



# INSIGHTS ON ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT

FROM YOUR DIVISION DIRECTORS AND COUNSELORS

## HELLO!

We hope you all had restful and joyful Thanksgiving holidays. We are excited to be using this month's newsletter to focus on a topic that many of you have expressed concern and frustration about: social media. While technology and social media have many positive impacts in our lives, there are also valid drawbacks and dangers that are difficult to navigate. We've compiled valuable resources and practical guidance to help foster healthy digital habits. We're also excited to share a few upcoming engagement opportunities and hope you'll join us as we work together to empower our students in the digital age.

Thank you for your partnership and commitment to our community!

*Danielle Wattleton-Anderson, Lia Gerety, Lauren Garrett, and Kate Smith*

## WHAT DO YOU NOT KNOW ABOUT SNAPCHAT AND DISCORD?

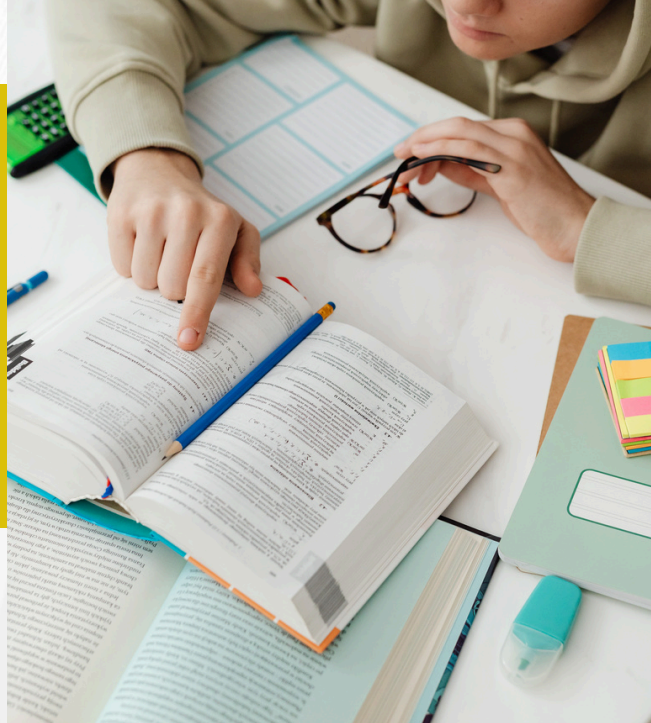


Do you have a teen or preteen who is begging you to allow them to get Snapchat? Or maybe your teen already has Snapchat but you have some worries about how they might be using it. In this monthly newsletter Laura Tierny, founder of The Social Institute (our program partner), answers these types of questions from parents!

This newsletter gives us some insight on Snapchat: **Why is 13 the Minimum Age for Most Social Media Apps?**

Discord is one of the less known social media platforms that is popular amongst teens. While it may seem like an innocuous chat room, it can be a hot bed of cyberbullying, inappropriate content, predatory behavior, and substance promotion if appropriate boundaries and expectations are not set.

Explore this article to learn more about Discord and how to keep your child safe: **Is Discord Safe for Kids?**



## AT A GLANCE

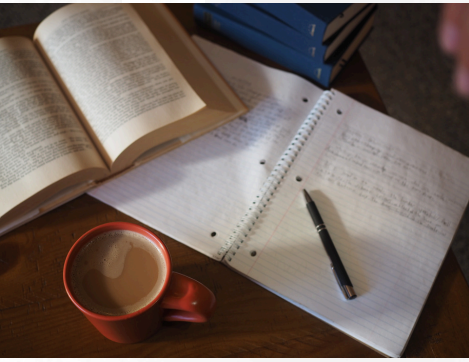
- 1) HIGHLIGHTED ARTICLES
- 2) PARENT GUIDE TO SOCIAL MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY
- 3) UNPLUGGED WEEK
- 4) UPCOMING CHANCE FOR PARENT EDUCATION
- 5) EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING TIPS
- 6) HIGHLIGHTED LESSONS FROM THE SOCIAL INSTITUTE



## OPPORTUNITY FOR PARENT EDUCATION

This Spring's Parent/Counselor book club book will be ***The Screentime Solution: A Judgement Free Guide to Becoming a Tech-Intentional Family*** by Dr. Emily Cherkin.

We will be partnering with Dr. Cherkin to attend our book club discussions and provide her expert insight! More information TBD.



## PARENT GUIDE TO SOCIAL MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY

*Click the link below to explore!*



[Guide on Social Media & Technology](#)



## Unplugged Week: December 9 - 13



### ***What is Unplugged Week?***

**Unplugged Week is a student run Miree Center initiative aimed at helping students step away from their phones and focus on school, especially with exams approaching.** During this week, students will have the opportunity to give up their phones for an entire school day. By doing so, they'll not only improve their focus and productivity but also have the chance to win prizes.

Throughout the week, students will also learn about and understand the impact of excessive screen time through educational sessions. We encourage parents to join this effort by reflecting on their child's screen usage and supporting them in taking steps to create healthier phone habits.

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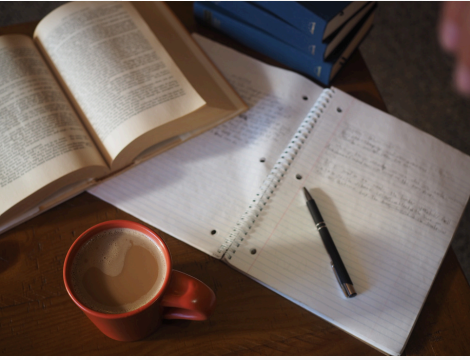
**We need YOUR help: Please take a moment to fill out this [quick form](#) (double click to access link) to share your thoughts and provide insight into how your family manages phone usage.**

Below, we've also included resources for parents to learn more about the screen time issue and strategies to address it:

#### Resources for Parents

- YouTube Video: A lecture by Dr. Jared Cooney Horvath summarizing the screen time problem.  
[Watch the video here.](#) (double click to access link)
- Books:
  - *Stolen Focus* by Johan Hari
  - *The Chaos Machine* by Max Fisher
  - *Anxious Generation* by Jonathan Haidt





## HIGHLIGHTED LESSONS FROM THE SOCIAL INSTITUTE

We invite you and your family to join us in our partnership with The Social Institute. These lessons provide a great opportunity to explore important and sensitive topics through a developmentally appropriate lens. Here are some lessons that we recommend by grade level:

- 5th - Reflecting Our Values in the Content We Consume
- 6th - Knowing When to Put Your Guard Up Against Strangers Online
- 7th - Recognizing How Much We Are Influenced By Influencers
- 8th - A Positive Reputation on Social Media
- 9th and 10th - How Companies Use Media to Advertise Substances
- 11th and 12th - Sharpen Your Online Presence for Colleges and Employers

## EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING TIPS - EXAM PREPARATION

Executive functioning skills are the skills that we use on a daily basis to make decisions, problem solve, manage our emotions and impulses, and organize our thoughts and tasks. These skills are crucial for success. With exams approaching for 7th - 12th graders, we'd like to highlight a few strategies that may be useful for exam preparation.



1. **Make a schedule!** Students should take time to consider what will go in to studying for each of their exams, or finishing a paper/project for a class. After identifying what steps need to be taken for each class, they can outline a schedule that will keep them on task and help to decrease stress. Advisors and counselors can help with this process if need be.
2. **Start early!** Don't wait until the last minute to start studying, by beginning a few weeks out, students can study in small chunks, return to material that is challenging, ask pertinent questions as they come across them, and ensure that information has had time to cement in their long-term memory!
3. **Consider studying with a group!** Studying with a group gives students the chance to discuss information, share study tactics, answer each other's questions, and reinforce materials by helping peers. This can be a more engaging than studying alone!