

How do we know if technology is in its proper place in our lives? By how well we love one another. “It’s hard to wash someone’s feet with a phone in your hand.”

What is your relationship with technology? Does your phone go everywhere with you? How do you feel when your phone isn’t with you? Are you receiving more enjoyment from technology than from real-life connections? Digital connections are meaningful to a point but fall short of real, intimate, face to face, social connections.

“The Stakes” – The Stats and The Science

4 Ways Tech Impacts Grade School Children:

1. Gender code develops younger, is sexier, and is meaner. Seen in play with toys.
 - a. For girls – Sexy is cute. Thin is in but younger than ever before.
 - b. For boys – Super masculine. “Future pimp” tshirts.
2. Cool to be cruel.
3. More quickly exposed to adult material that is developmentally inappropriate.
 - a. Children get in over their heads and view material that they are unable to process properly. You can’t “unsee” something.
4. Kids cannot pull the plug on fun. They have no limit setting abilities. PLUS, digital devices have an addictive nature to them due to the immediate rewards they provide.

2011 Survey of 2800 college students and young professionals:

1. More than half stated that “they could not live without the Internet, it is an integral part of their daily life”
2. They also could not live without their mobile devices: 66% of the students and 55% of the young professionals said that mobile devices are the “most important technology in their lives.”
3. Among students, 40% considered the Internet to be more important than social activities, including dating and spending time with friends and if forced to choose, 2 out of 3 would choose Internet connection over a car.

Screen time recommendations:

0-2 – no screen time (need face to face)*

3-5 – 1 hr/day (need make believe)*

6-12 – 90 minutes/day**

13-18 – 2 hrs/day**

*Most are spending on average 4.5 hours per day.

**Most are spending on average 8 hours per day.

Age Breakdowns:

- 35 year olds – had email/chat rooms in HS, MSN/AOL Messenger in college, MySpace after college, “immigrants”
- 25 year olds – had MySpace in high school, FaceBook in college, “bilingual”
- 15 year olds – don’t know life without social media, it’s their native tongue

Being “cool in school”:

- Pre-Instagram – popularity is assumed, sorted by lunch tables, people told you, pain temporary and contained, not invited? Just hear about it.
- Post-Instagram – popularity is explicit, selfies/pictures are ranked by likes, friends can be ranked by followers, not invited? See the pictures.

Children now assign a numeric value to base social standing. They can determine their “worth” using actual numbers – numbers that are provided by their peers.

And YES, they pay attention! Students typically know to the digit the number of followers they have, who they follow, and who isn’t following them back. They have hurt feelings when popular kids “like” pictures above and below theirs but not theirs. They don’t get invited to parties but they see all the fun they missed out on in every photo posted. PARENTS YOU HAVE TO READ THE HASHTAGS!!

Social media can create an entitlement to the attention of others. It can also dull the ache of loneliness and boredom that are so necessary for social and relational and personal development.

“At arguably the most awkward time in their lives, a crucial time of development when they are trying to figure out who they are and where they belong, this is what they’re up against: a quantifiable popularity ranking.” ~Sarah Brooks

Waldorf Schools – 160 nationwide that do not allow technology

Sleep disruptions – use phone as alarm and resist using a conventional alarm clock and so are being constantly interrupted by alerts from apps and emails.

Social/Communication disruptions or lack of development.

- Teens are often afraid of conversations they don’t have the ability to predict and control – even something as simple as ordering pizza – and so they rely on and prefer to use text messaging or email.
- Texts and emails lack verbal nuance and body language.

Brain changes:

Pleasure systems – cause of addiction. The system that rewards behaviors (and therefore creates addictions) is stimulated when we engage our digital devices. However, where this system is overused, our pleasure from that activity is diminished (tolerance is built and need for more use to get the same “high” or response). This equals an inability to experience small joys and an increase in “boredom”. Our prefrontal cortex is where our ability to self-regulate resides in the brain. Without a well developed prefrontal cortex, we do not have the ability to “turn off” things that are enjoyable, even if the enjoyment has become harmful for us – we lose self-control and self-discipline. Lack of prefrontal cortex development means that adolescents do not truly understand and comprehend social permanence. Anhedonia towards other activities.

Tranquility system – we experience anxiety when this system malfunctions. Stimulation caused by digital use releases cortisol to increase in our body.

Memory system – inability to retain information. Myth of multitasking. Impact on our short term memory.

Learning system – we become much more fatigued than we ever used to. Our brains also need “downtime” to consolidate and process information and does not get that downtime when we are always on our digital devices.

We are in constant need of and believe that we are entitled to the attention of others. And even though social media can help us connect with extended relationships, they tend to disconnect us from our most intimate relationships.

Parents need to:

Build trust through communication – teenagers need love and affection, they need limits, they need adults who are good listeners.

Protect their social skills with real and appropriate touch and real life relationships. Process it when things don't go well –especially when social cues are misread or misinterpreted.

Keep informed on latest apps/tech developments

Be involved in child's digital life

Love them enough to set limits

Let the example in your own tech usage

Get into nature with your children

Take digital fasts.

REMEMBER: Adolescents speak a different language than adults so don't make assumptions. Instead, ask questions, be patient, seek understanding. Be quick to listen and slow to anger.

Don't:

- Condemn any behavior you haven't taken time to understand.
- Expect your child to do less multitasking than you are!
- Give in to temper tantrums or pouting.
- Label teenager as “bad” or withdraw love as a way to condemn behavior.
- Let technology intimidate you!

Do:

- Experiment with the Internet to increase credibility to set limits.
- Monitor multitasking activities and try to limit.
- Reinforce behavior that focuses on single activities.
- Set clear limits on all activities that are stimulating.
- Encourage relaxation, taking time out, going outside, and changing their immediate environment.
- Foster as much physical activity as possible.
- Limit access to undesirable sights.

Have caring and candid conversations about life – thoughtful conversation is how we humanize our experiences. Stimulation has begun to replace connection, but connection is what we need most, especially as we develop through childhood and adolescence.

Develop empathy – this takes time and practice and requires walking through real life situations as they arise.

Guard your heart with Scripture that reminds you who you are and who God is. (Romans 12:2, 1 John 3:1, Philippians 4:8)

Find positive ways to use social media as a family – Instagram scavenger hunt, pictures that illustrate Biblical principles/verses, or pictures that describe a family member in a positive way

Router password protected, in a room inaccessible to children, and turned off when necessary. Additionally, all electronic devices charged in parents' bedroom at night.

Consequences need to be clear, consistent and fair. It is ok to take technology away but do so for a set time.

Focus on character building – children and adolescents need to learn from their mistakes and remain whole in the process (not shamed). Keep the big picture in mind!

Stay involved in children's digital lives – know all passwords and be open and transparent about your involvement.

Pray and seek God's wisdom in all things!

Best advice I've ever heard from a high school student: "Keep your circle small."

Using Social Media to Honor God:

1. Things that come out on social media are a reflection of the things in your heart. (Philippians 4:8)
2. Edify and bless others. Build others up. Are you encouraging or gossiping?
3. Invite others. Don't exclude others.
4. Teach others – share articles, Bible verses, favorite Christian artists
5. Be a peacemaker. - Romans 12:2

Protect your Godspace!

1. If you can't disengage from your digital technology, you won't engage with God.
2. Over-engagement in the digital world diminishes our ability to reflect, meditate, and contemplate.
3. Technology robs our ability to be alone and silent. It's in silence and solitude that we nourish our relationship with God.

Three Necessary Conversations: Others, Self, and God. Technology impedes all three conversations.

Being a sustainable family:

Recognize that technology is pervasive and develops a family philosophy that reflects family values – which may look different for different families. So talk about this as a family and encourage children to talk about it with others.

Encourage play and play together. This does not have to be fancy but children know you like and value them when you choose to be with them. Being together is the key and the actual activity is secondary.

Nourish meaningful connection and thoughtful conversation that shares feelings, values, expectations, and options.

Understands uniqueness of each family member, fosters independence in the context of the family and nurtures individual interests.

Builds in mechanisms for disagreement, parents set limits, act thoughtfully with parental authority, and do the hard work of demonstrating accountability, authority, openness, transparency, and avoids saying “just trust me.”

Has values, wisdom, a common language they share, and connections to their past while looking forward to the future.

Provides experiences offline in which children can experience and cultivate an innerlife, solitude, connection to nature, and most importantly connection with God.

Digital agreement ideas:

Digital Boundaries:

- No digital devices at mealtimes
- Limit checking emails or texts to once an hour
- Don't check smartphone until after morning devotions
- End digital day by 9:00 pm
- Take regular digital Sabbath
- Don't talk to “virtual people” when in the presence of “real people”.
- Pray daily for God's wisdom and discernment in stewardship of your virtual life.
- Post pictures of things other than your self – limit to 1 selfie per day
- One screen at a time.
- Think twice, post once.

SEX and TECH:

Facts:

- Average age first view of pornography is 9.
- 20% of children admit to receiving sexual solicitations from adults online.
- Porn marketers send 2.5 billion unsolicited emails a day often opened by teenagers.
- 21% of Christian teenage girls admit to texting a naked photo of themselves.
- The largest group of Internet pornography users are 12-17 year olds.
- The most popular day of the week to watch Internet pornography: Sunday.
- Almost 90% of teenagers have viewed pornography – most often unintentionally – and nearly 80% of the time in the home.
- 1/3 of 16 and 17 year old boys have viewed pornography intentionally.

Technology deletes the “pause” button between thought and action.

Adolescent development involves emotional intensity/impulsivity/risk-taking, a quest for autonomy, a quest for identity, and a search for intimacy.

Message to teenagers: 1. You are more than your online image. 2. You’ll make mistakes but the goal/hope is don’t do anything to embarrass you or your family. 3. Adults are here to help you and guide you.

Approachable parents aren’t: 1. Scary – they don’t react in anger. 2. Crazy – overprotect in meddling ways. 3. Clueless – want to be friend instead of parent OR are too old-fashioned

KEEP YOUR COOL when things go wrong! – “I will not be mad at you. There is nothing you can tell me that I cannot handle.”

Our goal for our children: Learn from their mistakes while remaining whole and not shamed.

JOSH STRAUB SCREEN BALANCED FAMILY – video series and workbook available

How can I have my child's heart more than the technology does?

“The first secret to being more connected in your marriage and with your kids is respecting the power technology has on your life. I heard my friend and colleague, Dr. Diane Langberg once say, “Anything you cannot fast from, owns you.” Relationally and emotionally connected families respect the powerful reward mechanisms and positive stimulation built into today's technologies. They enjoy the rewards but are not owned or controlled by them. In other words, they know when to shut them off.”

When was the last time you turned your phone off for an entire day?

Knife analogy – valuable for cutting vegetables but must be respected for its purpose or else you'll lose a finger. When we respect technology we're better able to use it for its purpose, lest we lose control. In order to respect technology, we need to learn about it – all of it.

More connected families also respect one another.

Previous generations of teenagers hung out at the mall. Today's generation hangs out on social media networks. Teenager's social life is directly linked to technologies.

Setting hard limits against these technologies without respecting the motivation behind your child's use of them could infuriate them and build bigger walls between you.

Respecting your children means you don't assume the worst about them. Respecting your children also means you don't give them free reign either.

4 Ways to Use Screen Time to Your Kids' Advantage:

Technology is not bad. Technology without limits is bad.

- a. Not AGAINST screens, but FOR emotionally and spiritually healthy children.
 - b. Sometimes instead of turning the screen off we need to change what is on it.
1. In 1970 the average age of first screen exposure was 4 years old. Today it is 4 months old. So...use the screen wisely and sparingly. Used to be used only in the home, not screens are literally everywhere.
 2. Children under 5 get 4.5 hours of screen time per day. (that's 40% of their awake time) and kids 5-18 are spending on average 7 hours per day. So...Invite them into activities with you – cook dinner together, yard work, discuss your day. These activities grow their brains. Parents spend approximately 2-3 hours per day with their children. This needs to increase. Have your children help you problem solve. Invite them into your inner world in appropriate ways.
 3. Too much screen time, or the wrong content can be harmful. If TV is on in the background, be sure to monitor what is on it – even regarding commercials. Kids pick up on both the images and the auditory content.
 4. What about iPad apps? Most (85%) are “drill and practice” apps. These apps do not make your child smarter. In fact, they can actually be detrimental in regards to attention and impulse control.

Why Mister Rogers is Smarter than Baby Einstein.

Age 3 and 7 are important markers regarding development. (watch Dimitri Christakis: Tedx Rainer – media and children

Greatest time of brain growth is from birth to 2 years old – brain triples, but what triples isn't number of neurons, but number of synapses and neural pathways. These connections are based on these early experiences and then are fine-tuned to the world the child lives in during adolescence around age 15. (example is language – every infant is born with the ability to speak ANY language. A child born in China will learn to speak mandarin flawlessly but unless exposed to English sounds at a VERY early age, they will be able to learn to speak English, but will never sound like a native speaker.)

Neural connections – born with 2500, 15000 by age 3, begin to be pruned by age 15.

Overstimulation hypothesis – prolonged exposure to rapid image changes during a child's critical period of brain development (birth to 3 years old) preconditions their mind to expect high levels of stimulation, which leads to inattention in later life.

Baby Einstein "A Day on the Farm" in a 20 second clip there were 7 screen changes – that's a screen change every 3 seconds. Which means that a lesson at school about farm animals or a trip to an actual farm is boring and slow for a child.

Mister Rogers' neighborhood was only program that showed no differences in later attention compared to kids who watched no TV. The show was designed to expand a child's attention by keeping the child focused on face-to-face interaction with one person. The pacing of screen changes is radically different from other programs.

Your child may learn ABCs quicker but you are sacrificing higher level executive functions of your child's developing brain such as ability to problem-solve, display behavioral control, regulate emotions, plan, negotiate, and delay gratification.

Consumption based apps lead to lower-level neural development and their excessive in-game rewarding leads to unrealistic expectations.

Compared to a child who has watched zero television, the more television a child watches before age three increases the likelihood of inattention problems by age 7. In fact, for every additional hour per day a child watches TV before age three their chance of inattention problems increases by 10 percent compared to a child who watches no tv. AND for every hour of cognitive stimulation (reading, singing, museums, interactive face to face play) a child's chances of having an attention problem decreases by 30%. Interactive face to face play improves language development.

We need more real time play and less fast paced screen time

What My iPhone Stole from Me:

"The first thing I reach for in the morning. The last thing I say goodnight to before bed. Always within arm's reach. If not, I search until I find it. How could I live without it? Present in all my moments – the stressful, the memorable, the mundane. An ever-constant presence. Dulling the

pain, lulling my anxious heart, entertaining my brain, bringing brief happiness. Another alert, another scroll through a newsfeed, another email check, another “urgent” request for my attention.”

Missing out on life and it’s my iPhone’s fault. I’ve lost quality time.

“Multitasking” has changed our brains: our ability to settle, to play, to be still, to enjoy, to be present in moments and in conversations.

When was the last time I considered the spiritual war raging for my heart and mind? When was the last time I thought of another scroll through FB as a celebratory win for the enemy? We’re doing nothing to grow, to change life of another, to widen perspective, soften hearts. We will never get back the time wasted on social media.

“Will you ever look back on your life and wish you’d seen another duck-lipped selfie or another friend’s vacation pictures through the Valencia filter?”

“Look back at your life this past week and tell me about the moments that mattered. The ones that made you feel real joy, belly laugh, and take a deep breath of thankfulness. The moments you’ll remember ten years from now. I doubt any of them happened on a screen.”

Our technology-laden generation is desperate to FEEL, to LIVE, to LOVE – we’ve been lulled into a screen life existence.

We feel like we need more – but deep down we know what we really need is less:

Less amusement. More musing.

Less entertainment. More creating.

Less sitting. More moving.

Less multitasking. More focus.

Less watching. More reading.

Less texting. More talking.

Less screentime. More outdoor time.

Less comfort. More adventure.

Less apathy. More passion.

Less self-centeredness. More serving.

Less of me. More of God.

PAUL MILLER – year without the internet.

Found that his time spent online was not actually productive time, it was distracted time. He longed for productive time. When he “quit the internet” he experienced a great sense of freedom, but he also experienced intense boredom at times. But that boredom allowed him to think, be self-reflective, be creative, be silent and explore what he REALLY wanted to do with his life. His relationships became more intimate and he was described as more “intense” by his friends. He lived more in the moment and his sister noted that he was more emotionally available than he had ever been. However, he also found that he withdrew more and often missed out on social activities when the invite was over text or by facebook. He found coming back online to be very overwhelming and disorienting. (He had 20000 emails) He missed things like Skype that kept him connected to family far away. But his sister also noted that “the wall was back up” regarding emotional availability and vulnerability. Basically, leaving the internet didn’t solve the problem. The internet didn’t necessarily cause the problem. “If you are 100% online, you miss the experience. If you are 100% offline, we miss the experience.”

#struggles by Criag Groeschel

What technology has stolen from us:

1. Contentment – struggle with comparison
 - a. Measure and compare lives
 - b. “Precise data” on popularity
 - c. “I used to think I had a lot of friends...we’d grab lunch or talk at our kids’ games...Then after Facebook, I was able to connect with long-distance friends...but everyone is so busy now. I supposedly have over 300 friends...but last week I couldn’t find one friend who could meet me for coffee. I’ve never felt so lonely in my entire life.”
2. Intimacy – struggle with “likes”
 - a. Hebrews 10:25 and Romans 12:9
 - b. Friendship on our own terms. More connected but more alone.
 - c. Addicted to immediate affirmation
 - d. Make sure technology is enhancing our relationships, not replacing them.
3. Authenticity – struggle with control of our image and conversation
 - a. The more filtered our lives become, the more difficult it is to be authentic.
 - b. We are no longer comfortable in spontaneous, unscripted conversation and texting allows us to stay in control.
 - c. TOO transparent happens too – just because it can be shared doesn’t mean it should be shared. Just because it is true, doesn’t mean it should be shared! So everything you say must be true, but not everything true must be said.
 - d. So...be authentic with all, transparent with most, and intimate with some.
4. Compassion – struggle with desensitization
 - a. Selfie-centered – obsessed with ourselves. Students today care about others 40% less than people did during the 80s. And 80% of what people post on social media is about themselves.
 - b. Pain into popular causes that are easily abandoned and creates desensitization over time. Repeating a stimulus overtime causes it to register less and less overtime. And we don’t have to interact with the content directly.
 - c. TRUE COMPASSION DEMANDS ACTION.
5. Integrity – struggle with secret impurity
 - a. Integrity – the things that keep us whole and completely focused on God.
 - b. The huge porn problem (highest percentage of consumers are children age 12-17), 1 in 5 teenage girls have posted a naked picture and higher rates of social media use are correlated with higher rates of infidelity.
 - c. Over time technology has eroded our moral beliefs and our commitment to acting on what we believe. What used to be considered wrong has gradually become tolerated and eventually simply accepted by many, if not most.
 - d. People don’t PLAN to ruin their lives, but it happens over and over again.
6. Encouragement – struggle with constant criticism
 - a. Just because you CAN do something, doesn’t mean you SHOULD do something.
 - b. Don’t post what you won’t say to someone’s face. And consider if you are truly helping or simply gossiping.
 - c. Ask yourself: Is what I’m about to say helpful or hurtful? Am I making private matters public? Am I permitting others to gossip?

7. Worship – struggle with idolatry
 - a. I love technology, but do I love it too much – do I adore it?
 - b. If you can't fast from it, then it owns you. So, don't manage it, destroy it!
 - c. Overall there is NO SIGNIFICANT MEASURABLE DIFFERENCE made by social media.
8. Rest – struggle with distraction
 - a. Nomophobia – fear of being without a mobile device. 87% of teenagers sleep with their phones.
 - b. 1 Corinthians 6:12 – I love technology but I have to stay mindful to refuse to be mastered by it. Christ in me is stronger than any addiction in me.
 - c. Psalm 46:10 – learn to be disconnected and still in the presence of God.

What happens when we are forced to disconnect? We survive!!

Jesus asked the invalid by the pool – do you want to get well? He asks us the same thing.

The Ten Commandments of Using Social Media

1. Put God first in all you say and post.
2. Love others as you want to be loved.
3. Use social media to facilitate, not replace, real relationships.
4. Use social media instead of being controlled by it as an idol.
5. Turn your virtual other cheek to posts that offend you.
6. Do not post out of emotion
7. Always reflect Jesus, loving God whether online or off.
8. Do not use social media to fuel temptations.
9. Form your own opinions; do not follow the crowd.
10. Do not base your identity on what people think.

The Glass Cage by Nicholas Carr

Spend less time “flying on autopilot” with the use of technology. Technology shoulders the workload, makes our chores less burdensome, do more in less time, and do things we couldn’t otherwise do. On the other hand, technology takes a toll on and erodes our talents, narrows our perspectives, limits our choices, opens us up to manipulation and surveillance.

Tacit (procedural) knowledge v. Explicit knowledge (or Riding a bike v. changing a tire)

- Innate skills that must be learned by cannot be expressed as a simple recipe or described without generalizations/abstractions (riding a bike) v. A process that can be broken down into well-defined steps. (changing a tire)
- How does Googlemobile blur these lines? Same ends now can occur with different means.

“When my computer goes down or my Internet connection fails, I feel lost, disoriented, unable to work – in fact, I feel as if my hands have been amputated.” Katherine Hayles, lit professor at Duke University in 2012 book, “How We Think”

Will total automation leave us feeling bored? Useless? Like driving an automatic transmission instead of a manual?

“The trouble with automation is that it often gives us what we don’t need at the cost of what we do.”

The “paradox of work” – we are more fulfilled and most happy at work but have a strong desire to be off the job and when not at work the last thing we want is to go to work. We’re terrible at understanding what satisfies us and what doesn’t.

“Miswanting” – we’re inclined to desire things we don’t like and to like things that we don’t desire.

Job = structure, happiest when absorbed in a difficult task with clear goals that challenges us to use our talents and stretch them. Allows us to tune out distractions, transcend anxieties of everyday life, fix our attention. We can have this in leisure but we often choose to squander our free time instead of engaging in challenging hobbies. Lazy = Bored = Fretful

“Are we in danger of being destroyed by our own creations?” Robert Hugh Macmillan

“Machines are worshipped because they are beautiful and valued because they confer power; they are hated because they are hideous and loathed because they impose slavery.” Bertrand Russell in 1924

The Shallows by Nicholas Carr

Medium matters more than the medium’s content.

“Our conventional response to all media, namely that it is how they are used that counts, is the numb stance of the technological idiot.” Marshall McLuhan, 1964, *Understanding Media*

Brains are changing – reading from getting immersed in a story to losing interest after just a page or two.

Internet is chipping away at capacity for concentration and contemplation. Mind expects to take in information the way the internet distributes it – in swiftly moving stream of particles. Think scuba diver v. a jet ski.

Neuroplasticity – malleable, cells grow bigger with use and waste away without use. Breaking old connections and making new ones – reprogramming on the fly. In other words, “cells that fire together wire together.”

Nature v. Nurture or Kant v. Locke or Rationalist v. Empiricist – both options have merit and actually complement one another. The common ground is found in the synapse.

We change our ways of thinking, perceiving, and acting through the way we live and the tools we use.

We become what we think – piano/imagery study: imagery created the same brain changes as actually playing.

Sara Bean blog:

Know the risks of time spent in digital world:

- Connection between screen time and social skill development.
 - Which comes first? Poor social skills and so gravitate to the screen or Screen time leads to poor social skills? Likely BOTH.
 - Regardless, more face to face time is the answer.
- Screen time and possible exposure to predators or inappropriate content. (even when they aren't looking for it.)
- Over exposure of self – sharing too much personal information – they can't see the potential harm (lack of prefrontal cortex).

Know Goals so You Can Set Rules:

- What kind of “product” do you want to create and how does screentime impact that?
- What kind of technology? For how long? Where?
- How do you know rules are working? If they aren't working what will you do?

What comes BEFORE screen time?

- Consider child's maturity level.
- Consider your priorities and values – they dictate what comes before a screen
- Consider child's responsibilities – homework and chores. Screen time is always an earned privilege.

Know your Options:

- Parents – you are in control! But don't ever get in a physical tug of war over a device. In event of sneaking or refusal eliminate technology through another means such as:
 - Changing the password – prevent guessing with frequent changes and memory erase after too many failed attempts.
 - Parental controls – use them! And guided access. And Facebook privacy.
 - Cell service – suspend and reinstate service through online account. Also offer tracking subscriptions.
 - Disable device by taking power cords, shutting off router, etc.

Teens don't realize the permanence of what they post online and don't have the foresight to see the potential negative consequences.

Begin conversations about internet safety as soon as you allow your kids online. Filtering works for younger kids but older kids will get around them.

Keep computer in a central space. (Difficult when homework requires a quiet space.)

Have your child help you with your social media profiles.

No personal information. Don't share passwords.

Make sure teens know computer keeps record of online exchanges – even if it looks like it doesn't.

Stats:

- 90% of teens are online. 73% are on social networking sites.
- Online average of 5 hrs per day. (parents believe it is only 3)
- 37% send messages to friends daily
- 50% have been bullied online and 50% have engaged in bullying.
- 20% have sexted and 30% have a friend who has sent nude pictures.
- 61% who have sent a nude picture admit they were pressured to do so
- 25% of teen girls have had nude picture sent to them accidentally
- 17% of sexters share the message with someone else.
- 27% of children 10-17 have been exposed to unwanted sexual material
- Only 1 in 3 children view pornography intentionally

A teenager's brain cannot handle these situations because the prefrontal cortex (responsible for learning, focusing, long-term decision making, short-term decision making, concentration, goal oriented thinking, judgment, impulse control) isn't developed until mid-20s.

Bottomline: they can't make the best decisions for themselves. Monitoring helps you protect them from themselves.

Monitoring benefits both the teen and the parent.

- Teens can be independent while parent can reach child anytime.
- Teen can connect with peers while parent can stay current with emerging tech.
- Teen can learn about boundaries while parent knows when child is in need.
- Teen can get guidance to make good decisions while parent protects their teen from outside influences.
- Teaches children to conduct themselves in the social world.

Four Principles:

1. Privacy.
2. Permanence
3. No regrets
4. Gossip gets around. (You can be a bully even if you don't mean to be.)

Communication:

Learn their perspective – understand the technology and be the person they come to when they are in need. Don't make it personal. Analyze, don't criticize.

References and Resources (not necessarily endorsements):

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The Glass House by Nicholas Carr

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