

# 1 Digital Parenting 101

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## **PARENTING IN A DIGITAL WORLD - Week 1**

September 19, 2018

### **OPENING:**

The fact that you're here tonight in this class shows you have a desire to be a better parent or adult in the lives of children.

**"We are living in the greatest communications shift in the last 500 years."**

-- Brady Shearer

Think about life 15 years ago.

### **2003**

Who had a cell phone? How many of you used it multiple times a day? Text? Internet on your phone?

### **2008**

Who had a cell phone? How many of you used it multiple times a day? Text? Internet?

- In 2008, Facebook was almost 2 years old. MySpace ruled the world.
- First iPhone had been released.
- No Netflix. No Uber.

- We listened to music on CDs.
- No Instagram, no Snapchat.
- Very few of us had data on our phones.

Think about how much our world has changed in just 10 years. We've never experienced this much change so quickly. Ever.

And what makes it so difficult to navigate is the way we communicate with one another has changed so dramatically.

Albert Mohler said, "The digital age is upon us. In the span of less than three decades, we have redefined the way humans communicate, entertain, inform, research, create, and connect -- and what we know now is only a hint of what is to come."

More change is coming.

**Franklin D. Roosevelt said, "We cannot always build the future for our youth, but we can build our youth for the future."**

That's why we are here. To prepare our children for the future.

So in this class series, we are talking about two things.

- (1) Technology
- (2) Parenting

**Your kids and mine are digital natives.** They have grown up with technology. My kids have known how to unlock my phone since they were toddlers. My kids would prefer to watch Netflix on an iPad instead of the big TV.

**We are digital immigrants.** We are playing catch-up. We can

remember life before a phone. I can even remember life before the internet. Now AOL Instant Messenger was a game changer. Remember those days of dialup internet?!

Have you ever said or thought..

- That won't ever happen to my kids.
- My kids know better.
- I've taught them better than that.
- My kids are good kids. Only bad kids do stuff like that.
- I trust my children.

You may or may not be aware of this, but there are companies and entire industries that are targeting your children. It's been like this for decades, but we are seeing an increase like never before.

Just a couple weeks ago the popular game *Fortnite* surpassed \$1 billion in revenue -- and it's a free game to play. It's all the extra stuff that kids are paying for.

*Persuasive Technology Lab* at Stanford University are teaching app developers how to build apps that will get kids addicted. Their slogan?

"We design machines to change humans."

This is why Digital Parenting is so important today.

### **Average age a kid gets a smartphone is 10.3**

- Imagine sending a 12 year old on a trip around the world by themselves. Would you expect them to be able to navigate themselves to and through all the major cities without missing anything important but also avoiding areas they don't need to visit?
- This is what happens when we hand our kids a smartphone or tablet

TABLE

Between 70-75% of teens today own smartphones. And the number is growing.

## **YOUR CHILD HAS AN ONLINE LIFE. BUT DO YOU KNOW WHAT THEY ARE DOING?**

Kids born in the last 10-15 years will never know a life of constant connectivity. They will never know a life of no notifications.

Imagine travelling back in time 100 years to 1918 and taking an iPhone with you. You're in Mobile, AL and you show someone this fully functioning iPhone.

DISCUSS -- What do you think they will think?

They might say, "This is amazing! You can access every bit of knowledge imaginable to mankind!"

And you say, "Yes, you can. Or you can watch funny cat videos on YouTube."

**Our children have the world at their fingertips. But do they know what they are doing? Are we providing direction and guidance? What's our involvement like?**

So here's some things we need to realize..

**(1) We can never use the excuse that "We didn't know".**

There is a great message from Jesus in Luke 12:48..

"But the one who does not know and does things deserving

punishment will be beaten with few blows. From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked."

We've been given much. So many tools to use for good. So much to share the Gospel. What are we doing with it?

And equally important, what are we teaching our children to do with it?

Your lack of knowledge about technology and digital trends will be to your child's harm. Educate yourself.

## **(2) Your child does not yet have the experience and will power to keep themselves in check on the internet.**

We don't trust our children to drive by themselves till 16.

We don't trust our children to vote till 18.

We don't lower their insurance till 25.

Why?

Wisdom.

- the quality of having experience, knowledge, and good judgment; the quality of being wise.
- the soundness of an action or decision with regard to the application of experience, knowledge, and good judgment.

There is a part of the brain called the frontal lobe. It's the area of the brain that houses the ability to discern good from bad. It doesn't fully develop in most till around the age of 25.

It's why teenagers make decisions where you just bang your head against the wall. "Didn't you think that through? Don't you realize the long-term consequences this decision will have?"

No. They didn't. They don't have a fully developed frontal lobe yet.

It's not an excuse. It's an explanation. It's why kids need adults.

I love this quote from Dr. Tim Elmore..

"This is the first generation of kids that don't need adults to get information. the soundness of an action or decision with regard to the application of experience, knowledge, and good judgment."  
*(Three Huge Mistakes We Make Leading Kids -- And How To Correct Them by Tim Elmore)*

No child (newborn to 18) needs unfettered, unrestricted, and unmonitored access to the internet. Because it's the devil's playground.

We need parental controls on all devices that connect to the internet (phones, tablets, computers, Smart TV's).

We tell them to hold our hand while crossing the street. We say "don't touch the stove, it's hot." We don't let them take candy from strangers. And then we hand them a device that can do just as much, if not more destruction in their life than any of the other things we protect them from.

Speaking of destruction..

It's estimated that over 60% of all the internet is porn. 6 out of every 10 sites on the web are for porn. That doesn't include social media.

So the odds of your child accidentally or intentionally viewing pornography is pretty high.

- 1 in 5 searches made on a mobile device are for porn.
- 24% of mobile smartphone users admit to having some form of porn on their phone.

Average age a child is exposed to pornography for the first time is -- 8 years old.

Here's some other stats for you..

- 90% of children viewed pornography online, most while doing homework
- 80% of teens age 15-17 have had multiple exposures to hardcore pornography
- 89% of sexual solicitations are made to youth in "chat" apps
- 67% admit to clearing their browser history in order to hide internet usage from their parents.

### **(3) There is no such thing as privacy.**

Privacy is an illusion.

Anyone with a computer and knowledge can find out anything about you that they want.

A powerful verse for us to remember and to remind our kids is..

#### **>> Hebrews 4:13**

Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

I'm going to talk more about apps and so-called privacy next week. But for now, remember this..

Just because an app says a post or picture goes away after so many seconds, remember it's a lie.

## **Everything that happens online is PUBLIC and PERMANENT.**

People are pulling tweets from athletes, celebrities and politicians that are 8-10 years old. People are losing jobs, elections and reputations because of things they posted.

Every picture sent on Snapchat is stored and saved. Every picture.

- Each picture travels through at least 5 servers before it is delivered to the other person's phone. Each server saves the picture forever.
- One day Snapchat will go out of business and someone is going to buy all of those pictures and release them.

So what can you do as a parent?

### **(1) Be informed.**

I will share with you what I know. But technology changes fast.

In one year, some of the things I will share with you will be gone or radically different. So educate yourself. Read articles. Research internet safety and responsible digital parenting.

### **(2) Be where your children are.**

If your child uses Snapchat, you should use Snapchat. If they are on Instagram, you should be on Instagram.

If you don't know what an app does, don't let them download it until you've had time to research it. Remember, you cannot say, "I didn't know".

"But what about their privacy?"

Please. There's no such thing as privacy online. They gave up that right when they created an account for an app.

Second, they have no rights to privacy.

I remember my dad telling my sister, "If you shut and lock that door again, I will take the door off the hinges and then you won't have a door to shut and lock anymore."

In my parents house, in my own house, there is no such thing as privacy. Unless you're going to the bathroom.

I think we've laid out a pretty good case that your children do NOT need online without your involvement.

You need to see their posts. You need to know what changes are happening with the apps. You need to know the purpose of the app itself.

Now please hear me. Not to hover and be a helicopter parent. But to engage in discussion to help your children navigate this digital world.

Remember.. They don't need to ask you for information. They need your help with interpretation.

## HOMEWORK FOR THIS WEEK

- (1) **Make a list of all devices that access the internet.**
- (2) **Have a conversation with your children this week about the importance of online safety & what they like to do online.** Spend time with them online. Let them show you their favorite YouTube videos. Let them educate you about an app you don't know about. Send them funny Snaps.
- (3) **Move a home computer in a public place, like the kitchen or living room.**
- (4) **Take up all devices at bedtime.**