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The Bill Gates Theory



- **Wait until age 14**
- **No smartphones or cell phones at the dinner table**
- **No technology after a certain hours so you can get to sleep**



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The Common Sense Media Theory



- **Between the ages of 12-14**
- **Depends on:**
 - **Child's maturity**
 - **Ability to follow rules and guidelines**
 - **Sense of responsibility**
- **CEO James P. Steyer: wait until child is in high school and only when child can demonstrate restraint and face to face communication skills, kids vary**





The Harvard Graduate School of Education's Theory



- Lay groundwork on healthy and responsible device use
- Be a good role model
- Understand how child uses tech at school
- Rely less on texting your child
- Develop rules and guidelines
- Cater rules to individual child and evolve rules



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The Wait Until 8th Theory



- A pledge that empowers parents to delay giving children smartphones until at least 8th grade and rally other parents in the school to make the pledge active
- Get a basic phone that allows calls and texting without a data plan
- waituntil8.org



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Okay, Let's Get Specific...



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Guidelines for Phone Use for Kids



- **Age 4-6**
 - **Should not be using smartphones**
 - **2-5 yrs.: screen time < 1 hr./day**
 - **< 2 yrs. → no screen time at all**
 - **Damaging to brain development (dopamine)**
 - **Physical activity**
 - **Social skills**
 - **Harmless videos → inappro videos**



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Guidelines for Phone Use for Kids



- **Age 7-9**
 - **No phones**
 - **Or if child needs to reach you:**
 - **Flip phone - call/text only**
 - **Smartphone - no internet, no data, call/text only**
 - **Absolutely no social media: FB, Insta, Snapchat**





Guidelines for Phone Use for Kids



- **Age 10-12**
 - **Phones with strict limits**
 - **No phones**
 - **Or a flip phone to keep in touch/calls**
 - **Or a smartphone with call/text only, no internet, data**
 - **Absolutely no social media: FB, Insta, Snapchat**





Guidelines for Phone Use for Kids



- **Age 10-12**
 - **Protects against**
 - **Gaming/addiction**
 - **Peer validation**
 - **Sedentary lifestyle**
 - **Particularly potentially harmful for girls**
 - **Family contract**
 - **Non-punitive/no threats/honesty**





Guidelines for Phone Use for Kids



- **Over 12 years**
 - **12-14 consider a flip phone or smartphone without internet access**
 - **Consider a provider family plan**
 - **Consider a non-punitive and respectful family contract**
 - **Limit screen time and apps**
 - **Includes screen free times of day/weekends/black out times**





Tips for Parents of 12 and Over..



- **Stand/Band/Teach:**
 - **Stand your ground: Don't cave in**
 - **Wait until 16 - she will catch up quickly**
 - **Band together with other parents:**
 - waituntil8th.org
 - **Social media = popularity contest**
 - **It's okay not to get "likes"**
 - **Encourage outside interests**





Look into Cell Phones and Plans for Kids

- Sept 2020: Best phones for kids:
<https://www.allconnect.com/blog/best-phones-for-kids>



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Look into Cell Phone Plans for Kids



- **Example #1: Verizon**
 - **Smart Family Plan:**
 - Limits calls, texts and purchases, blocks contacts, monitors web activity, pauses internet access and tracks child's location
 - **Add Just Kids to Smart Family Plan**
 - Child lines can send calls and text to/from trusted contacts
 - 20 trusted contacts
 - Must be a smartphone
 - Time restrictions/911 reset





Look into Cell Phone Plans for Kids



- **Example #2: AT&T**
 - **Secure Family Plan:**
 - Tracks locations, pauses wi-fi, limits or blocks internet access
 - Installs as an app on up to 2 smartphones
 - You can block WhatsApp and FaceTime
 - Must be a smartphone





Next Steps? Talk to Your Child...



- **Discuss your fears**
- **Discuss your hopes**
 - **Having a well-adjusted child**
 - **Someone who doesn't need social media validation**
 - **Someone who is able to preserve their youth**
- **How do we manage phones to protect those goals?**
- **How can your child be part of that?**





Resources

- **Guidelines Around Screen Time for Kids:**
<https://www.todaysparent.com/family/parenting/an-age-by-age-guide-to-kids-and-smartphones/>
- **Here's How Much Screen Time Children Should Actually Be Getting:**
<https://www.todaysparent.com/kids/kids-health/all-th-at-screen-time-does-real-life-harm-heres-how-much-kids-should-actually-be-getting/>





Resources

- **Technology Addiction, Concerns, Controversy and Finding Balance:**
https://www.common sense media.org/sites/default/files/uploads/research/csm_2016_technology_addiction_research_brief_0.pdf
- **Waituntil8th.org: let kids be kids a little longer**
<https://www.waituntil8th.org/>





Resources

- **Infants' Attention Span Suffers When Parents Eyes Wander During Playtime:**
<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2016/04/160428131954.htm>
- **Five Simple Steps to a Healthy Family Media Diet:**
<https://www.common sense media.org/blog/5-simple-steps-to-a-healthy-family-media-diet>





Resources

- **Six Simple Ways to Get a Handle on Your Child's Screen Time:**
<https://www.todaysparent.com/kids/6-simple-ways-to-get-a-handle-on-your-kids-screen-time/>
- **Our Kids are Addicted to Screens...**
<https://www.todaysparent.com/family/study-our-kids-are-addicted-to-screens-and-its-our-fault/>
- **Age by Age Guide to Using Smartphones:**
<https://www.todaysparent.com/family/parenting/an-age-by-age-guide-to-kids-and-smartphones/>





Resources

- **When Should Your Kid Have a Phone: A Real Conversation:**
<https://freedomsprouit.com/children-phone-age/>
- **Theories of When to Get your Kid a Phone:**
<https://www.allconnect.com/blog/right-age-to-give-child-smartphone>
- **When Should Kids Get Smartphones: Survey:**
<https://www.pandasecurity.com/en/mediacenter/panda-security/when-should-kids-get-smartphones/>





Resources

- **What's the Right Age for Parents to Get Their Kids a Cell Phone?**

<https://www.common sense media.org/cellphone-parenting/whats-the-right-age-for-parents-to-get-their-kids-a-cellphone>

- **Bill Gates Says This is the Safest Age to Give Kids a Smartphone:**

<https://www.inc.com/melanie-curtin/bill-gates-says-this-is-the-safest-age-to-give-a-child-a-smartphone.html>





Follow-up Ideas From our Discussion

- **FaceBook Kids**
- **Buying a less expensive or refurbished smartphone**
- **Safety using the internet in schools**
- **Blocking “unwelcome texters”**
- **Helping children deal with peer pressure to have a phone**
- **Helping children see how phone use gets in the way of real living**



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**THANK YOU
FOR JOINING US!**



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