Proven Ministries

PARENTS' DIGITAL PLAYBOOK

For Purity

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Parental Controls on All Devices

This section outlines how to create a risk-free, limited-temptation digital environment for your kids. Below you'll find a simple step-by-step guide for using parental controls to protect your kids from harmful content.

Apple users, meet Screen Time.

Apple provides a fantastic parental control and usage tracking feature called Screen Time. Screen Time uses a passcode to control access to certain features. The majority of the apps and features on an Apple device can be restricted via Screen Time. This will create a buffer against porn and other inappropriate content.

A significant perk of Apple's screen time feature is that it can be used on all Apple devices, not just iPhones. If your kids have Macs, iPads, or any other Apple products, these can be locked down easily using Screen Time.

If You're an Android family, fear not.

Unfortunately, Android phones do not have the same built-in parental controls that Apple products do. However, there are a number of excellent third-party apps that can help you monitor your kids' Android devices. We highly recommend Bark, which is an app that will be explored in the pages to follow. Bark is a subscription-based app that gives Android families powerful parental control tools for a small monthly fee.

5 Steps for Apple Users
## Setting up the Screen Time Feature

Step One: Open the Settings App on Your Device
Scroll down until you see the "Screen Time" menu option. Each of Screen Time's parental control features are accessible from here. On a Mac, Screen Time can be accessed in System Preferences.

Step Two: Set a Screen Time Passcode
Once you open the Screen Time Menu, you'll find "Use Screen Time Passcode" written in blue near the center of the menu. From this screen, you can create a passcode which locks down your parental control settings you create for your kids' Apple devices. Push the "Set a Screen Time Passcode" button shown right, and type in a four-digit code of your choosing. Be sure the number you choose isn't a number your kids would know, and be sure it's one you will not forget!
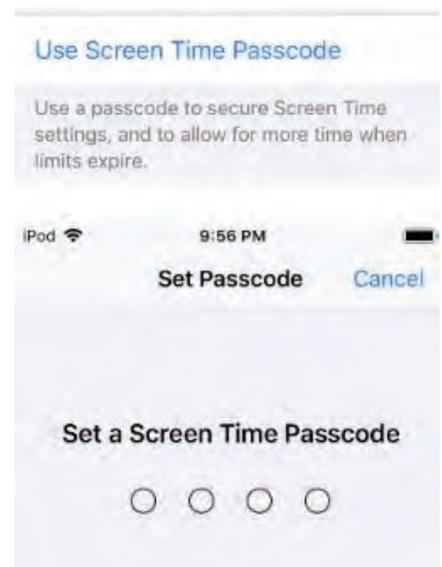
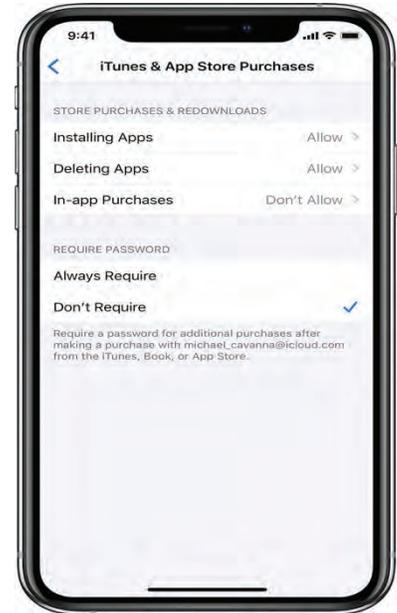## Step Three: Content & Privacy Restrictions
The Content & Privacy Restrictions section in Screen Time has three main options for protecting your kids on their devices. Inside the Content & Privacy Restrictions menu in Screen Time, you will find these three options. The iTunes & App Store Purchases option can be used to prevent your children from downloading apps on their devices without your permission. The Allowed Apps option can be used to turn off Safari, the built-in web browser on Apple devices. Finally, the Content Restrictions option lets you block any porn or other inappropriate content with the flip of a switch. Below are instructions for how to use each of these features.

iTunes and App Store Purchases

Using the Screen Time Content and Privacy Restrictions features, you can disable the App Store and make it accessible only by passcode.

In the "Store Purchases & Redownloads" section (shown right), turn off the "Installing Apps" option, and, if necessary, the "Deleting Apps" option as well. Under "Require Password," select "Always Require," so that your kids cannot download apps without you. Only let your kids download an app with your permission. If they are old enough, they should be able to give you a pitch for why an app would be beneficial to have. Look through each new app's features with your kids. Pay attention to any potential loopholes in an app that can expose your kids to inappropriate content.

Allowed Apps

This section of the Content & Privacy Restrictions menu opens to a list of apps that come installed on your kids' Apple devices. These include Mail, Camera, Facetime, and, most importantly, Safari. If you have concerns about your child having internet access, turn the Safari switch off (it is green when it is on). Other apps can also be disabled as needed, depending on your child's age and specific needs and struggles.
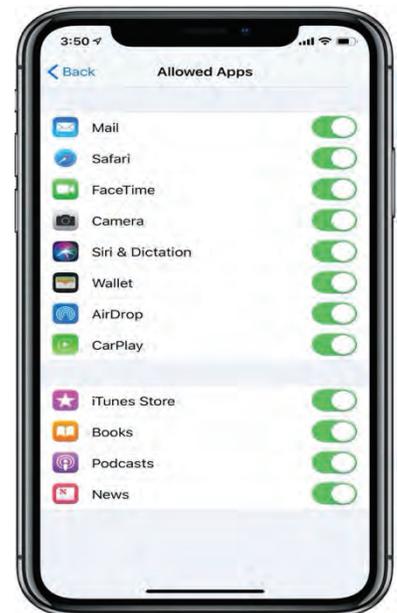
Content Restrictions

Screen Time allows you to easily enable restrictions on several types of inappropriate content; anything from porn to explicit music.

When you first open the Content Restrictions menu, you will see multiple sections, including Apps, Web Content, Music, Movies and TV Shows. However, your highest priority should be to block adult websites in the Web Content section. Beyond this, the other restrictions can come in handy, especially for younger children.
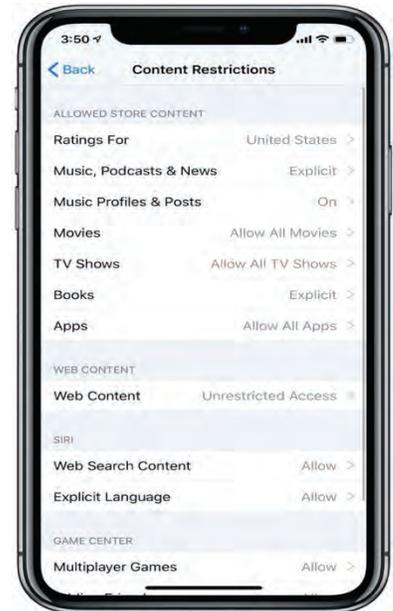
Step Four: Set Time Restrictions using Downtime

Downtime (Right) is an incredibly helpful Screen Time feature that disables all apps at a certain time every day. Implementing this feature in particular for your kids (and yourself) helps create a habitual period of digital rest during each day.
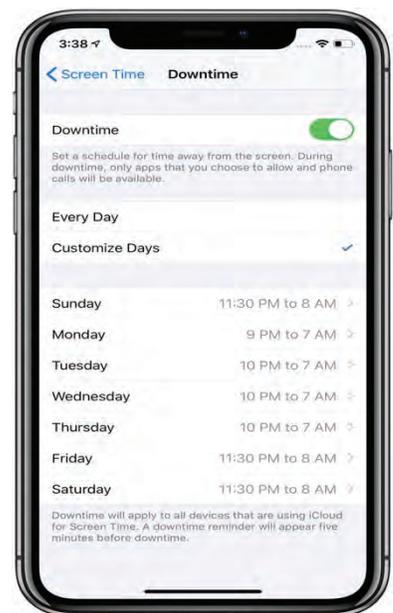
"All things are lawful for me," but not all things are helpful...
- 1 Corinthians 6:12

App Limits

Screen Time also allows you to put time limits (right) on individual apps. This feature can be helpful if your kids like to play mobile games or use social media. Be conservative in your time allowances for these apps! You can restrict specific apps or categories of apps (games, social media, etc.). You can even restrict all apps if that's necessary. Once an app's time limit is reached, Screen Time locks the app, making it only accessible with a passcode.
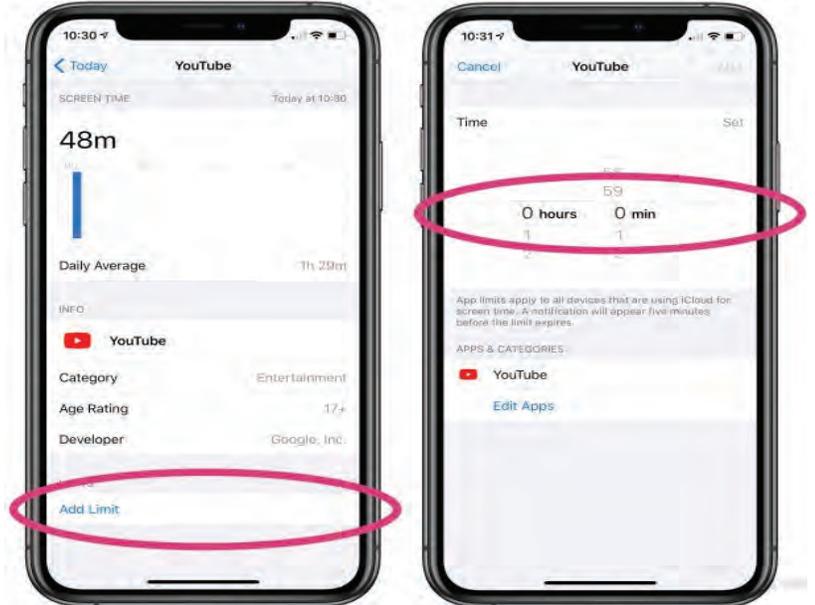
Step Five: Set Communication Limits (if necessary)

The Communication Limits feature (right) can be used to block phone calls, text messages and FaceTime after a time limit is reached, or altogether. If you want your kids to be able to reach only you with their phones, or only certain contacts, this feature is incredibly helpful. Use the "During Allowed Screen Time" menu to limit your child's communication to only specific contacts such as parents and trusted friends. Use the "During Downtime" menu to restrict communication after you have designated hours as downtime.
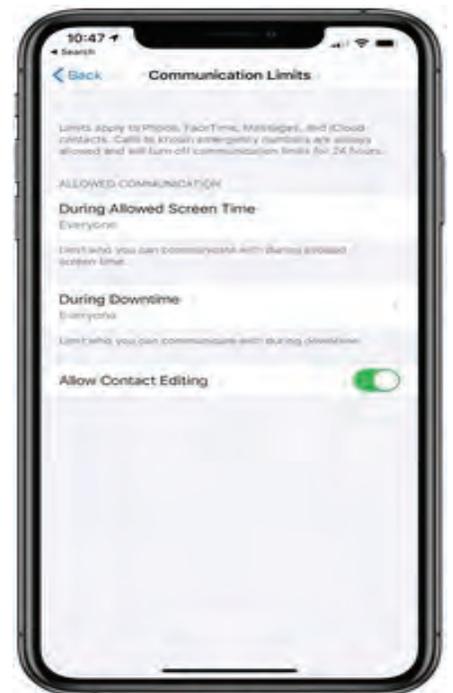
Introducing: *Bark*

Because Android and Windows devices do not come with a built-in parental control feature, a third-party app must be used. Of the parental control apps available for Android and Windows, *Bark* stands out, offering features that put it neck-and-neck with Apple's Screen Time feature. At $5 per month for their "for kids" version (comparable to Apple's Screen Time), it's a small sacrifice to make for the sake of your kids' digital health. Even if you need to skip a few coffees per month to make it fit in your budget, it is well worth it. Below are 5 steps to make the most of *Bark* on your kids' Android devices.

Before starting, make sure go to Bark.us online and create an account. From your account, you can access the *Bark Parent Dashboard* feature, which allows you to fine-tune your parental control settings.

Bark for Kids VERSUS *Bark*

Bark for Kids is comparable to Apple's Screen Time feature. However, if you are looking for more intense content monitoring for Apple or Android, **an upgraded version of *Bark* is available for $14 per month.** Below is a comparison of *Bark* and *Bark for Kids*.

If you are a parent of a teenager and are looking for a means of monitoring texts, emails and app usage, the $14 version of *Bark* may be helpful.

Step One

Bark is not available on the Google Play Store as most Android apps are. Instead, it can be downloaded online. **Download the *Bark for Kids* app** from Bark.us. Then, go to your "Downloads" folder and tap on the **bark-for-kids.apk** file.

Step Two

Open the *Bark for Kids* app and log in before going online and **accessing the *Bark Parent Dashboard*** at bark.us/login.

Step Three

From here, you can *adjust* screen time limits, *filter* inappropriate content, and *block* certain features.

NOTE: **Your Android device may be set to block downloads from "outside sources."** If you are unable to open the file, go to "settings" and search the keyword "unknown," Select "Install unknown apps" and turn this setting on.

3 Steps for Users on ALL Platforms

Introducing: *Covenant Eyes*

 Not many services or apps work on iOS, Android, *and* Windows, which is why Covenant Eyes is so powerful. Covenant Eyes is designed not just for parents to help their children, but for couples, families, and accountability partners alike. At $15.99 per month or $172.99 annually, it is slightly pricier than the full version of Bark. However, Covenant Eyes has set the gold standard for accountability software. A subscription allows for up to 10 users and unlimited devices!

Powerful Features such as:

- Patented AI Monitoring which scans for concerning explicit activity
- Comprehensive Blocking which eliminated millions of explicit sites and locks YouTube into Restricted Mode automatically.
- Multi-Class Content Rating Model determines if content is explicit, suggestive, or clean using patented AI technology.
- Easy-to-Use Activity Feed offers comprehensive coverage secured via 256b encryption
- Exclusive Mini-Course/Victory Connectivity enables access to exclusive courses and mobile monitoring when paired with the Victory app

Step One
Click our link to visit the Covenant Eyes website. This takes you to the "How it Works" section, and from here you can click "Get Started" in the top right, "Sign Up Now" for the 30 day free trial halfway down the page, or "View Pricing," at the very bottom.

Step Two
Download the Covenant Eyes sensor app for devices you want monitored, and The Victory App for any device you wish to monitor the other devices from.

Step Three
Customize the settings necessary for your use-case, and enable the apps in your accessiblity settings. Victory over porn has never been easier.

NOTE: Due to restrictions by Apple, Screen Accountability is only available in Safari or through the Covenant Eyes App on Apple and iOS devices.

Lock Down Your WiFi

At this point, we've covered how to set up parental controls on Apple and Android devices. However, it is essential to cover all of the bases by protecting your family's other screens as well. Of course, Windows PCs, Game systems, smart TVs, and many other devices all have internet access. This may sound like a big challenge, but it is easier to achieve than you might think. Your WiFi network at home can be equipped with parental controls and content filters that will keep all of your family's screens free of temptation.

Step 1: Use A Router With Parental Controls

Your router is the device that provides access to the internet for you and your family. All routers serve the same purpose, but some have more features than others. A more updated or high-end router can give you faster internet. In addition, many more recent router models let you adjust their settings from your computer. **To find out whether your router has parental control settings, check its instruction manual or box.** If your router does not provide content filtering, it is worth it to invest in a new one that does.

Step 2: Enter Your Router's IP Address Into Your Browser Search Bar

The best way to access the parental control settings on your router starts with opening your web browser on your computer. From here, type in the IP Address of your router, which lets you access its settings and set parental controls up. By default, most routers use 192.168.1.1 as their IP address, but if not, you can find your router's IP address by right-clicking on the WiFi symbol on your computer and selecting "settings." After you've typed in the IP address, press enter and you'll be asked to enter your login info for your account with your WiFi provider.

NOTE- To **locate** the **default username and password** for the **router**, look in its manual. If you've lost the manual, you can often **find it by searching** for your **router's model number** and "manual" **on Google.** Or just search for your **router's model** and **"default password."**

Step 3: Turn on A Content Filter

Below is an example of what router parental controls can look like when accessed online. This menu is from Google's Nest WiFi router. As you can see, this router allows you to restrict access to adult websites and even turn off your WiFi during certain hours.
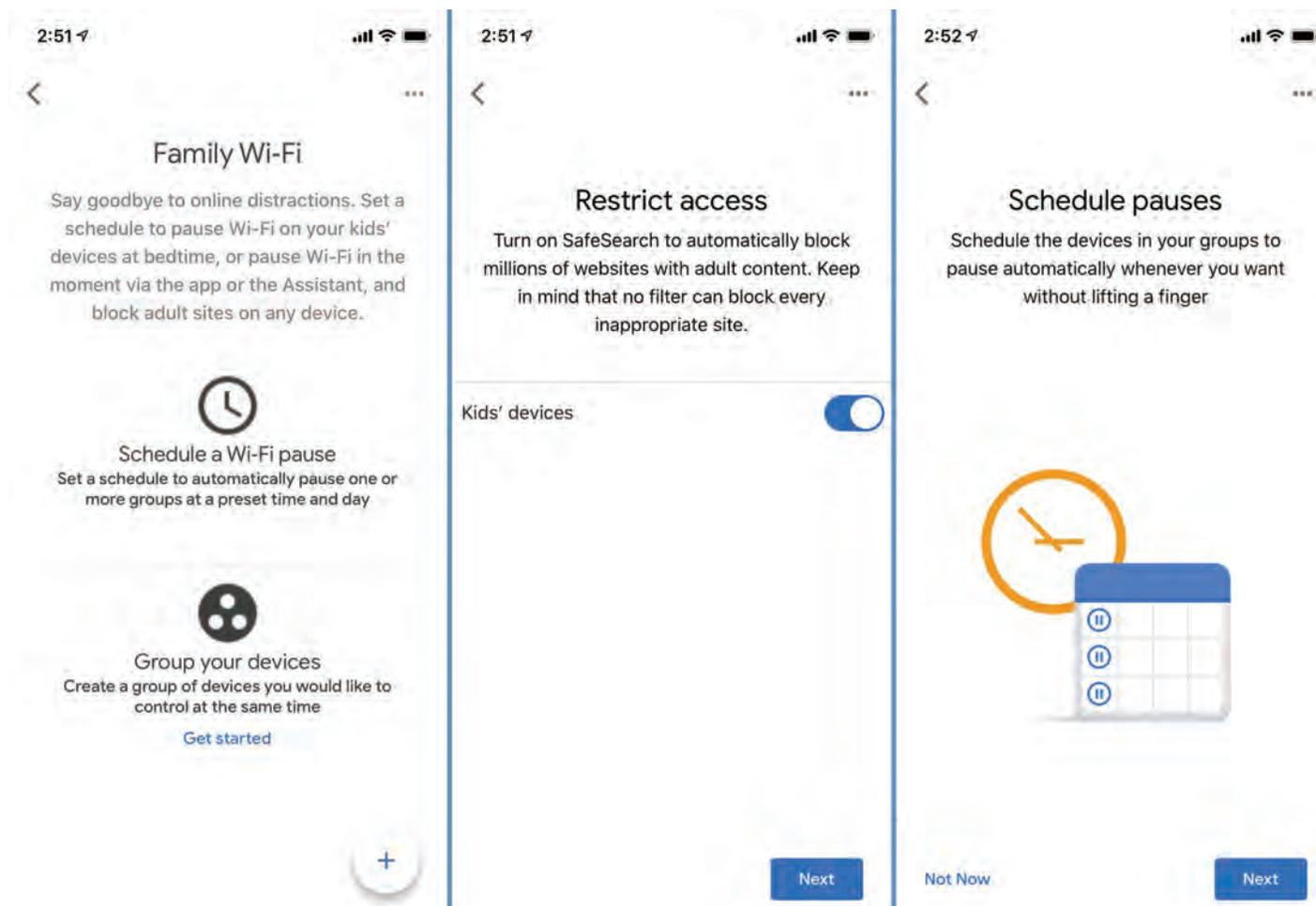
Depending on which router you use, this section may look different for you. The primary setting you want to find and adjust on your router is a content filter, which will block adult websites where your kids might be exposed to pornography. Since you've already set up content filters on your kids' Apple and Android devices, the content filter on your WiFi network is primarily for blocking access to inappropriate websites from PCs, TVs and gaming consoles.

What if My Router Doesn't Have Parental Controls?

If your router doesn't allow you to adjust its filtering settings, you have a few alternative options. One, of course, is to buy a router which has parental control features. This will help ensure that you have easy access to the tools you need to protect your kids when they use PCs, TVs and game systems.

The second option is to get an external accessory for your router that does all the content filtering for you. These accessories are powerful tools, but can also end up being a big investment. The primary parental control router accessory on the market is Disney's Circle. Circle is a device which you connect to your router and then control from your computer or an app on your phone. Using Circle, you can now place restrictions on the internet access of all devices connected to your home network, as well as devices like smartphones that can access the internet outside of your home. However, the Circle router accessory costs over $100, so the better option may be investing in a router which has parental control features included with its base cost.

Direct your children in the way that they should go, that they may not stray from it when they are older.
- Proverbs 22:6

Keep Screens in The Open

   At home, your kids' devices should always be used in common areas. Bedrooms and other closed off spaces can create an enabling environment that your kids will be tempted to exploit.

Power down before bed

Letting your kids take their devices to their rooms at night is inviting in temptation and distraction and will likely negatively affect their physical health. The practice of powering down before bed can be aided by the Apple Screen Time feature Downtime (right). As discussed in key practice two, the Downtime feature can be programmed to disable unnecessary or non-essential apps at bedtime.

Model this behavior to your kids by powering down at bedtime. Make sure to avoid "do as I say, not as I do." This type of hypocritical behavior will frustrate and demoralize your kids. Make sure that you are a strong example for them of what a healthy relationship with technology looks like.

Create a designated area to put devices away at night

Always make sure everyone's phones, tablets, laptops and other devices are all accounted for. This will help your whole family settle down each night and create a designated sacred time to be away from noise and distractions.

Keep Family Time Phone-Free

Check for planks in your Eye.

Matthew 7:5 says,
"First take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will
see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye."

In the context we are talking about, this can translate to, **"Before making an attempt to change your kids' digital habits, inspect your own."** A major obstacle that stands in the way of our kids having a healthy digital life is **our own unhealthy digital habits.** When we invite the distractions of emails, texts and social media into our family time, we're telling the kids that they're not a priority. In this aspect of digital health, you as a parent are leading by example.

Before asking our kids to pay more attention and look up from their screens, we should make sure we are practicing what we preach. Create a culture of listening and quietness in your family. Don't let the vibration of a phone distract from quality time with family. Reinforce this behavior in your kids' lives, as well as your own.

It can be expected that your kids (especially teenagers) will push against a mandate against screens during family time. Phones in particular provide a connection with friends and a constant influx of gratification and information. It can be hard to convince your kids that something they find so inviting is worth putting away. However, **the more a good rule is enforced, the more its fruit shows.** Be diligent in keeping your family time screen-free, and you and your kids will gradually detox from the constant input from your devices.

Putting it into Practice

So, what does it look like to have phone-free family time? When you think about the time that you spend with your family, some specific interactions may come to mind. Mornings before work and school, and evenings after. Mealtimes. Family trips and vacations. Even movie nights, game nights and other shared leisure time.

All of these pieces of life can easily be infiltrated by distracting devices. Below is a guideline for how to protect these precious times and treat them as sacred.

Morning
Leave your phone off until after breakfast. If you normally use your phone as an alarm clock, opt for a cheap digital clock instead. This way, you can keep your phone powered down for a morning dedicated to time with Jesus and family. Get your kids alarm clocks as well, keeping their phones powered down until the day begins.

Evening
Power your phone down before dinner. Meals are crucial times to invest in your family. If needed, set up a station where all family members drop their devices before dinner. This will keep everyone present and engaged for the duration of the meal.

Family Activities
Keep devices put away during family activities like walks, road trips, and movie and game nights. This will keep everyone in the moment, enjoying each other's company, and not tempted to respond to the onslaught of notifications from their devices. **Again, it is crucial to practice this behavior with your kids.**

Prayer Time
Instead of ending the night with screen time, **consider implementing a family prayer time before bed.** As discussed in Key Practice III, it is strongly recommended that you power your devices down before bed. Ending the night with family prayer after devices are put away is a great alternative to one more scroll through TikTok or Instagram.

Limit Screen Time to 30 Minutes a Day.

    Screens are inescapable. Many of us need a computer for school or work. The daily average for time spent on the internet worldwide is six and a half hours. For some added perspective, we tend to average around 16 hours awake per day. This means over 40 percent of our waking hours are spent on the internet. However, that's only a fraction of our total average screen time, which is a whopping 11 hours per day, nearly 70 percent of our time awake. Even with so many of us, including our kids, needing devices to learn and work, 16 hours is much more time than any of us needs to spend over a screen.

    Living our lives glued to a screen doesn't sound like the abundant life Jesus came to give us. That sounds more like the Thief threatening to kill, steal and destroy our joy and freedom.

The Why

• The University of Pennsylvania conducted a study in which participants reduced their social media use to 30 minutes a day. The results showed a dramatic increase in wellbeing for the participants, who were all students.

• Many kids spend several hours a day on screens at school, and then several more at home. Limiting extracurricular screen time to half an hour will give your kids a gentle push towards building strong relationships, hobbies and habits. By the time your kids get home from school, chances are they have been staring at a laptop or tablet during class. Keeping entertainment time short after school will help your kids learn to prioritize schoolwork and family.

• Excessive digital distractions can easily become a major hindrance in kids' and teens' holistic development. Childhood and adolescence are pivotal, vulnerable stages of life where habits, values and practices are formed that carry over into adulthood. Love on your kids by encouraging them to dive deep into the abundant life that Jesus invites them to.

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and have it to the full. - John 10:10

Check In Weekly

Lastly, when working on building up your kids' digital health, a weekly check-in is a powerful tool. A critical step in building a healthy digital life for your kids is welcoming structure and accountability. Work to become intimately involved in your kids' digital habits. Don't be afraid to ask your kids sincerely about their screen time. Here are some of prompts that can be used for your weekly check-in.

Question One: Status Report

"What were you using your screen time for this week?" Ask your kids to walk you through how they spent their screen time. Take interest in the details. Ask them what was fun and what they enjoyed, and try to determine whether or not the time on their screens that week was enriching.

Question Two: Assess Convictions

"Did your screen time honor God? Why or why not?" Get a sense of whether your kids feel like they did something sinful or harmful. Make sure not to ask this question in an accusatory way. Instead, focus on lovingly challenging and encouraging your kids with the best intent.

Question Three: Assess Content

"Did you engage with anything that you knew you shouldn't have? How do you feel about it?" It's possible that your kids are engaging with pornography or other inappropriate content online. This question can help you get a sense of whether your kids are struggling with guilt or shame. Be prepared for the possibility that your kids will not feel comfortable opening up about a sin struggle immediately. Letting them know that you are available is essential.

Question Four: Assess Connection

"Did you feel connected, alone, or somewhere in between this week? Did screen time help or hurt?" Sometimes screen time can provide a genuine means for connecting with others. However, it can also leave us feeling isolated and disconnected. Ask your kids how their screen time impacted their sense of connection with others. If they are feeling lonely, look for ways to comfort them and encourage them. Be a presence in your kids' lives that they can always count on for face-to-face, deep connection.

Let's Pray.

"Let's ask God to be with us as we move forward into the coming week." Prayer is powerful. It reorients us towards the will of God and redirects our thinking towards. Paul writes in his letter to the church in Colossae that we have been **"RAISED WITH CHRIST."**

He goes on to instruct the Colossian believers to **"SET THEIR MINDS ON THINGS ABOVE."** Paul, inspired by the Holy Spirit, knew that we could realign our thinking through prayer and meditate on the ultimate truth of our **"CITIZENSHIP IN HEAVEN"** (Philippians 3:20). In our efforts to teach our kids healthy digital habits, we must always be diligent in prayer, asking God to give us strength and wisdom.

If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. - James 1:5

Be Cautious with Social Media Apps.

Instagram, Facebook and others are designed to be as addictive as possible. In a 60 Minutes interview, former Google product manager Tristan Harris described a smartphone as "A slot machine." Harris went on to say, "Well, every time I check my phone, I'm playing the slot machine to see, "What did I get?" This is one way to hijack people's minds and create a habit, to form a habit. What you do is you make it so when someone pulls a lever, sometimes they get a reward, an exciting reward. And it turns out that this design technique can be embedded inside of all these products." Harris and others in the tech industry have pointed to the addictive nature of smartphones, **specifically of social media apps.** If you are choosing to let your kids use social media, exercise caution. There are inherently addictive aspects of each of the leading apps.

Likes, Streaks, Followers

The key players in the social media sphere all have addictive elements that exploit the dopamine regulation systems in our brains. Like Harris said, **checking your phone is like pulling the lever on a slot machine.** There is a chance that, if you use social media, positive feedback will come your way in some form. This builds up a desire in us to check our phones, because when we do, we sometimes are rewarded with a little surge of dopamine.

Dopamine 101

Trevor Haynes of Harvard University writes, "Dopamine is a chemical produced by our brains that plays a starring role in motivating behavior. It gets released when we take a bite of delicious food, when we have sex, after we exercise, and, importantly, when we have successful social interactions." Dopamine is the driving force behind the formation of most addictions. Humans are capable of having just as strong a dependency on a smartphone as they would on hard drugs. Antoine Bechara, a neuroscientist, writes, "The similarities between internet and cocaine addiction really lie in those brain systems that drive you toward the reward."

Carrying around dopamine dispensers in our pockets all day every day can have troubling effects on us.

If you or your kids are going to use social media apps, keep in mind what the buzzing and pinging in your pocket makes you do. If getting a notification makes you feel forced to pull out your phone and check it no matter what is going on, your brain is compulsively responding to the promise of a dopamine rush. Don't let yourself or your kids become enslaved to screens!

What Do I Do?

Set Limits.

If social media is going to be used by you and your family, be cautious and wise. Try avoiding overuse of these distracting and addicting apps by setting time limits on them. The Screen Time feature we addressed earlier can be used for setting these limits on your Apple devices. Take advantage of this tool! Instead of being glued to these apps for the American average of 2 hours a day or more, set a time limit!

10-20 minutes of social media time daily is more than enough for you and your kids.

Know the risks of each app.

None of the key social media apps listed on the following pages are without risks for your kids. However, some contain more inappropriate content than others, and some are more difficult to monitor and filter. Make sure to educate yourself! Know which apps are safest for your kids, and which ones pose the greatest risk. The rest of this chapter has a quick and easy rundown of each of the key apps, their functions, our recommendations and tips, as well as what to look out for on each.

For God gave us His Spirit, not of fear,
but of the power of love and self-control.
- 2 Timothy 1:7

Instagram
The Average User Spends ***53 Minutes*** ***on The App Daily.*** **What is It?**

- **A photo and video-sharing platform** that is most popular among kids and teens

- Allows users to follow each other's accounts. Your Instagram follower count is often seen as a sign of your social status.

- On Instagram, users can judge the success of their content based on how many likes a post gets. This is not exclusive to Instagram, and many social media apps use this same model. However, it is pushed more prominently on Instagram than others.

- By default, users get a notification whenever someone likes a post, comments on it, follows their account, or tags them (posts a photo with them in it).

How Do I Keep it Safe?

- **Keep your kids off Instagram before they are well into their teens.** This is a good rule of thumb for social media in general. Social media platforms are full of content that is *at least* PG-13. Have conversations with your kids to gauge their maturity level and where they are at socially before letting them loose.

- **Make your kids' accounts private.** In Instagram's settings, there is an option to not allow anyone to contact your kids or see their photos without approval. A private account has protection from inappropriate messages, harassment, and stalking, all of which are risks on the platform. **TIP: Approve your kids' followers.** Don't let someone see their account or message them if they are not someone you approve of if you can help it. Your kids don't need online relationships with strangers!

- **Follow your kids on Instagram.** If necessary, have their account logged in on your phone as well as your own. **Remember, with teens especially, be watchful without being overbearing.** Try not to over-involve yourself in your teens' social media presence.

TIP: Make sure you require a passcode to bypass app limits. The Screen Time feature's default setting lets users choose to ignore their time limits. When a limit is set, make sure you have the "require passcode" setting turned on.

Twitter
The Average User Spends *3 Minutes* *on The App Daily.* What is It?

• **A platform where users publicly share short text-based posts (tweets) that includes photos or videos.**

• Extremely loose in terms of content filtering. Twitter is full of often offensive and inappropriate content that is barely policed by the site.

How Do I Keep it Safe?
• **Hard to say.** As a popular and widely used social media platform, it may be surprising that **TWITTER IS FULL OF EASILY ACCESSED PORNOGRAPHIC CONTENT.** This makes it nearly impossible to recommend letting your kids or teens use Twitter. Major risks abound, and using the app has few clear benefits.
Our recommendation is to steer your kids clear of Twitter.

Facebook
The Average User Spends *58 Minutes* *on The App Daily.* What is It?

• **A platform where users create a personal page to share photos, videos and text-based posts without the character limit of Twitter.**

• Built on adding "friends," Facebook has a widely used companion app called Facebook Messenger that allows users to send direct messages to friends.

• Despite being somewhat overshadowed by newer platforms, Facebook is still widely used by young adults. 88% of internet users aged 18-29 are on Facebook.

• Facebook is full of ads. The company observes and analyzes each user's data to create a personalized ad experience, often creating a sort of echo-chamber wherein Facebook users only see content that they are liable to agree with or support. Facebook's use of user data to make money has gotten the company in trouble multiple times since the platform launched in 2004.

How Do I Keep it Safe?

• **Like Instagram, it's best to keep your kids away until they are older.** Facebook's age requirement for making an account is 13, but it's an easy formality to bypass. The site provides ample opportunities for your young kids to come into contact with individuals who are troublesome at best and predatory at worst.

• **If your kid has a Facebook account, be their friend and keep an eye on their online activity.** Be mindful of who your child is interacting with on Facebook. If you notice a person on their friends list that you don't recognize, don't be afraid to ask your child about this person. **TIP: Your child should definitely not be Facebook friends with adults that you don't personally know or trust.** Ideally, your child's Facebook friends list will consist of close friends of his or her own age.

• **Teach your kids to value real-life friendships over digital ones.** Facebook unsubtly encourages users to befriend new people as often as possible by emphasizing the "people you may know" section of the site. Encourage your kids to focus time on their real-life friends off a screen rather than building their online following.

TIP: Model the value of quality over quantity in friendships to your kids. Keep your own friends list trim, prioritizing the people you know and love most. This will demonstrate to your kids the value of investing in specific relationships, including online ones

Snapchat
The Average User Spends *35 Minutes* *on The App Daily.* What is It?

• **A platform where users share disappearing videos, photos and messages with friends.**

• Built around temporary content. Snapchat promises users an experience free from the potential embarrassment of leaving a digital footprint. **BECAUSE OF THIS, THE APP IS OFTEN USED FOR SEXTING, THE EXCHANGE OF SEXUALLY EXPLICIT MATERIAL OVER SOCIAL MEDIA OR TEXT.**

• Hard to monitor. Because everything a user sends to friends via Snapchat is temporary, the platform provides a major temptation for kids to use it to hide inappropriate communication.

How Do I Keep it Safe?
• **Hard to say.** Arguably, the only feature Snapchat provides that other apps like Instagram do not is the ability to automatically erase content. This feature is the centerpiece and primary selling point of the platform, but the service does not provide any inherent benefit to the users, unless, of course, they don't want their files to be saved; which may imply they are up to something. It may be best to advise your kids against using Snapchat, since it comes with a great degree of both temptation and secrecy.

• **Be cautious of whom your kids connect with.** Snapchat has been known to be host of a controversial service provided by certain community members called **"Premium Snapchats."** These are users who require payment from people who want to follow them in exchange for pornographic material. This is illegal and commonly a form of tax evasive income, but they still exist.

Our recommendation is also to steer your kids clear of Twitter.

TikTok

The Average User Spends 52 Minutes on The App Daily. What is It?

- **An extremely popular and addictive video sharing app.**

- Originally created as another app called "Musical.ly," TikTok offers users a platform to post videos that typically revolve around dancing or lip-syncing to music, referencing pop culture, or performing original skits.

- The videos have a time limit of just a few seconds, and a TikTok user can easily view hundreds in one sitting. The app continues to display new content that is algorithmically recommended to each user, making for an extremely addictive experience.

- Populated mainly by teens. The app was originally designed with teenagers in mind, and its endless novelty is tailor-made for the short attention spans of generation Z.

How Do I Keep it Safe?

- **Time limits!** Because of TikTok's addictive nature, monitoring or limiting usage is crucial.

- **Make your kids' accounts private.** Like Instagram, TikTok allows users to make their accounts private. This will keep your kids' basic info visible to users on the app but will not allow strangers to follow or message them. This will also protect your kids from the same risks posed by public Instagram account.

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. - Romans 12:2

PARENTS' DIGITAL PLAYBOOK

For Digital Health

As technology continues to advance, so too will it become more common, more accessible, and more easily used for questionable means. It is imperative to understand what we can do to as parents to maintain the integrity of innocence by keeping up with that technology, what our children use it for, and how we can best regulate them for both their sakes and ours.

Proven Ministries