



August 2021: Parenting the Technology Generations

**MINES
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A National Business Psychology Firm



“New technology is common, new thinking is rare.” – Sir Peter Blake

Welcome to the August **2021 edition of TotalWellbeing**, your guide to the **8 dimensions of wellbeing**. The focus of this month will be technology and the influence, both good and bad, that it has on our children. This is a tough yet important topic as technology continues to evolve and influence/provide our primary means of information flow, education, social interactions, and more. In today's society, children must use technology to function and interact on a day-to-day basis, which is why it is imperative that we teach children to treat technology and the information that is accessible to them, responsibly and with discretion.

Balance is a key concept here. Children today have been raised with smartphones, computers, the internet, smart-home devices, and more as a part of everyday life. These things are integral to how they interact with the world. This is both good and bad as they have more information and influence available to them than any generation before, but there is both good and bad information and influences in the world. Teaching them to navigate this world of information responsibly is the key. Check out the tips on understanding the impact of tech and raising the "technology generation."

This Month's Focus

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Please remember that your EAP is here to help and provides a variety of resources to help you through parenting challenges. You have access to free and confidential counseling around family issues, 4 parental coaching sessions, lactation consultation, trainings, and more. Plus, an online resource library full of proactive self-help tools! Visit [PersonalAdvantage](#) for helpful articles, personal and professional development tools, and more!

To your total wellbeing,

The MINES Team

The Impact of Technology on Children

Parenting children of today's generation comes with a unique set of challenges due to the many recent advancements in technology. There is no denying the reach technology has in our lives, as well as the lives of our children.

Technology is virtually in every home in one way or another: about 96% of Americans have a TV and 94% of children ages 3 to 18 have internet access either through a computer or smartphone. According to a national survey done by Common Sense Media in 2019, 53% of children have a smartphone by the time they turn 11. Therefore, it is important for parents to be mindful of how their children use technology and the potential effects—both positive and negative.

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Tips for Parenting the Technology Generation

These ten tips can help parents navigate the minefield that is social media:

1. **Set clear limits.** Communicate clear guidelines to your children about acceptable media use. You could create a family media use plan to hold everyone accountable and ensure everyone knows the rules. Set time limits for watching TV, computer, or internet use that is not school-related, playing video games, and use of cell phones or other devices. These limits will depend on the age and maturity level of your child, as well as what you feel comfortable with.
2. **Maintain open communication.** Initiate discussions with your child about the technology they're using and ask if they have questions. If you allow your teen to use social media, make sure to

talk with them about privacy settings and the importance of being selective with what they share.

3. **Encourage kids to be active.** Encourage your children to engage in activities each day that don't involve technology or screens. When it's nice out, try to get your children playing outside for some fresh air and exercise. This could also be an activity the family does together, such as going for a walk, exploring a new park, or riding bikes.
4. **Designate technology-free times.** Designate certain times or activities as technology-free zones. For example, during family mealtimes, don't leave the TV on in the background and do not allow any devices at the table. Instead, let this be a time for the family to engage in conversation and share how their day was. When children are studying, remind them to turn off any possible distractions to help them focus. To help children wind down, remove technology at least one hour before bedtime.
5. **Promote face-to-face communication.** With our reliance on emails and texting these days, young people might not be as comfortable with face-to-face conversations. In certain situations when appropriate, let the child take charge of the conversation rather than relying on you. For example, if your high schooler needs to schedule an appointment, let them make the phone call. You could also encourage younger children to call or video chat relatives. These little things can help to hone their communication skills and build confidence.
6. **Teach kids to be mindful.** The skill of being mindful is one that all of us can benefit greatly from. At times, technology can detract from our ability to be mindful and present in the moment. Encourage kids to bring their awareness to the moment—what they are doing right now—and notice the details, such as sights and sounds. Practicing being present in the moment can also help combat anxiety and depression.
7. **Practice what you preach.** One of the best ways to teach your children responsible media use is to be a good example. Try to follow the same guidelines you set for your child. If you have to make exceptions, such as having your cell phone at the dinner table due to an emergency, explain to them the extenuating situation. Limit the time you spend staring at a screen as much as possible so that you can instead engage with your children and family and be present in these moments.

If you or a member of your household needs assistance or guidance on any of these wellbeing topics, please call MINES & Associates, your EAP, today for free, confidential, 24/7 assistance at 800.873.7138.

To access past issues of *TotalWellbeing* please visit our [newsletters page](#). This newsletter is aimed at providing helpful information about various aspects of your wellbeing and then connecting it all back to important and relevant parts of everyday life. If you have any thoughts, questions, or content you would like to see covered here please get in contact with us. You can email us directly by clicking [here](#).

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