WELL-BEING SNAPSHOTS K-7
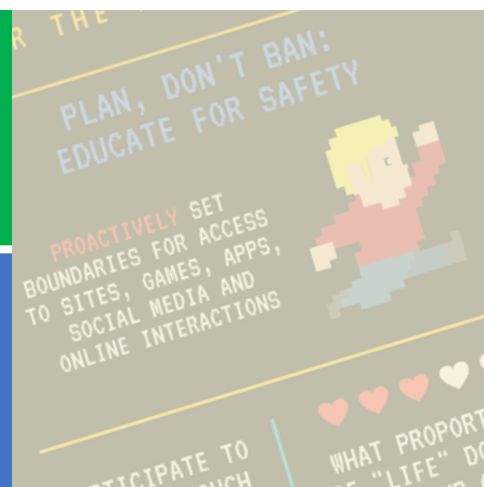
DIGITAL WELL-BEING

Digital Well-being
FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

PLAN, DON'T BAN: EDUCATE FOR SAFETY

PROACTIVELY SET BOUNDARIES FOR ACCESS TO SITES, GAMES, APPS, SOCIAL MEDIA AND ONLINE INTERACTIONS

PARTICIPATE TO STAY IN TOUCH WITH WHAT YOUR CHILD IS INTO

2-player mode

WHAT PROPORTION OF "LIFE" DO YOU WANT YOUR CHILD TO SPEND ENGAGING WITH SCREENS?

ENCOURAGE GAMES THAT TEACH VALUABLE SKILL SETS AND LEARNING

★ MULTITASKING
★ CREATIVITY
★ TEAMWORK
★ FINANCIAL SKILLS

UNDERSTAND TECHNO-TANTRUMS

RECOGNIZE YOUR CHILD'S STAGE OF BRAIN DEVELOPMENT

TEACH AND PRACTICE SKILLS TO MANAGE TRANSITIONS

START GAME ▶

INFORMATION PROVIDED BY: KAREN PETERS, RCC
SOURCES: DR. KRISTY GOODWIN, DIGITAL WELLBEING EXPERT

In just one generation, the childhood experience of boredom has moved from peeling dried glue off our hands and riding bikes through endless pits of mud, to staring at screens the size of our palms. This rise of technology and its availability has injected stress, fear, and confusion for parents attempting to keep up with our kids' viewing and digital engagement. We want them to be safe and use screens wisely, but this is all new territory for us. When humans don't feel capable of something, we have a tendency to want to be reactive, panicky, and attempt to gain control. It might feel simpler to get rid of screens altogether than even try to catch up in our learning about online safety, the latest apps and how to manage our kid's techno-tantrums when screens are turned off.

Dr. Kristy Goodwin, an expert in digital well-being, advises parents to take the "plan, don't ban" approach. Having clearly laid out boundaries and expectations for how digital tools are used in your home can go a long way. Making rules around amount and type of use, is more effective than creating rules in reaction to overuse or inappropriate use.

It can also be helpful to discuss the "where" screen use happens and have open conversations with your kids about why. It is important for parents to be aware of what their kids are engaged in for everyone's social and emotional well-being. Consider how often your kids might be using their devices in private, without your ability to know the nature of online interactions or exposure to potentially harmful content.

Teaching your child how to detect harmful content is important, rather than relying on you "catching it" as it happens. This will also help you and your child be on the same team instead of risking the potential for you to be upset with them for having viewed inappropriate material. This leads to kids learning to hide what they are engaged in to avoid getting in trouble. Share openly with your kids both the pros and the cons of the technology they have access to, and check in with them routinely about what they are viewing and participating in. Avoid blame or punishment and pour your energy into educating them and arming them with screen-wise strategies. ●

Karen Peters