

“Parenting requires us to rely on God, not simplistic answers. And, this is a continual pursuit, a daily asking for manna in the desert wildernesses of parenting. God is not just at work in your [child’s] life, he’s at work in yours. We need his strength, his guidance, and his grace.”

MELISSA KRUGER, *PARENTING WITH HOPE: RAISING TEENS FOR CHRIST IN A SECULAR AGE*



Anne Chen
MPC MomsConnect
Nov. 6, 2024

Tech-Wise *Parenting*

DISCIPLING CHILDREN FOR A
LIFETIME OF TECH-WISE LIVING

Introduction: Concerning tech trends and statistics for our youth

- Sextortion

- Between 2021-2022, sextortion increased by 7,200%, especially among 13-17yo boys¹
- In a six-month period (by March 2023), reports to the FBI of financially motivated sextortion involving minor victims increased by 20%, leading to at least 20 suicides²

- Cyberbullying

- 1 in 5 tweens³ and nearly 1 in 3 teens⁴ have experienced some form of cyberbullying in the US

- Mental health crisis among youth

- Depression, anxiety, and suicidal ideation rates have increased significantly among youth⁵
- Concern over social media's impact on mental health crisis → 40 states suing Meta (Instagram and Facebook), 13 states suing Tiktok⁶

¹"Prevalence of sextortion," WeProtect Global Alliance, accessed Oct. 20, 2024, <https://www.weprotect.org/issue/sextortion/>

²"Sextortion: A Growing Threat Targeting Minors," FBI.gov, Jan. 23, 2024, <https://www.fbi.gov/contact-us/field-offices/nashville/news/sextortion-a-growing-threat-targeting-minors>

³Patchin, J. W. & Hinduja, S., *Tween Cyberbullying in 2020*, available at https://fi.cartoonnetwork.com/stop-bullying/pdfs/CN_Stop_Bullying_Cyber_Bullying_Report_9.30.20.pdf.

⁴Patchin, J. W. & Hinduja, S., "Cyberbullying Facts," Cyberbullying Research Center, 2024, <https://cyberbullying.org/facts>.

⁵Youth Mental Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, accessed Oct. 24, 2024, <https://www.hhs.gov/surgeongeneral/priorities/youth-mental-health/index.html>; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Youth Risk Behavior Survey Data Summary & Trends Report: 2013–2023*, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; 2024, available at https://www.cdc.gov/yrbbs/dstr/pdf/YRBS_Data-Summary-Trends_Report2023_508.pdf

⁶Bobby Allyn, "More than a dozen states sue TikTok, alleging it harms kids and is designed to addict them," Oct. 8, 2024, NPR, <https://www.npr.org/2024/10/08/g-s1-26823/states-sue-tiktok-child-safety-mental-health>.

Introduction: Concerning tech trends and statistics for our youth

- Drug overdoses

- The Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) calls social media sites the "superhighway of drugs"⁷

- AI

- 63% of parents do not know their children are using AI
- 53% of teens use AI for homework help
- 46% of teens use AI for homework help without teacher permission⁸

- News and media literacy online

- 96% of high school students believed a fake video claiming ballot stuffing; only 3 of 3,000 students tracked down the source, even though a quick search invalidated the video⁹
- Two-thirds couldn't differentiate between news and ads⁹

- Pornography

- Average exposure to online pornography occurs at age 12, and sometimes even earlier¹⁰

⁷Devlin Barrett, "Poison pill: How fentanyl killed a 17-year-old," *The Washington Post*, Nov. 30, 2022, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2022/11/30/fentanyl-fake-pills-social-media/>.

⁸"New Report Shows Students Are Embracing Artificial Intelligence Despite Lack of Parent Awareness and School Guidance," Common Sense Media, Sept. 18, 2024, <https://www.common SenseMedia.org/press-releases/new-report-shows-students-are-embracing-artificial-intelligence-despite-lack-of-parent-awareness-and>.

⁹Breakstone, Joel et al. *Students' civic online reasoning: A national portrait*. Stanford History Education Group & Gibson Consulting, 2019. <https://purl.stanford.edu/gf151tb4868>.

¹⁰Robb, M.B. & Supreet Mann. *Teens and pornography*. San Francisco, CA: Common Sense, 2023. <https://www.common SenseMedia.org/sites/default/files/research/report/2022-teens-and-pornography-final-web.pdf>.

Introduction: And yet...

- God is a God of encouragement (Romans 15:5).
- God knew our children would be born into this Digital Age— and intentionally appointed us as their parents (Acts 17:26).
- God is **both completely sovereign and more than able** to equip us for the good work of discipling our children for a lifetime of tech-wise living.
- He loves our kids more than we do, and He loves us, too.



Today's Road Map

1. A Biblical Posture of Parenting
2. A Biblical Posture towards Technology
3. Parenting *in* Technology



Technology: The interconnected digital devices and platforms our families use today.

Caveats (Because I'm a lawyer)

1. This is *still* not an anti-tech talk!
2. There are lots of good resources on this topic!
3. I'm on the journey with you.



Today's Road Map

1. **A Biblical Posture of Parenting**
 - a) **What is it?**
 - b) **How do we do it?**
2. A Biblical Posture towards Technology
3. Parenting *in* Technology



Our Posture of Parenting: Wells & Fences

What is the biblical approach to parenting?

“Fathers [and mothers], do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up *in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.*”

EPHESIANS 6:4 ESV (KJV: “nurture and admonition of the Lord”)



1. Wells (“nurture”):
Draw them to what is truly life-giving in Christ!
Attractional; gospel-centric



2. Fences (“admonition”):
Set boundaries and limits with consequences.
Also gospel-centric!



3. “Of the Lord”:
*God’s way, not ours or others’,
i.e., loving God wholly and loving neighbor as ourselves—
by His grace, for His glory
(Deut. 6:1-9).*

Our Posture of Parenting: Relationship

How do we implement biblical parenting?

1. Through the means of grace: **prayer, God’s Word, and the church.**
2. God “parents” us through **relationships.**
 - Children can out-manuever you in technology!
 - Conversations in relationship is key.
3. **Success in parenting is foremost about being usable and faithful in God’s hands**, because He alone is able to produce good things in our children.

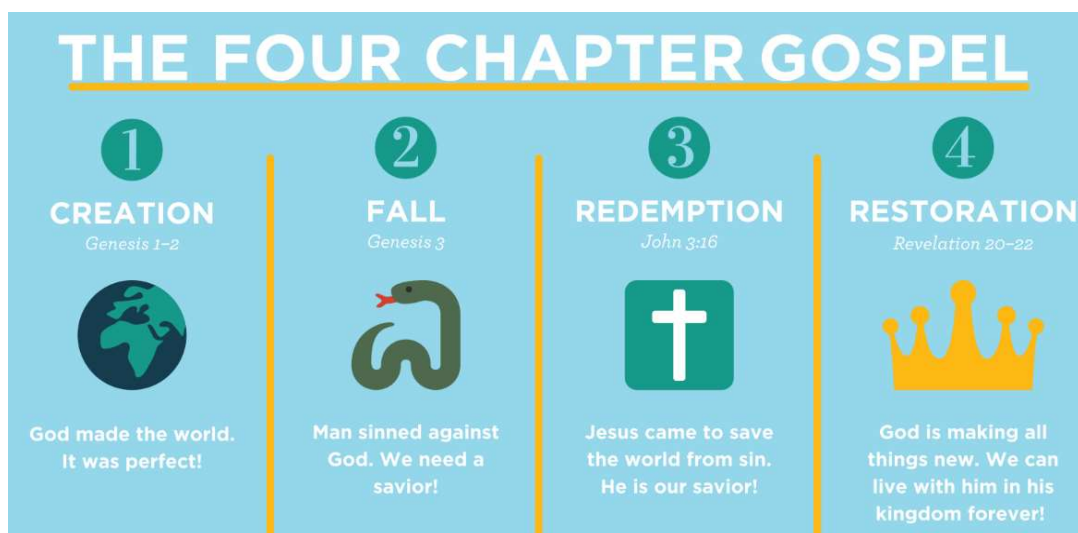


Today's Road Map

1. A Biblical Posture of Parenting
2. **A Biblical Posture towards Technology**
3. Parenting *in* Technology



Our Posture Towards Technology: A Gospel Framework



Our Posture Towards Technology: Biblical Values of Technology

Four-Chapter Gospel	Biblical Values of Technology	Common Values in Technology
Creation	God is in control. We are just the created beings.	We are in control.
	God created us with physical bodies as well as souls and minds. Our bodies are not limitations to be transcended.	Digital selfhood is preeminent.
	Every human being has intrinsic worth and dignity from God, and should be treated as such.	People deserve my outrage and online abuse.
	Technology ultimately glorifies God, the only One who can create something from nothing.	Technology ultimately glorifies man.
Fall	Technology is tainted with sin, in both design and use.	Technology is neutral.
Redemption	Technology is a God-given gift and can be redeemed, in both design and use.	Technology is always bad.
Restoration	As citizens of heaven, not earth, we should not always conform to popular behavior and lifestyles online.	We should do what everyone else is doing online.
	Our tech struggles have an end point: God will complete His good work in us, to present us holy and blameless before Him. He will restore all that we look to technology to satisfy and fulfill.	Our tech struggles are futile.

Today's Road Map

1. A Biblical Posture of Parenting
2. A Biblical Posture towards Technology
3. **Parenting *in* Technology**
 1. It starts with us.
 2. Establish "wells" with joy.
 3. Establish "fences" with consequences.
 4. Teach discretion and discernment.
 5. Talk: Monitor, but keep having conversations.



“Until We Finish, Delight in Divine Training”

Parenting in Technology

1. It starts with us.

In parenting, “more is caught than taught.”

- Avail yourself to the means of grace for your own growth in wisdom and holiness: **prayer, God’s Word, Christian community in the church**
- Model **healthy, bounded use** of technology.
- Ask yourself:
 - **How is technology shaping me?**
 - **Does my use of tech glorify God?**
 - **Does it love God and love neighbor as myself?**



Parenting in Technology

2. Establish “wells” with joy.

- **Make Christ the center** of the home: in your time, family priorities, relationships, etc.
- **Living out biblical values in technology:**
 - **Prioritize in-person interactions** in and outside the home—including with our church body.
 - **Promote “heart-mind-soul-strength”** activities.
 - **Enjoy positive media consumption** together.
 - **Make space for white space** (i.e. boredom, margin, down time).



Parenting in Technology

3. Establish “fences” with consequences.

- **Set the expectations up front.** Explicitly share **biblical values of technology and healthy tech use with your kids.**
 - E.g. AAP’s Family Media Plan (healthychildren.org), phone contracts
- **Kinds of tech “fences:”**
 - **Screen time limits** (varies by age)
 - Many parental controls are available!
 - **Screen-free spaces**
 - E.g. bedrooms, dinner table, car, bathrooms
 - **Screen-free time/rhythms**
 - E.g. after 8:30pm, 1 day a week, etc.



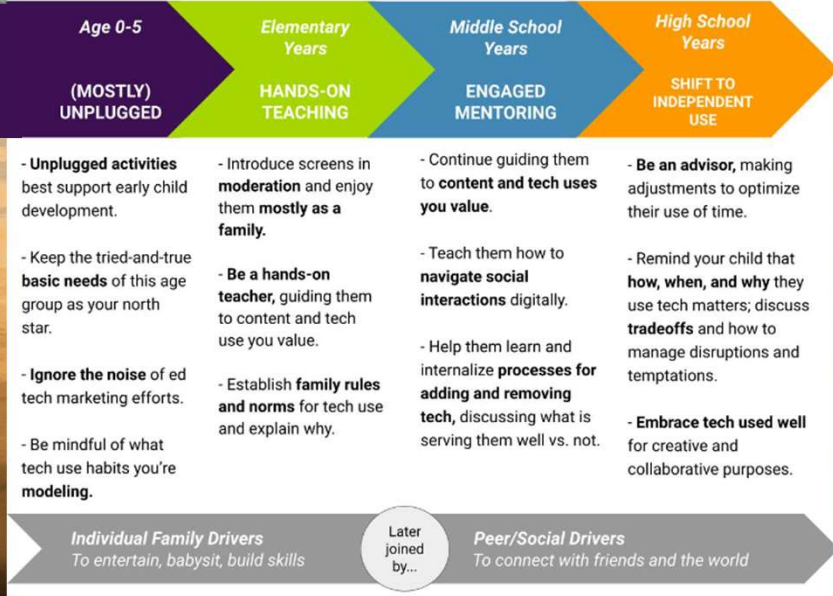
Introduce Tech Slowly – AAP & www.screensense.org

Your Approach to Tech Use Varies By Age



American Academy of Pediatrics Guidelines

- **0-18 months:** Only video chat with relatives
- **18-24 months:** Only high-quality videos, parents co-watch with kids
- **2-5 years:** 1 hour maximum a day, parents co-watch and discuss how it relates with the world around them
- **6+:** parental discretion with consistent limits. Should not compromise adequate sleep, physical activity, and other behaviors essential to health.



Parenting in Technology

4. Teach discretion and discernment.

1. Digital privacy
 - **Nothing online is truly private**
 - **Online actions are permanent**
 - **Discuss personal, private information** that is okay to share online
 - **Set accounts to private**
2. Digital safety
 - **Discuss online “friends” and “tricky people”** – Put it down, tell someone!
(ProtectYoungEyes.com – “Stranger Danger in the Digital Age”)
 - **Create a safe space/culture of accountability** and confession in the home

Parenting in Technology

4. Teach discretion and discernment.

3. Curated content
 - **Not all screen time is the same!** Consider content that promotes *connection, critical thinking, creativity, and context* (Common Sense Media)
4. Media literacy and news literacy: Ask the “why?” question
 - **Discerning design:** identify persuasive design techniques that keep eyes on screens and skew users towards negative or fake news
 - **Discerning content:** identify targeted ads, deepfakes, misinformation, fake news or web sites
 - **SIFT: Stop, Investigate, Find, Trace** (Michael Caulfield, WSU)

Parenting in Technology

4. Teach discretion and discernment.

5. Self-reflection


Five-question guide for reflecting on media: (Axis)

1. What's *good* about it?
2. What's *bad* about it?
3. What's *missing* from this?
4. What's *confused* about this?
5. What does *the Bible* say about it?

- "How did you feel when you stopped playing that game after several hours?"
- "How does it compare with, say, creating something online or offline?"

Online Resources: Curating Content

Axis Ministries




The Culture Translator

A weekly email to help you stay up to date on the music, movies, TV shows, and social media trends impacting your kid's world.

[Sign Up](#)

Redeemed Reader

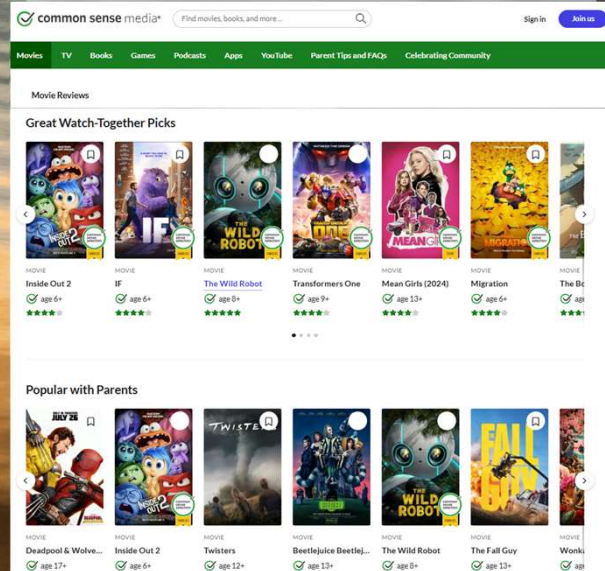


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Book reviews and resources for Christian parents and educators.

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Movie Reviews

Great Watch-Together Picks

 MOVIE Inside Out 2 age 6+ ★★★★★	 MOVIE IF age 6+ ★★★★★	 MOVIE The Wild Robot age 6+ ★★★★★	 MOVIE Transformers One age 7+ ★★★★★	 MOVIE Mean Girls (2024) age 13+ ★★★★★	 MOVIE Migration age 6+ ★★★★★	 MOVIE The Bee Movie age 38 ★★★★★
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Popular with Parents

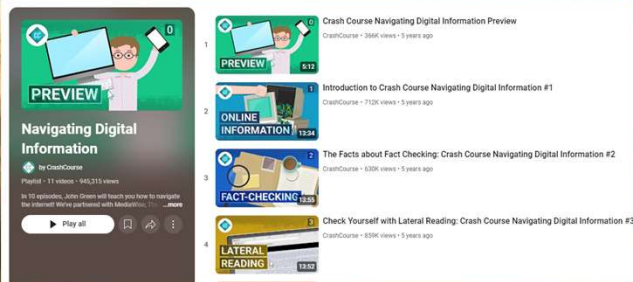
 MOVIE Deadpool & Wolve... age 17+ ★★★★★	 MOVIE Inside Out 2 age 6+ ★★★★★	 MOVIE Twisters age 12+ ★★★★★	 MOVIE Beetlejuice Beetlejuice... age 13+ ★★★★★	 MOVIE The Wild Robot age 6+ ★★★★★	 MOVIE The Fall Guy age 13+ ★★★★★	 MOVIE Wonka age 13+ ★★★★★
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Online Resources: Media Literacy

Axis Ministries

An Axis Course On
Media Literacy and Discernment

MediaWise: Navigating Digital Information



National Association for Media Literacy Education

Key Questions to Ask When Analyzing Media Experiences **NAMLE**

Media literacy requires us to actively consider all our media experiences, from scrolling social media to watching news at the dentist's office. The term media experiences accounts for both the media text (what many think of as "the message") and the environment—both physical and technological—in which we encounter the text.

The key questions below can help us to think critically about the messages we encounter, the platforms and technologies that help shape those messages, and our own personal contexts that we bring to each media experience. Not all questions may apply to every media experience, and there may be others you find yourself asking in addition to these. Some questions will have more than one answer, but for all questions, we should also be sure to probe for evidence, asking ourselves, how do I know that? What makes me say that?

Authors and Audiences	
Authorship	Who made this? Who was and was not involved in the creation of this? When was this made?
Purposes	Why was this made? What does this expect me to do? Who is the target audience?
Economics	Who paid for this? Who makes money from this?
Messages and Meanings	
Content	What does this want me to think (or think about)? What could someone learn from this? What meanings, values and perspectives are obvious, and what are implied? What is left out that might be important to know?
Techniques and Format	How does the format or method of communication impact my experience with the media? Where or how was it shared with the public? What techniques are used to communicate meaning, and why?
Reflections and Evaluations	
Interpretation	What is my interpretation? What can I learn about myself by reflecting on my interpretation? How might different people understand this message differently?
Responses	How does this make me feel? How do my emotions influence my interpretation of this? If I feel the need to respond, what actions could I take that would feel productive?
Credibility	Is this fact, opinion, or something else? What are the sources of the information, ideas, or assertions? How credible is this (and how do you know)? How do I know I can trust this source to give me credible information about this topic?

Updated by NAMLE in 2023. Based on the original document, "Key Questions to Ask When Analyzing Media Messages," by Faith Rogien and Cindy Schiller. <https://www.namle.org/educational-use-in-classroom/>

Parenting in Technology

5. Talk: Monitor...

- **Be curious about their online activity.** Know what they're up to online; follow their social media accounts.
- **Praise healthy tech moments:** "Catch them doing good"
 - "I'm so proud of you for getting off your iPad when I asked you to."
 - "I liked how you wrote that kind comment on your friend's Instagram post."

Parenting in Technology

5. ...but keep having conversations to get to the heart issue!

Our goal isn't foremost to control behavior, but to lead our children to Christ as ambassadors of reconciliation.

- **Active listening:** restate/reflect back what they're saying.
 - Practice the not shocked face!
- **Ask questions that get to the heart issue with your child.** (Paul Tripp)

1. **What happened?**
2. **What were you thinking and feeling?**
3. **What did you do in response?**
4. **Why did you do it? What were you seeking to accomplish?**
5. **What was the result?**

Common Heart Issues in Technology for Your Child


<https://mclean.capitalpres.org/resources/presentations/>

Heart Issue	The Temptation/Accusation → Possible Fruit	Biblical Truths
Belonging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ I can feel connected without risk or vulnerability—social media is my imaginary buffer between emotions and reality. ❖ I can feel known and loved (e.g. receive affirmations and acknowledgement from others based on my day-to-day thoughts and feelings). ❖ I need to belong to these set of online relationships/social events to feel like I am part of my “tribe.” <p>→ <i>anxiety; compromising choices; copycat behavior; unrealistic expectations for relational fulfillment</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I don't have to perform to belong; by grace, I belong to Christ. Ephesians 2:13-16! In my online group, I often perform to belong. The audience is others; the standards are set by the group; they are undefined and changing. Under the gospel, I'm not performing. God is my audience. The righteousness of God, which I can't live up to—but I do live up to that standard, so that in Him, He is well pleased with me. • Out of my union with Christ, I can pray for and seek community with other people. I can look for community or other circles that provide healthier outlets for social connection. • Because of my union with Christ, it's okay to be a citizen of heaven, I will be “left out” in one way or another, but I always “fit in” with the pattern of this world (Roman 12:2). • “Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise, but the company of fools will suffer harm” (Proverbs 13:20). Are these friends influencing me to behave in ways that are honoring God and loving others? “Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but he who walks with the wise and prudent will be wise, righteous, holy, and blameless for many days.”
Body Image	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ My body needs to be “perfect” as dictated by worldly or others' standards online <p>→ <i>anxiety; discontentment; depression; eating disorders</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am beautifully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139:14). • Because I am “in Christ,” I have the beauty and righteousness (Isaiah 61). I don't have to live in shame or be worthy by others in physical beauty (which is fleeting) in order to be out in the security of being eternally loved and accepted. I don't need to achieve mastery over food and my physical body to find peace. I truly have nothing to earn and nothing to prove. • God is patient and gracious with me. He knows my struggle; he is gracious and patient with those who are hurting; he lifts up those who are cast down (Hebrews 4:15; Isaiah 42:3; Psalm 145:14; Matthew 11:28-30).

- Belonging
- Body Image
- Escapism
- Identity
- Immediate gratification
- Materialism
- Sexual gratification
- Social comparison

Online Resources: Equipping Parents to Talk with their Children

Axis Ministries

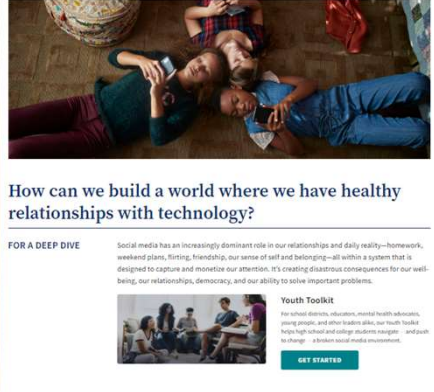


Conversation Kit

Conversation Kits are topical video series designed for you and your teen to watch and discuss together. These family-friendly videos weave biblical principles with cultural references to provide an engaging experience that is relevant to teens and trusted by parents. Our

Center for Humane Technology

For Parents & Educators



How can we build a world where we have healthy relationships with technology?

FOR A DEEP DIVE

Social media has an increasingly dominant role in our relationships and daily reality—homework, weekend plans, flirting, friendship, our sense of self and belonging—all within a system that is designed to capture and monopolize our attention. It's creating disastrous consequences for our well-being, our relationships, democracy, and our ability to solve important problems.

Youth Toolkit!

For social anxiety, education, mental health education, young people, and other leaders alike, our youth toolkit helps high school and college students design—and push to change—a broken social media environment.

[GET STARTED](#)

FOR GETTING STARTED


THREE ACTIONS YOU CAN TAKE TODAY

Overwhelmed by our broken social media environment and wondering where to start? Here are a few important steps you can take today to increase your well-being.

Discuss The Social Dilemma

This documentary powerfully illustrates the impact of technology designed to keep our attention. Use our Discussion Guide with your family, your school, or your

ScreenSense.org



Talking About Tech

"Mistakes are a part of life. It is the response to the errors that counts."
—Nikki Giovanni

Monitoring conversations to substitute healthy tech use need to be an individual to the devices themselves. Below find curated talking points and resources you can share with your children. It's never too late to get started on this work, no matter where you are on the journey to healthy tech use!

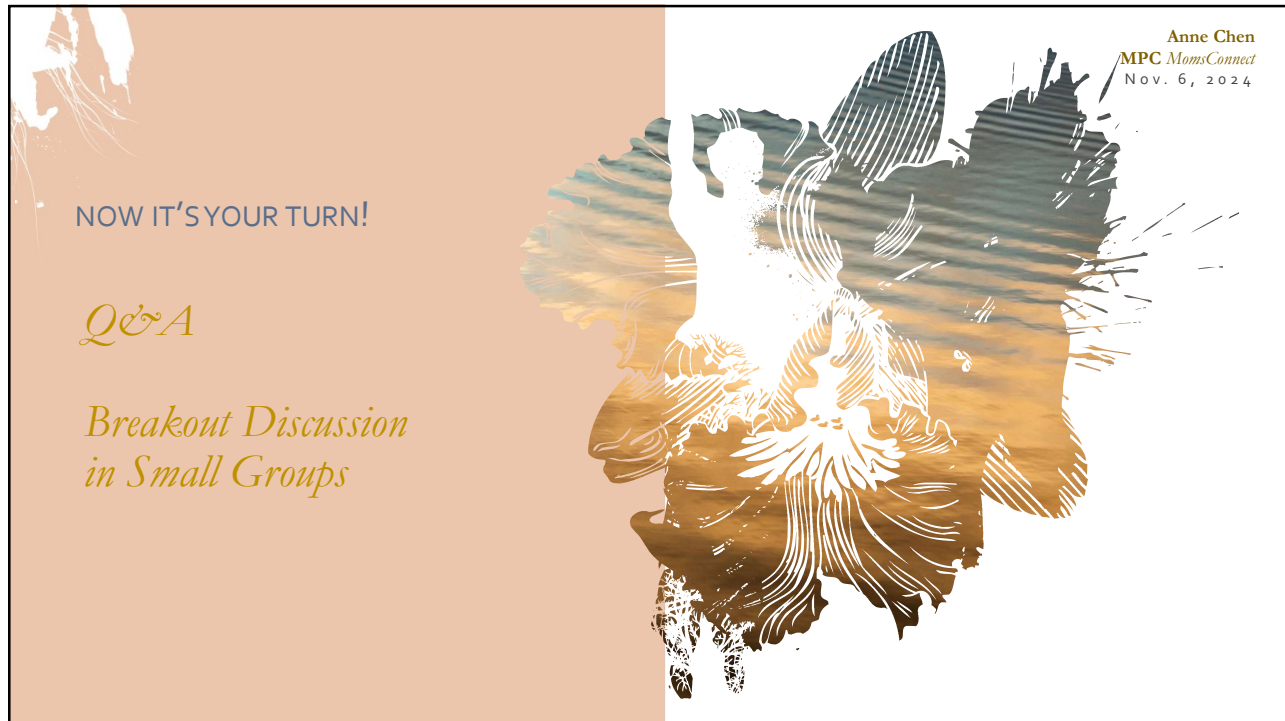
In Closing: Two Comforts in the Gospel

This isn't our work, but *God's* (Phil. 2:13).

1. Let's be empowered by the **sufficient grace** He gives us (2 Peter 1:3-4, Titus 2:11-12):
 - Let's **pray** for His wisdom (James 1:5);
 - be **nourished by God's Word**;
 - and **seek Christian community** as we parent.
2. God is a **God of redemption** (Ps. 130:7). We aren't locked into our past mistakes! It is never too late to correct, reorient, and set new patterns.

*O Israel, hope in the Lord!
For with the Lord there is steadfast love,
and with him is plentiful redemption.
Psalm 130:7*





Anne Chen
MPC MomsConnect
Nov. 6, 2024

NOW IT'S YOUR TURN!

Q&A

*Breakout Discussion
in Small Groups*