

Raising Kids in a Digital World: Making Sense of Research and Headlines



Are Today's Teenagers Smarter and Better Than We Think?

www.nytimes.com



Have Smartphones Destroyed a Generation?

More comfortable online than out partying, post-Millennials are safer, physically, been. But they're on the brink of a mental-health crisis.



Teens say they're addicted to technology. Here's how parents can help.

www.washingtonpost.com

Half of of all teens say they feel addicted to their mobile devices.

That's right, 50 percent of teens *actually admitted* that they feel addicted. Just imagine what the real number is.

Not only do teens feel they can't put their devices down, but their parents know it (59 percent) and many parents themselves can't put their own devices down (27 percent).

This according to a new report by Common Sense Media, which also found that teens feel their parents are addicted as well.

"Digital devices have transformed people's lives. They are changing everything from parent-child relationships, to human interaction, to our ability to focus on the task at hand," said James Steyer, founder and chief executive of Common Sense, an organization that studies and rates media and technology for kids and families. "And particularly for young people who are growing up as digital natives. It has public health concerns."

What are the big issues?

Excessive exposure to media has small, but measurable negative effects:

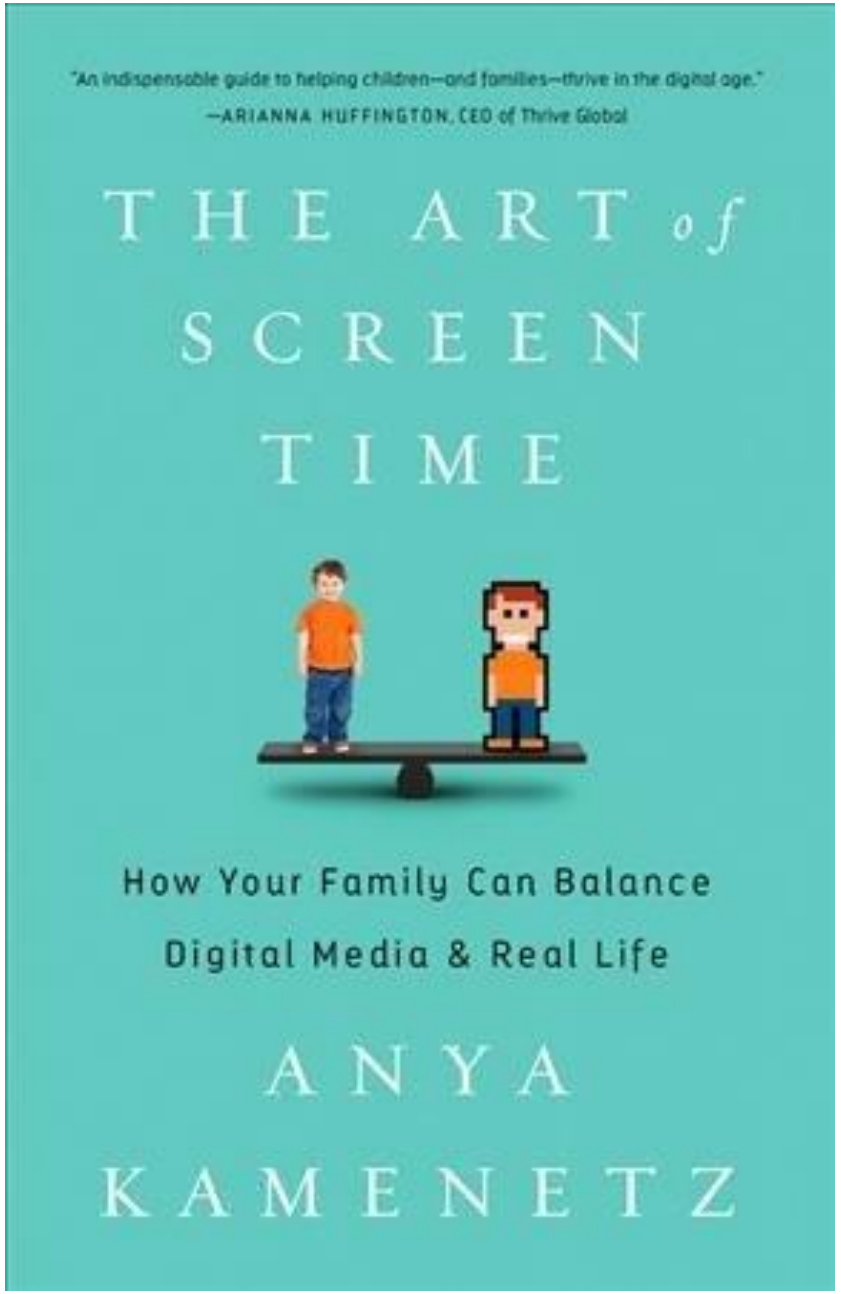
1. Sleep
   a. Light from screen – harder to fall asleep
   b. Choosing content over sleep (binge watching…)
   c. Exposure to cortisol (stress hormone) inducing content
2. Obesity
3. Depression, Anxiety, Attention
4. Aggression
5. Addiction





“A lot of the research, in order to get published, they focus on the harms”





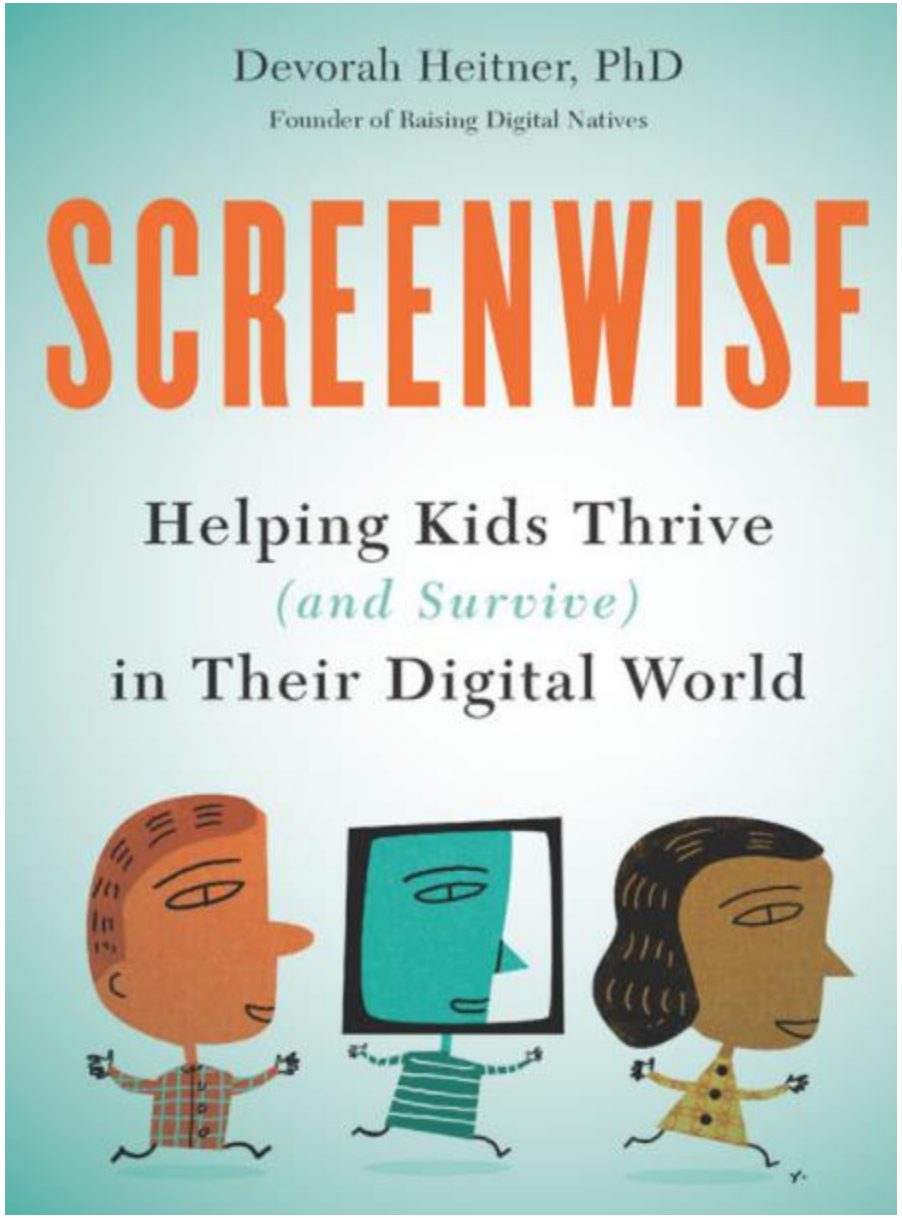
Guiding Principles



Enjoy Screens

Not Too Much

Mostly Together



Mentoring

- Developing digital skill set is a priority
- It's not about skills – it's about relationships
- Digital literacy requires mentorship
- Mentors don't want to catch the wrong thing, they want to teach the right thing
- Raising digital citizens is our responsibility

Parental rules and attitudes about technology make a measurable, positive impact at any age.

Screens and Sleep Don’t Mix

It’s ok to set time limits.

It’s also ok to set limits and priorities together.

Practice joint media engagement and active mediation some of the time.

Observe screen-free occasions together

Bottom Line: Responsible, positive tech use in kids who experience trust and support.

Practical ways to work together: