SCREENWISE: Helping Kids Thrive and Survive in Their Digital World

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What's really at stake?   Relationships   Reputation   Time

"True screen wisdom is about relationships. It's about the kinds of connections we can have with one another. It's about trust. And balance." D. Heitner

Our Current Reality

- need to "wrest family life out of the greedy clutches of distraction"
- the family album has migrated to social media
- Sherry Turkle's "alone together"
- children growing up too fast
- parents judging and feeling judged

Three main parental approaches to technology:

- Limiters: use a restrictive/protective approach to tech without much meaningful interaction about tech with the kids

- Enablers: take a more laissez-faire approach - neither limiting nor mentoring - the kids are left to their own devices

- Mentors: engage with their kids about technology - talk regularly about use of tech, apps, games, etc. and interface with their kids on tech
        a more intentional approach
                YOU be the source of tech literacy
                        approachable, calm, informed, realistic

Parenting in a Fishbowl

- judging and feeling judged
- competing perspectives on what should be allowed
- not feeling free to open up to other parents about fears and uncertainties
- children's "media mistakes" are often very public - parents often feel this is a reflection on them

Choosing your sources of info carefully

- Alarmists and the clueless
- Do your homework
- Partner with the sane and reasonable

Becoming a "tech-positive" parent - What does that look like?

- She creates a tech-positive environment, which include planned, unplugged spaces and places.
- He thinks about his relationship with his own devices and recognizes that his behavior sets the tone for the whole family.
- She is the model of civility in her online and offline correspondence with friends, colleagues, her child's teacher, etc.
- He teaches and models respect for other people's boundaries in the digital world, asking permission before sharing and posting.
- She uses the power of technology to make a difference in the world.

Apps and games to encourage:

- games that encourage cooperation and collaboration in problem solving
- apps that encourage your child to connect with others
- games that don't oversexualize female characters or feature unlawful behavior
- games that encourage kids to create, not just play

Collaborating against distraction:

- No double-screening
- Start homework unplugged
- Use tech to fight tech
- Turn off the tech at will
- Talk about your struggles, too

Empathy as a core family value:

- Motivations
- Environment
- Teaching empathy
- Modeling empathy
- Relationships are more important than technology

What are your family's distinctive values?

Do your children know what they are?

How do they know?

The stakes have never been higher . . .

Mentoring over Monitoring

Faith over Fear

Prayer over Panic

Ephesians 6:12 *For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.*