

UNPLUGGED REBELS



The following information is from Smartphone free childhood. They are doing some incredible mahi in the UK. We have learnt a lot from them and are grateful for all the work they have done in this space already.
www.smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk

As parents, how can we talk to each other about this?

Loads of people have got in touch to ask how they should approach conversations with other parents. We're learning about this ourselves. And we know everyone brings their own perspectives and experiences. So these chats might not always feel easy. But they don't have to be fraught debates.

These overarching principles will help create a positive conversation

Most importantly: talk, don't tell. Ask questions and listen to how people are feeling. Don't approach this as an argument to be won or lost.

Know – and say – that everyone wants to do the best for their children, however we handle this particular challenge.

Ditch parental judgment and be clear who's ultimately responsible: tech companies and governments.

Parents have been put in an impossible position. Either we allow our children access to something harmful, or we risk alienating them among their peers.

Talk about the growing evidence, but don't beat people over the head with facts and stats. The simple reality is that ten years ago, we didn't know the impact that smartphones had on kids. Now, we do.

Here are some helpful talking points

- Smartphones decrease attention-span, damage mental health and open up a world of things our kids shouldn't have to deal with
- We all know smartphones are addictive. For kids smartphones can get in the way of all the good stuff: playing outside, hanging out with friends, reading, talking and laughing.
- Of course technology is part of the world now, and children need to learn how to use it. But young children aren't equipped to have a healthy relationship with something addictive. It's hard enough for us adults!
- There are alternatives. Many parents want to be able to contact their children for safety but this needn't be a smartphone.
- Tobacco companies used to market their products to kids as healthy - we think we'll look back on smartphones the same way
- Films are regulated, computer games are regulated, now smartphones need to be.

In terms of pushback that you might receive, Unplugged Rebels NZ have some more detailed information and statistics on the 'Evidence' section of the website.