

It's Complicated: Adolescents, Social Media, and Mental Health

Dr. Dave Walsh and Erin Walsh
Mind Positive Parenting

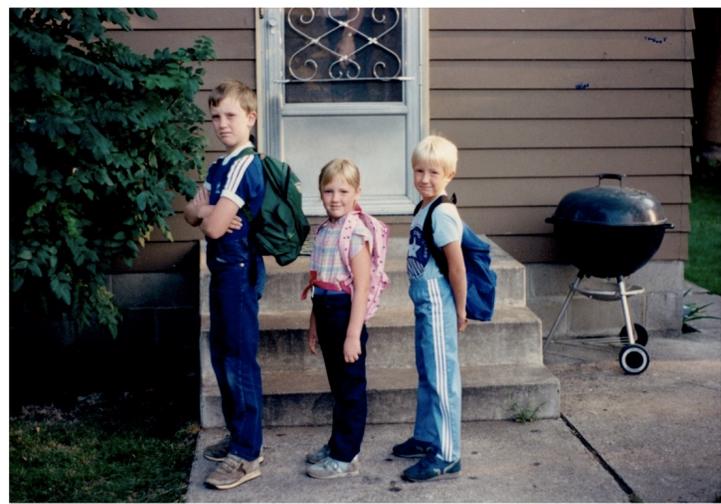
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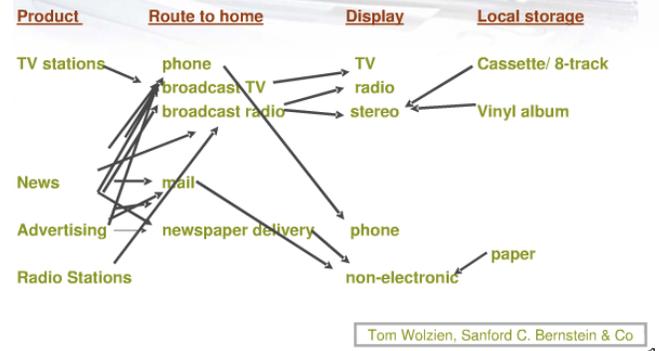


NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON
MEDIA + THE FAMILY

Digital technologies are
not inherently good or
bad; they are powerful.



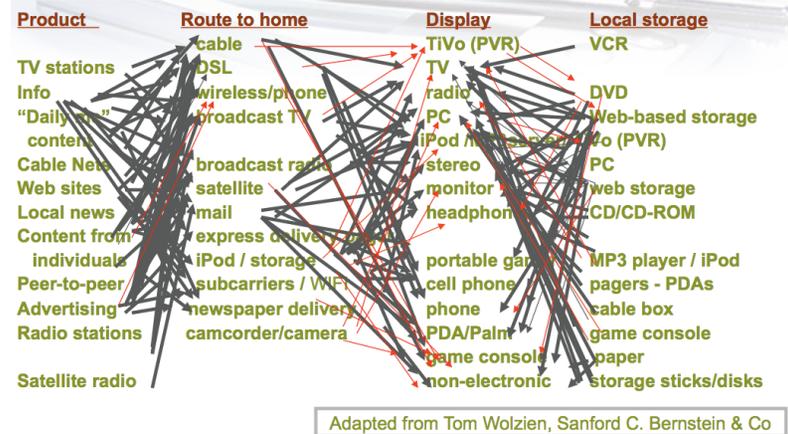
Media Ecology Then



* Borrowed from Lee Rainie, Pew Internet and American Life, "The Rise of the Networked Individual"



Media Ecology Now



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53 hours

a week is the amount of time tweens and teens spend with media outside of school and homework. (Common Sense Media, 2015)

4.5 hours

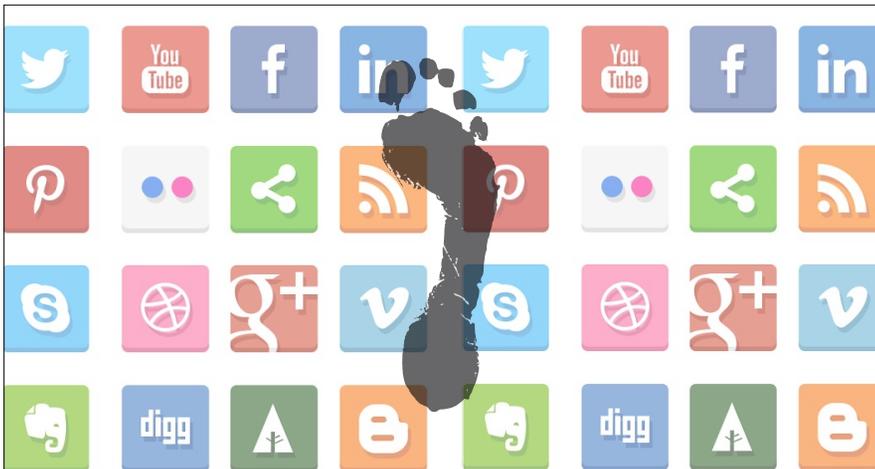
a day is the amount of time each day teens spend with their smartphones. (Common Sense Media, 2015)

37%

of 2-4 year olds have TVs in their bedrooms. (Common Sense Media, 2013)

1/4

of children go online daily at age 3. (Joan Ganz Cooney Center, 2016)



Permanent, Visible, Spreadable, Searchable

Dana Boyd, 2014

Digital technologies are not inherently good or bad; they are powerful.



How do we
respond?



Digital technologies are
not inherently good or
bad; they are powerful.

Protective Factors:

- + Relationships
- + Boundaries
- + Participation



Ingredient #1: RELATIONSHIPS



- + What kind of person are you on this app? In what ways is it similar or different to your offline personality?
- + Do you feel pressure to act a certain way here?
- + What do you like about this? What do you want to change?
- + Do you feel like you have "control" here? Why or why not?

"These have become spaces where much of social life is echoed and amplified - in both good and bad ways."

- Amanda Lenhart,
Pew Internet and American Life



entertaining
don't-put-it-all-out-there humorous happy
mind-your-own-business
caring jolly peaceful interact common-sense stop-being-fake
respectful less real mature
friendly general horny
self-control kind be-yourself get-to-know-people keep-it-to-yourself

Social media are spaces for:

- **Support** - especially for marginalized youth
(Boyd, 2014)
- **Identity formation** (Boyd, 2014)
- **Advice** (Nielsen, 2009)
- **Information** - especially health information.
(Lenhart, 2010)

- ✦ [How](#) are they using it?
- ✦ How do they [feel](#) about it?
- ✦ How [much](#) do they use it?

It's complicated.

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Extending Friendships?

Berkeley's Digital Youth Project (2008)

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Belonging and Support

ABOUT BLOG TAKE THE PLEDGE TAKE ACTION WATCH VIDEOS GET HELP EVENTS MERCHANDISE CONTRIBUT

IT GETS BETTER PROJECT
WWW.ITGETSBETTER.ORG

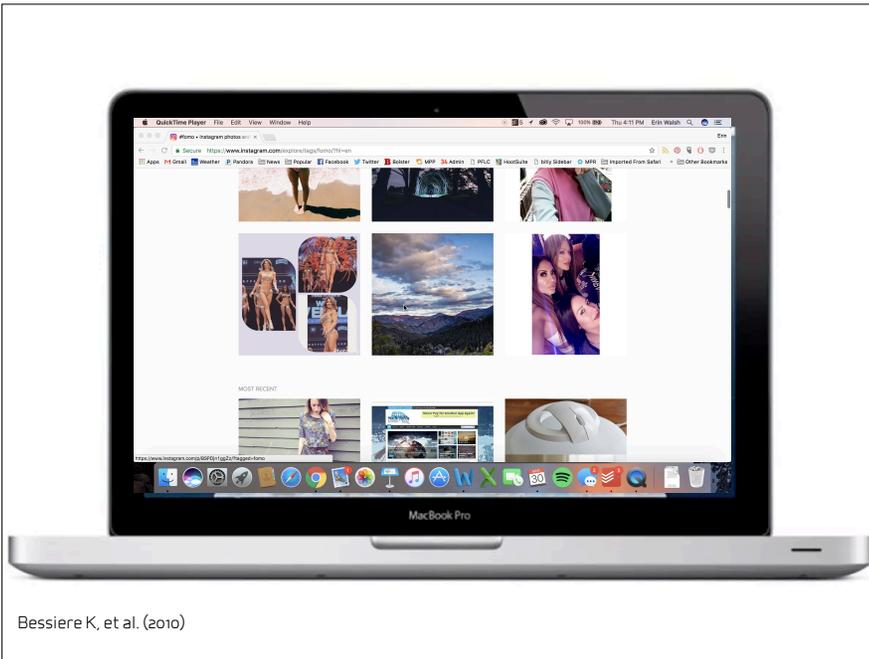
Many LGBT youth can't picture what their lives might be like as openly gay adults. They can't imagine a future for themselves. So let's show them what our lives are like, let's show them what the future may hold in store for them.

NEWEST POPULAR [SUBMIT YOUR OWN VIDEO >](#) Find Videos SEARCH

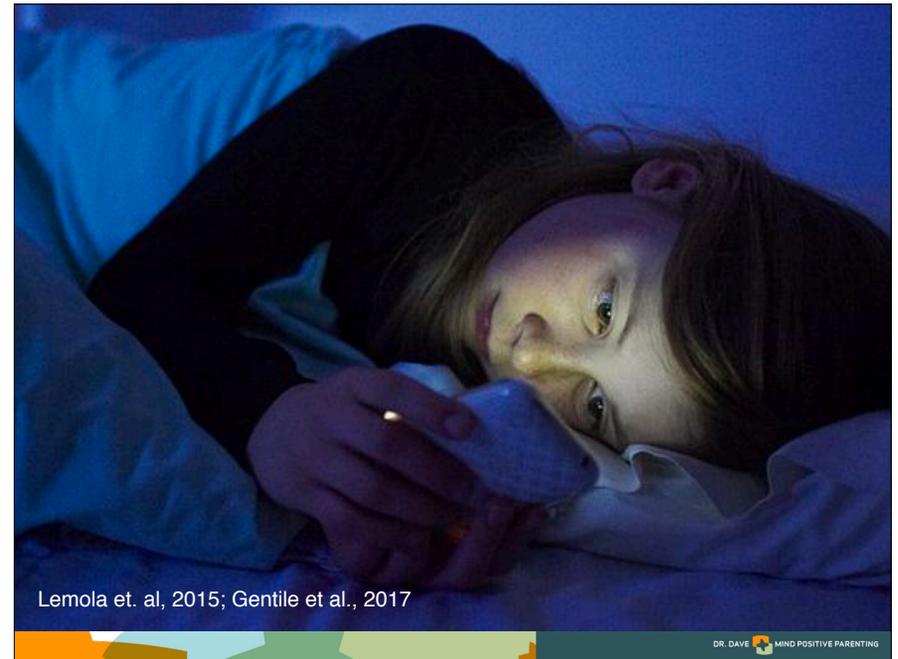
STRAIGHT ALLY SAYS IT GETS BETTER | WATCH ON YOUTUBE | Share on: [Facebook] [Twitter]

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VS.



Bessiere K, et al. (2010)



Lemola et. al, 2015; Gentile et al., 2017

What do s mean to you?

Key Questions

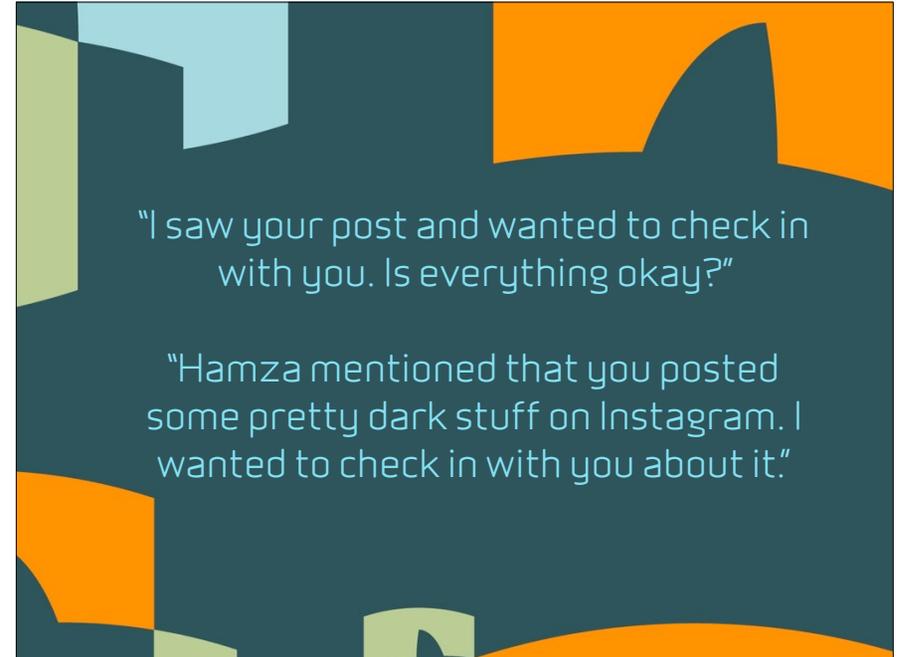
- + Does Internet cause depression and anxiety?
- + Do depressed or anxious youth turn to the Internet? (including avoidance coping)
- + Probably both.



How to respond to online displays of depression?

- Whilehill, J.M., 2013

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"I saw your post and wanted to check in with you. Is everything okay?"

"Hamza mentioned that you posted some pretty dark stuff on Instagram. I wanted to check in with you about it."



- Clifford Nass, 2013

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- Photo credit: Erick Pickersgill

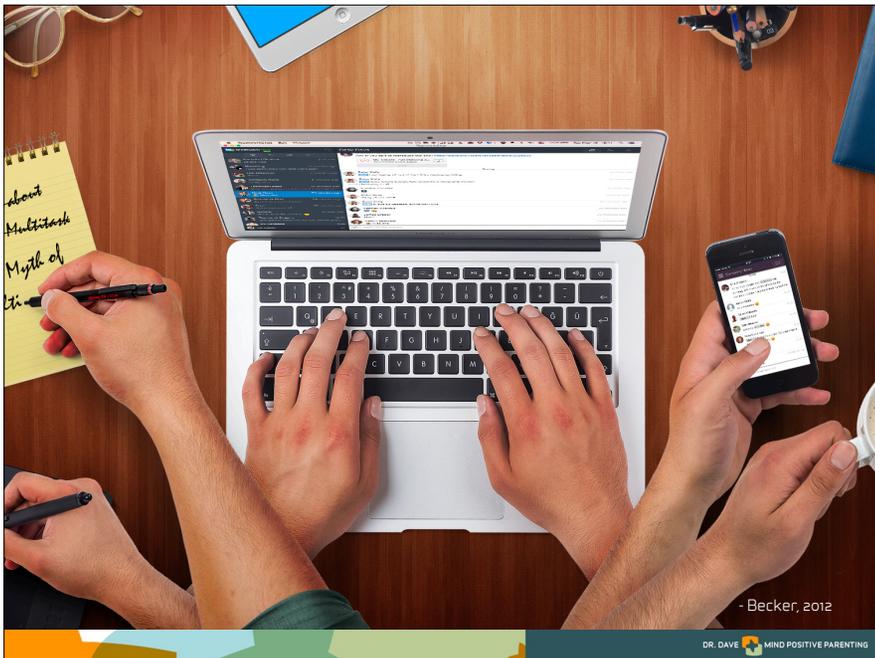
Ingredient #2: BOUNDARIES

Nurturing "Digital Discipline"

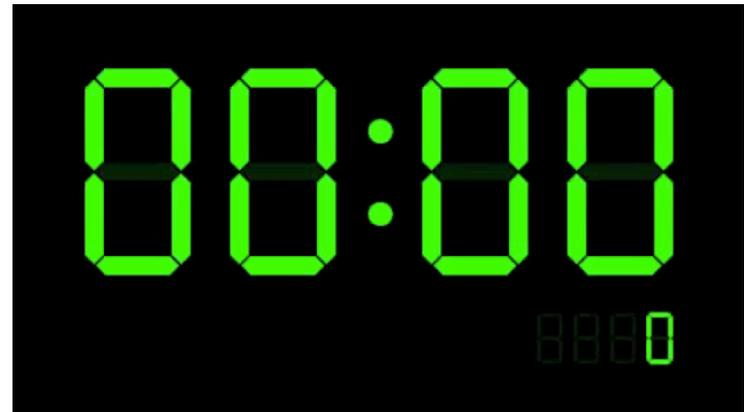


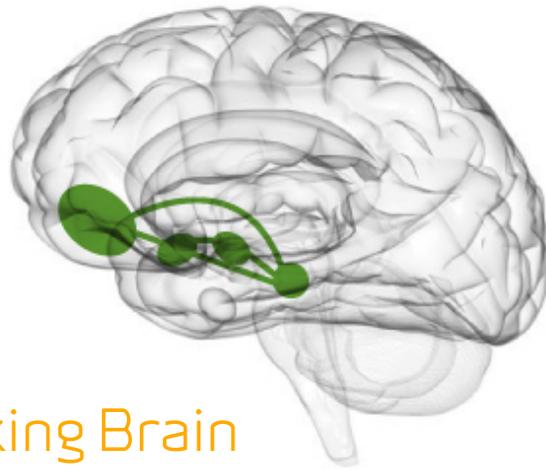
Walsh

"It keeps me from looking at my phone every two seconds."

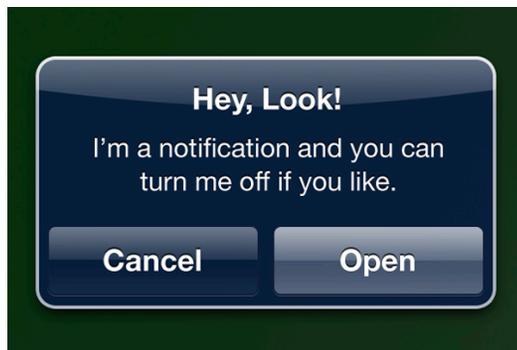


-Becker, 2012





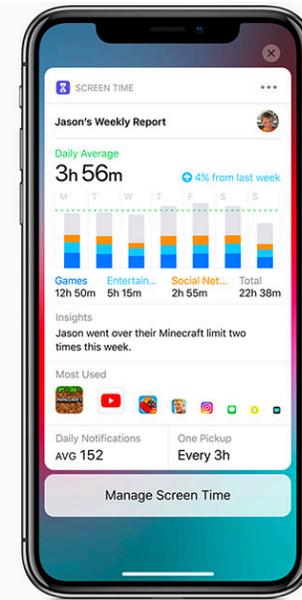
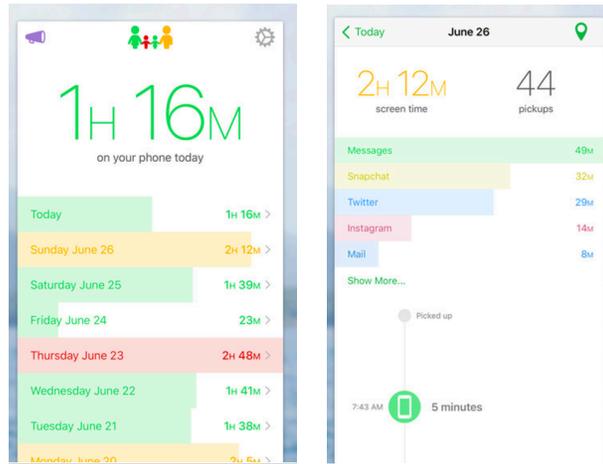
The Seeking Brain



Singletasking

- 15-20 minute focused attention sessions followed by brain break.
- If phones aren't part of homework - off and away.
- Reduce alluring cues like "ping!" "buzz!"
- Use history and monitoring tools to help self reflect on study habits.

Gain Awareness of Habits (Moment)



"Forest"



Phone Tools



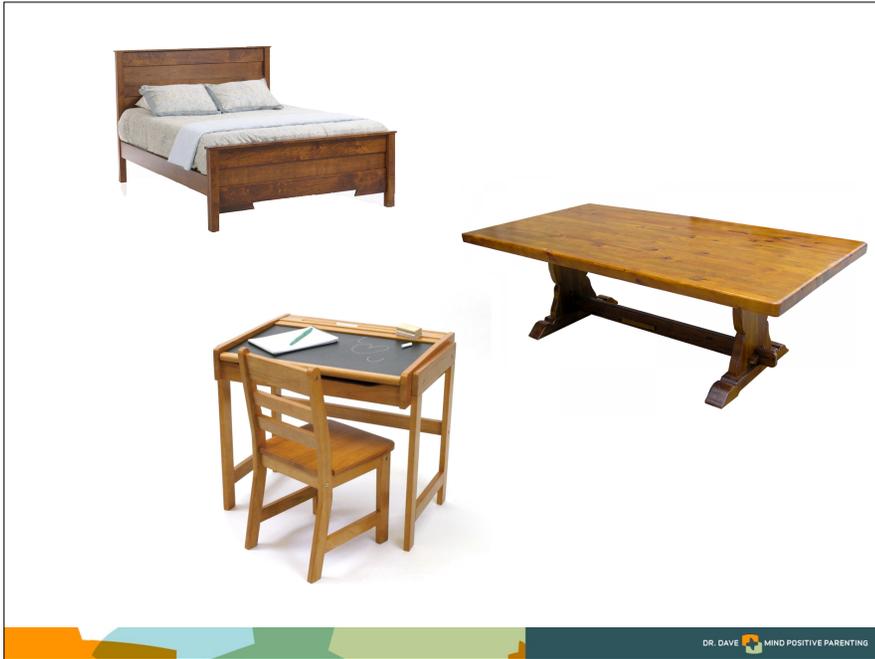
OFF TIME



MOMENT



BREAK FREE



"To make our lives livable we have to have spaces where we are fully present to each other and ourselves, where we're not competing with the roar of the Internet."

- Sherry Turkle

Stay in touch!

www.drdavewalsh.com