

DIGITAL DISTRACTIONS

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The human spirit must
prevail over technology.

Albert Einstein

“ quote fancy ”

DIGITAL DISTRACTIONS

- Online Gaming.
- YouTube.
- Discord
- IG/SNAPCHAT/TIK-TOK
- Video Gaming: PlayStation, Xbox, Wii
- Phones: Texting/calling



Benefits of Technology



- Ability to remain connected to friends
- Pleasurable
- Can provide a sense of mastery (ex. gaming)
- Creative outlet (ex. Tik-Tok)
- Strengthens knowledge and use of technology

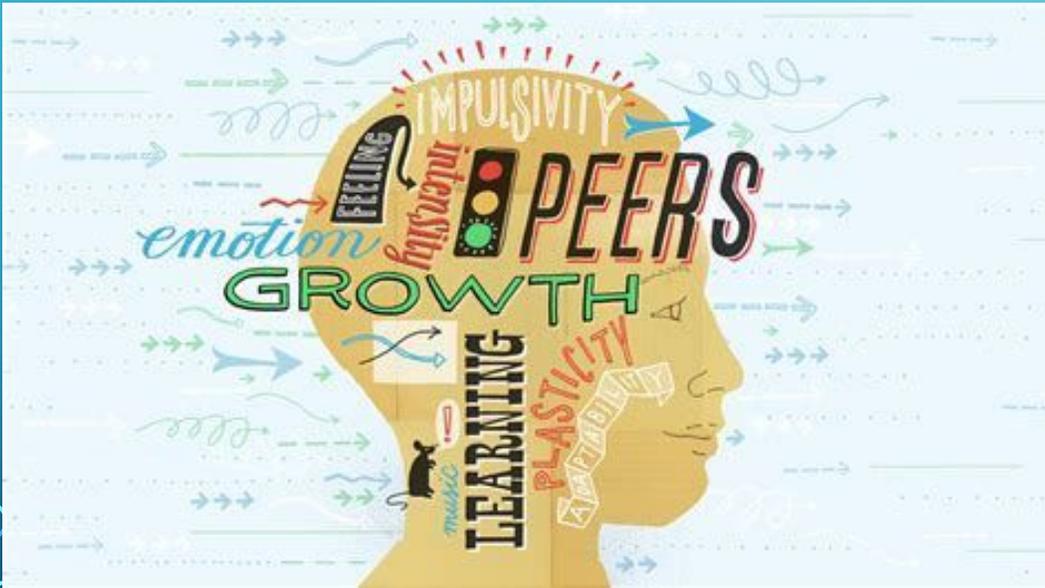
THE PSYCHOLOGY BEHIND WHY CHILDREN/ADOLESCENTS ARE SO DISTRACTED

- <https://www.common sense media.org/research/tweens-teens-tech-and-mental-health>
- Trauma: the trauma created by the pandemic has been identified as an ACE (adverse childhood experience) by the American Psychological Association.
- Some hallmark symptoms related to the impact that trauma has on the brain and learning is; an inability to process and organize information and remain focused.

THE PSYCHOLOGY BEHIND WHY CHILDREN/ADOLESCENTS ARE SO DISTRACTED

- Escapism: digital distractions provide easy escapes from our current realities, a reality that can be scary and confusing for some children/adolescents.
- Loss of control: our children and adolescents had their entire worlds turned upside down without much warning. Gaming and other virtual realities provides them with a sense of control, that the pandemic stripped them of.
- FOMO (fear of missing out): Adolescents want to remain in “the know” about what friends are doing, when and with who.

Neuropsychology and Digital Distractions



- Under-development of prefrontal cortex: decision making center of brain that also manages impulse control
- Dopamine: Gaming and social media trigger the release of dopamine in the brain. The adolescent brain seeks dopamine stimuli more frequently than in any other developmental stage of life.

Sreenagers



When Digital Use Becomes a Distraction

- Interferes with school/academics
- Child/adolescent stops engaging in other interests
- Disrupted sleep patterns; staying up too late, trouble staying asleep, trouble waking up on time
- Child/adolescent becomes inappropriately reactive when not allowed to use tech
- Child/adolescent becomes withdrawn from household family members



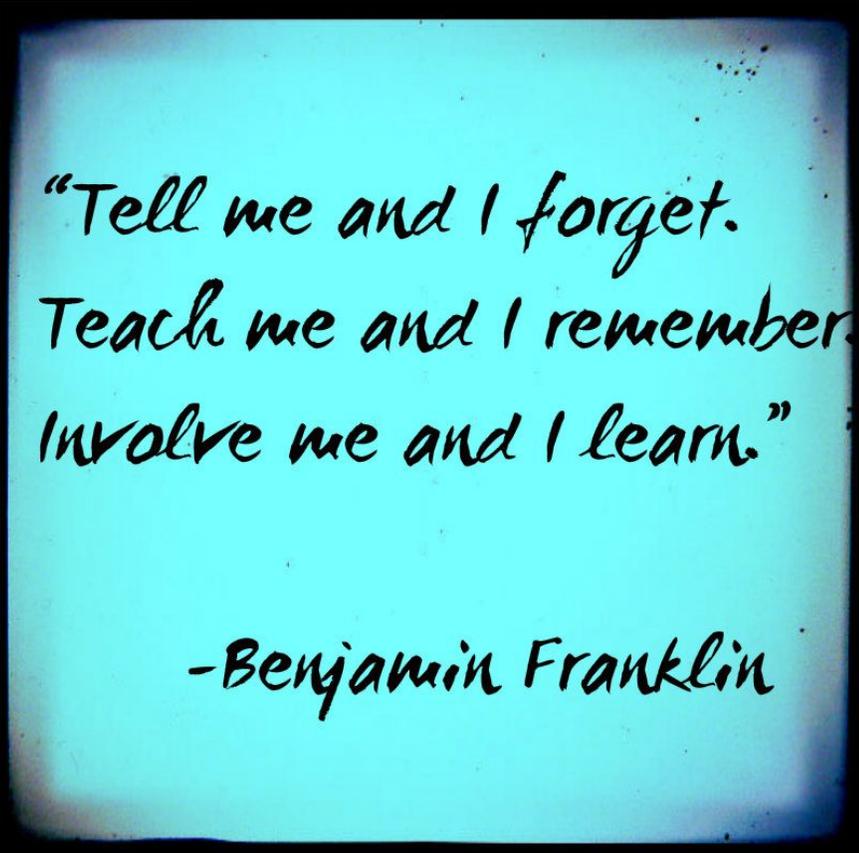
How to Manage Digital Distractions



- Household rules regarding tech use: no use during school hours, during dinner time, or family time.
- Tech/Screen time contracts: family agreed upon written contract regarding screen/tech use
- No tech in cars: driving in the car is ideal time to connect and talk with adolescents
- No tech during family dinners: prioritize family connection

How to Manage Digital Distractions Continued

- No tech in rooms after bedtime: 75% of adolescents get inadequate sleep. The presence of devices disrupt sleep. Create a family charging station that all family members turn their tech into at a set time each night
- Tech/screen use as incentive for completion of school work/household chores. Science shows children/adolescents respond best to rewards.
- Provide positive praise when you observe your child/adolescent making healthy choices related to tech/screen use.
- Model healthy tech/screen use



*"Tell me and I forget.
Teach me and I remember.
Involve me and I learn."*

-Benjamin Franklin

How to Manage Digital Distractions Continued



- Provide alternative pleasurable activity: family games, cooking together, walk/physical activity, watching a show/movie together
- Support your child/adolescents insight and personal accountability by facilitating discussions related to tech use and responsibility
- Involve your child/adolescent in after school activity.

When Family Rules/Incentives Don't Work

- Restricted use of screen time: Do not take screen time away all together, instead reduce time in increments based on school work/household chores not being completed.
- Software to monitor/manage screen use
- Allowing screen use to only occur in family space where it can be supervised



Final Thoughts

THERE IS NO SUCH
THING AS A PERFECT
PARENT. SO JUST
BE A REAL ONE.

~ Sue Atkins

- Parenting during a pandemic is a challenge none of us were prepared for
- Providing praise and connection to your child is the best way to motivate and manage behavior
- Change takes time and is often met initially with resistance
- Be patient not only with your child, but also with yourself
- Seek out support when needed

Resources:

<https://www.screenagersmovie.com/find-a-screening>

<https://cmch.tv/parents/askthemediatrician/>

<https://www.childrenandscreens.com/>

<https://www.harker.org/page.cfm?p=5030>

Software:

<https://famisafe.wondershare.com/>

<https://www.netnanny.com/>