



PARENTING TECH TIPS

Danelle Spence

1. Begin with family screen time conversations.
 - Talk about your family's use, and re-set the expectations, rules, and limits together.
2. Set screen time limits and stick to them.
 - Be consistent. Get comfortable with your child being mad at you. This is ok and necessary. Remember you are the parent.
3. Establish *non-negotiable*, tech-free zones as a family.
 - I suggest no screens at the dinner table, in the car, or in the bedroom.
4. It's ok (and necessary!) for kids to be uncomfortable sometimes.
 - If kids use their screens to numb, distract or escape difficult emotions, how will they learn to handle adversities, failures, and/or disappointments?
5. Activate and encourage more non-screen, offline activities.
 - Trade 1:1 (1 hour of screen time equates to 1 hour of art, music, exercise, etc.)
6. Sit with your kids and teach them healthy, appropriate social media use.
 - Don't assume they know how to do this (or how to do this well!). They will make mistakes, so teach them the skills they need versus only consequenceing their behaviour.
7. Insist on moments of boredom and downtime.
 - Boredom activates problem solving, imagination, curiosity, and healthy self-reflection.
8. Get off your own phones.
 - Ensure you are modelling healthy technology use yourself. Be available to your children, and show them they are more important than your device.

Dr. Philip McRae

1. **Be Balanced**- Avoid having a device out at the dinner table, and don't sleep with a phone.
2. **Be Mindful**- Developmentally we need to be cautious how and when we introduce technology to our children. While this is preschool oriented, it also goes to development across school ages from kindergarten to grade 12.
3. **Be Present**- Simply put, if technology helps to amplify and connect positive relationships, then it has value. If, however, it interrupts, distracts or inhibits our relationships (the storied nature of our lives) then we need to remember to be present not absent.

Suggested Books on Technology

1. **Screen-Smart Parenting – Jodi Gold**
2. **How To Break Up With Your Phone – Catherine Price**
3. **Glow Kids – Nicholas Kardaras**
4. **The Big Disconnect – Catherine Steiner-Adair**