

FOR THE SAKE OF OUR YOUTH

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Presentation Outline and Key Points

LookUp believes that continued discussion and work is needed to truly create change. We know it's a lot of information, therefore, LookUp is more than happy to share this outline with you after your recent presentation. Thank you for listening to our message! We are thrilled that you and your family, school, friends are joining our mission to help families LookUp!

For more information please visit www.lifeisoffline.com

As mentioned in the presentation, there are two main concerns happening for youth today:

1. Lack of Resilience
2. Lack of Connection

It's undeniable that parenting today is marked with overwhelming challenges prominently centered on screens. The needs and emotions experienced by the current generation share similarities with those of previous generations, yet they unfold within distinct circumstances, presenting unprecedented challenges. Screens and social media are proven to directly affect one's mental health and we are here to tell you just why that is and how to keep your family safe.

Resilience

• Understanding The Young Brain

- The Prefrontal Cortex isn't fully developed until ages 25-28: cognitive thinking, emotional regulation, impulse control, risk assessment, relational problem solving.
- Natural Confusion vs. Influenced Confusion: young minds are impressionable, vulnerable and sensitive: what they consume, will affect their way of thinking. Confusion is natural, influenced confusion causes a greater problem.

• The Need For Immediate Gratification

- Growing up in a world with instant fixes and unfortunately, there are no instant fixes for emotional distress.
- Numbing out or "bed rotting" on devices, keeps individuals from truly coping and unable to process emotions creating an act of avoidance,

- **Overwhelming Pressure**

- The world of perfectionism has taken over creating unrealistic comparisons and pressure: academic, athletic, body image, sleepless nights.
- Confidence goes down while insecurities go up, natural but with added pressures from social media and anxieties, making it harder to bear.

Connection

- **Loneliness**

- In a world of selfies and screen use, social media and instant fixes, convenience and portable devices, connection is harder to achieve creating an uprising in loneliness.
- With loneliness, the feelings of low self worth, and the need for instant fix, unhealthy thoughts are prominent.
- Online connections release dopamine with no oxytocin *See Screen Addiction

- **Attention Seeking**

- It is natural to want to feel important and valued, especially when experiencing loneliness
- With the young brain, it is harder to seek attention in a healthy manner if not getting the proper attention at home and in social settings (suicidal ideation, self harm, harmful social media use)

- **Screen Addiction**

- Dopamine Dumps vs. Dopamine Drips
 - Dopamine Drips: natural chemical reaction our brain creates as a reward system when we do or see pleasant things: finishing a book, acing a test, making our bed, smelling fresh baked cookies
 - Dopamine Dumps: an overload of dopamine caused by too much stimuli. This is caused by gambling, cocaine, pornography, video games and social media.
 - If we get too much dopamine, it is harder (and sometimes impossible) to achieve the natural, healthy drips. With dopamine dumps you will see irritability rise, motivation lessen, sleep deprivation and obsessive behavior towards source of dopamine (screens)
 - Dopamine feels good but in order to truly connect with another individual, we need oxytocin to release as well. Oxytocin is only achievable in person.

Social Media

We have so much to say about Social Media, it deserves it's own page! Only fitting since it's brand new to most of us parents as none of us grew up with it. Here is our list of what we want you to understand about Social Media and it's harms (no one is immune) that affects mental health.

- **The Big Four**

- The most popular social media apps today include: (**list updated regularly*)



Instagram



SnapChat



TikTok



YouTube

- “Everybody” has these in order to communicate and stay in the know, avoid FOMO and entertain themselves during times of boredom.
- Every social media app and online gaming is at risk for the following list of harms. The chances of risk increases with the amount of time spent on apps. Your child has a 100% chance of experiencing a number of these risks (if not all) no matter which platform they use.
 - *Cyberbullying:*
 - Hurt people hurt people and there are a lot of hurt people behind a screen
 - They don't have to deal with the consequence of regret due to seeing someone's reaction to a hurtful comment.
 - They feel it's safer to be hurtful behind a screen than in person
 - *Unrealistic Comparisons:*
 - Body Image
 - FOMO (fear of missing out)
 - Perfectionism

- *Early Exposure*
 - The average age for pornography exposure is 8 years old
 - Violence or Disturbing videos and images
- *Predators*
 - Tricky people, predators, and scammers know exactly where kids are today and how to target them.
 - The digital playground is a perfect and easy set up for predators
- *Sextortion*
 - The act of a predator or scammer deceiving young individuals into sending explicit photos, followed by extortion through threats to expose these images to family and friends unless a sum of money is paid.
- *Victim Fishing*
 - The act of posting sad or painful moments to gain attention from followers to gain attention
- *Drug Deals*
- *Viral/Trending Challenges*
 - Many challenges that go viral are dangerous and result in injury and sometimes death *Benadryl Challenge, Broken Jaw Challenge
- *Screen Addiction *See Screen Addiction Section*
- *Social Life on 24/7*
 - Kids don't get a break from cyberbullying, FOMO or learning to balance their life with some productive alone time with social media available 24/7
- *Mental Illness Hypochondria *term coined by Tessa Stuckey*
 - Engaging in the consumption of information about mental illness from unreliable online sources and subsequently adopting or imitating the symptoms of the illness.
- *Diagnoses Rising*
 - Health care professionals struggle to distinguish the symptoms and are diagnosing and treating patients who may not have the illness.
- *Stalker Mentality Normalized*

Solutions For Every Family

Now that you have a good idea of the inevitable harms that come with screens and social media, maybe you're already seeing it in your family. We believe in a gradual approach to screens and social media. LookUp helps parents take on the management role with confidence to then transition that position over to their growing adult.

We have some tried-and-true solutions that are proven to help every family integrate technology with less stress, less fights, and stronger mental health!

The Parenting Role: Manager

*as oppose to "controller"
(because no body likes to be controlled)*

- **Build Resilience: Allow The Struggle**
 - The Power of Boredom:
 - Kids do not need ongoing, constant entertainment from screens.
 - Delay is the Way.
 - Boredom is the first experience of discomfort and our children need to experience it in order to find creative and build resilience
 - Gradually move from the "fixer" role to the "supporter" role with your child
 - Allow mess ups
 - Support and brainstorm ideas when struggling
 - Help minimize instant fixes by not allowing screens during a time of boredom or distress
 - Help brainstorm coping skills *See Seek Balance
- **Seek Balance**
 - Prioritize Sleep:
 - Children and Adolescents need 10-12 hours/ day of sleep for healthy development
 - Prioritize Routine
 - Expectations for the day are important for all individuals

- **Check Their Pulses:**
 - Physical Health
 - United Front (Do they feel supported by you? Do they feel the team spirit?)
 - Loving Relationship
 - Social Health and Needs
 - Emotional Needs
 - Spiritual Needs (what lifts their spirits/coping skills?)

- **Prioritize Healthy Coping Skills: Brainstorm to Create + Avoid Screens**
 - What do you like to do that is fun?
 - What do you like to do that is relaxing?
 - What are you allowed to do that can help release anger?

- **Build Connection: Prioritize At Home**
 - Friendly Parenting
 - Spend quality time with your child with friendship qualities: taking interest, avoiding nagging

 - Practice Responding vs. Reacting: your child might tell you something that is hard to hear. Find a way to calm yourself enough to thank them for feeling comfortable coming to you, slow down your thinking by listening and validating and *then* finally express your thoughts.

 - LOVE Communication
 - Listen
 - Openly
 - Validate
 - Express

 - Parents: Put your phone down too

Not All Screens Are Created Equal

LookUp is not anti-screen nor anti-social media. However, given too young, screens and social media can corrupt a young heart and mind creating a dangerous and difficult situation for the entire family.

TV and Movies

- **Great for Relaxation**

- When we talk about screens, we are seldom worried about TV and movies. Why, you might ask? Because TV and movies (typically) don't have an interactive, fast-changing quality that creates too much dopamine for the brain to handle.
- Stay aware of the content your child is watching: movies and TV shows can seem fine but ratings help guide us to what is age appropriate. We like relying on CommonSenseMedia for in-depth descriptions in order to make the best decision for our families.
- Family Movie Night is a great time to relax together and enjoy a movie. We love this activity for families as a great, healthy way to use screens. *Parents, even if you are uninterested in your child's choice, try to resist picking up your phone during this time. Your child notices more than you think.

- **YouTube on your Smart TV**

- Some YouTube channels and shows are healthy and safe for our kids to watch.
- Advertisements that come with all YouTube channels are not regulated or fit for a specific target audience.
- Early Exposure is common with YouTube
- LookUp suggests, allowing YouTube on a communal TV and avoid personal devices

Personal Devices

LookUp believes in the use of technology for productivity. Personal devices can be great tools for getting projects and homework done, checking emails and creating something amazing!

Suggested Family Goals: Communication, Balance + Safety

- **Tablets**

- Tablets are so convenient for the little ones to supply entertainment. Unfortunately, that convenience has taken away the opportunities and the importance of teaching our kids social skills, life skills, resilience and patience.
- Delay is the Way: avoid personal devices for your children as long as possible. This includes taking them out to eat, going to the grocery store or just quick errands in the car.
- LookUp likes personal devices for traveling but only used for movies and music while they are little. Try to resist traveling with online games, YouTube or social media.

- **Computers**

- Used only for productivity
- Stay in communal areas
- Family computer with young children
- Avoid allowing personal devices in bedrooms

- **Phones**

- Children do not need their own phone. If you need to communicate with your young child, who is with a trusted adult, depend on the adult or allow your older child to have a watch that can communicate with you. We like these options here: Gabb or Gizmo
- Get a family phone! Just like the good ole landlines we grew up with but go ahead and get a simple phone that can only call and text. This is a great way to introduce healthy tech/phone use for your family. We like the Gabb Phone for this!

- Start Simple
 - A simple phone such as the Gabb or Bark phone, are great first phones for older kids, preteens and teens. These phones are created with parents in mind to simply call and text with no internet or social media access.
- Ready for Smart Phone
 - Behavior: knowing if your teen is ready for a smart phone will be evident by their behavior and overall well-being.
 - Asking the question “what will you use it for?” can help determine their maturity level
 - Checking their PULSES: are they living a balance lifestyle?
 - Ongoing conversations of the harms and risks that inevitably come with a smartphone
- Social Media: *LookUp* suggests holding off social media until around 15-16 years of age
 - Same as smart phone readiness, assess for social media just the same
 - Can your teen name at least 10 harms? If not, he/she may not be ready. We want to be sure they are aware of all the dangers and risks so they stay observant online
 - Start with one platform at a time with small time limits: this will help avoid mindless scrolling and using more for intention and productivity all while minimizing the risks

The most important part is continued conversation and striving for an open relationship with your children. We can't control what other families do with their devices and our children will be around their friend's devices. We always want our child to come to us when exposed or feelings of concern.

Family Reset

You are not alone when it comes to the overwhelming task of keeping your kids safe online. And you're certainly not alone if you have jumped into this experience without the true, in-depth understanding of all that it entails, that you now have. Your family may need a reset and LookUp is here to help. We have effectively guided hundreds of families in resetting their tech lifestyle for the well-being of their kids and the sake of their family!

- **Take Blame**
 - You're only human after all, so go ahead and take ownership of not realizing how harmful handing over a device could be for your family.
- **Start Explaining**
 - List the reasons you've learned today and why they are important to you and your family
 - Approach this as a team approach, not a punishment or singling anyone out
- **Allow Contribution**
 - Look over this [Tech Agreement](#) to use as a guide
 - With the team spirit, ask your kids what types of changes they'd like and guidelines they want to share ideas for (ex: what time should devices shut down for the night?)
- **Avoid "Control"**
 - Avoid all things that have to do with the word control. Try not to use it, try not to feel it, try not to make your kids feel controlled.
 -
 - Management is key: in order to help regulate our kids' screen use and emotional health, we have to help manage their time and use. This helps our teens eventually learn to self-regulate themselves and move into their own management role. Which is what we want for when they leave the nest.

Family Reset (Cont)

- **Setting Boundaries**
 - There will be disagreements and push back, go ahead and accept this reality and allow your kids to be upset
- **How to Say “No” + Reset**
 - Turn it into a “not yet” conversation
 - Remind your kids that the goal is for them to have more access and freedom on screens
 - Practice LOVE communication: validate their frustration and anger
 - Help make lifestyle plans, routines, help brainstorm coping skills and replacement activities
 - “We are not comfortable with you having Instagram right now but we are going to continue talking about it and will work towards you getting it in the future.”
 - “When we see some more balance and priorities shifted, we will be excited to talk about readjusting these boundaries as a family.”
 - “We love you too much to continue this lifestyle. This is for the whole family to find a healthier place and learn how to blend tech in our lives together.”
 - “If other parents knew what I now know, and what too much screens does to your brain and your heart, I know they wouldn’t be allowing it as much either.”

Helpful Resources

LookUp Foundation

www.lifeisoffline.com

Bark Technologies

<http://www.bark.us/tesa>

Gabb Wireless

<http://gabb.com/promo/GOODIDEA>

Protect Young Eyes

www.protectyoungeyes.com

Childhood 2.0 Movie

Found on Amazon

For The Sake Of Our Youth:

a therapist's perspective on raising your family in today's culture

by Tessa Stuckey

Amazon and Barnes&Noble

Glow Kids

how screen addiction is hijacking our kids

by Nicholas Kadaras

Amazon and Barnes&Noble

For the Sake of Myself: The Unplugged Journal

LookUp Foundation

Amazon

For the Sake of Our Youth Podcast

apple or spotify

Experiences with family, friends or personal accomplishments hold more weight than any experience on a screen.

Prioritize connection and resilience building for your family in order to blend technology in your lifestyle in a healthy manner by remembering to LookUp!