Families Matter



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Contact the Extension Office at 273-7683 or sonya.mcdaniel@okstate.edu

POTTAWATOMIE COUNTY EXTENSION

Tips to UnPlug

According to CNN, a report from Nielsen shows that the average American spends 10 plus hours per day on tablets, smartphones, and other technology. This number has increased in 2020 due to virtual work/school responsibilities.

Technology has its pros and cons when it comes to relationships. In one way it can enhance our relationships by giving us a chance to communicate with those that we may not see very often. In another way, it can keep us on our technology which means fewer face to face conversations.

Research is now showing that this isn't just a problem with our children or the younger generations, but problematic technology use reaches across all age levels.

Overuse of technology and perhaps even addiction can be hard for people to grasp due to technology being ingrained throughout our everyday life. Do you realize the amount of time per day that you are on technology? Does technology run your life?

Question Test for Technology Use

1. Do you lose track of time online?
2. Do you compulsively check for notifications on your devices?
3. Do you use technology as an escape?
4. Do you struggle to stay off technology?
5. Does technology get in the way of your responsibilities?
6. Do you get anxious when you do not have technology near you (like a phone)?

Being addicted to technology may sound crazy because in many ways we have to be plugged in for work, school, and etc. Did your answers to the questions above surprise you?

Simple steps to break free from technology

Time Yourself: Keep a Media Diary and add up the time you spend on technology.

- This will open your eyes to how much time you are truly spending on technology.

Tech Free Time: Have a set time or place where no technology is allowed. This applies to youth and adults!

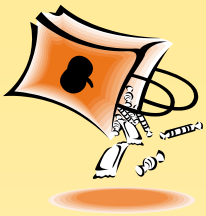
- Some people go as far as to put all technology (phones, TV remotes, and tablets) up in a designated box or basket.
- Try to enjoy at least one meal a week together with no technology

Balance It All: Find your balance between time connected and time unplugged.

- When you have hit your time limit put the technology away.
- Turn off notifications or set your devices to "do not disturb" time. This will keep you from getting tempted to check your devices.
- Always be conscientious of your time on technology to ensure that it is not getting in the way of your relationships and interactions.

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Halloween Treats

Parents can help by providing good balanced meals and snacks, so those special treats are not a big deal. Set a daily candy limit and make it known BEFORE the trick or treating begins. Once everyone returns, use snack-sized baggies to make daily treat bags.

This eases the temptation to eat more than the agreed upon amount, so reaching into the big bowl is not as much of a struggle!!

Set a good example for your kids— stay out of the candy bowl yourself!

Pumpkin Carving

Make this year's Jack-O-Lantern a learning experience for your kids! Talk to them about what may be inside the pumpkin before you open the top. Talk about how many pumpkins they could grow by counting the seeds inside. Talk about all the things you can make to eat with pumpkin.

Get kids involved with Food!

10. Mean Green Cleaning Machine. Let them wash fruits and vegetables when preparing for cooking or eating.
9. Pick A Peck! When shopping, let them select a new fruit or vegetable to try … or several!
8. Make It Snappy! Let them snap the green beans, snap peas, or break the flowerets from the broccoli or cauliflower.
7. I Spy. Play "I Spy" in the produce section when grocery shopping.
6. Tear It Up! Let them tear the lettuce for salads and sandwiches.
5. Measure Up! Let them measure the frozen vegetables before cooking them.
4. Peel & Slice. Older children can peel and slice carrots, cucumbers, potatoes … the list goes on!
3. Stir & Spice. Make applesauce from fresh apples. Let them help stir and add the cinnamon.
2. A Sprinkle A Day… Let them sprinkle herbs or other seasonings onto vegetables.
1. **Monster Mash!** Pull out the potato masher!

Source: #haveaplant Fruit and Veggie for better health

#FAMILYMEALTIME

Halloween—Tip to Prepare for the Scare

1. **Read books that feature charming themes,** age-appropriate costumes, and kid-friendly illustrations to jump-start your conversation about Halloween and dressing up in costumes.
2. **Expect that fatigue, hunger,** and too much stimulation can change a game plan. Call it quits when you see those signals. There's always next year.
3. **Diffuse the horror.** Help your youngster understand the difference between make-believe and reality. Explain that the Ninja who is ringing the doorbell and asking for candy isn't real, but the person inside the costume is a little boy—just like he is. Let your newbie watch older trick-or-treaters don their costumes, or invite him to peek underneath their masks to see the friendly and familiar faces.

Some key points for parents to consider:

1. Respect your child's fears.
2. Understand that your child will outgrow most fears.
3. Allow your child to gradually work through the fear.
4. Understand fears in relation to your child's personality.
5. Be aware of the variety of fears children experience at different ages.



Raising Children in an Age of Overindulgence

What is overindulgence you might ask? It is giving children too much of what looks good, too soon and for too long. Adults overindulge when they do things for their child that the child should be doing for themselves, or giving too much of the families resources (time, money, attention, etc.) to one or more children.

It usually starts in early childhood and continues through young adulthood for many families.

Overindulging kids meets a need for parents, not children and becomes a pattern which is hard to break. Creating a habit of never having enough, never being satisfied, never being too busy, and never considering others. Overindulging happens at all income levels.

Overindulging kids means they are never given the opportunity to learn from mistakes, feel responsibility for themselves and their belongings because someone (usually a parent) always takes care of things for them.

So, is it wrong to want your children to have nice things, be involved in activities, feel loved and cared for by parents. No, however, there are 4 questions to ask to help guide a decision.

A "yes" answer to any of these points to overindulgence.

1. Does it hinder the child from learning a new task?
2. Does it put a strain on the rest of the family—financially, time, schedule, etc.
3. Whose needs are being met? Does it benefit the parent more than the child?
4. Does it do harm to others, society or the planet?

Overindulging children comes from a good heart! Parents do not want to set their child up for problems, however, many times they go overboard. Here are a few

suggestions for changing a family habit.

- Recognize when it has happened and choose to do things differently, even through the struggle.
- Use the 4 questions to help guide you through making choices.
- Work on one area at a time. Too much stuff, too much time, not enough chores!

Studies show overindulged kids:

Feel they are the center of the world

Have an overblown sense of entitlement

Are ungrateful

Are irresponsible

Have poor boundaries

Need immediate gratification

Have poor self-control

Fire Safety Month

1. **Clear an escape route**—put away toys & rearrange any furniture that prevents easy access to an outside door or window.
2. **Assign accountability partners**—to make sure everybody gets out safely, including pets. Remember, some people can sleep through anything.
3. **Close door behind you**—as you walk through your escape route. This will slow the spread of fire & give you more time to escape.
4. **Teach your family to test closed doors**—& use an alternate route if a door is warm. Before a drill, label some doors "hot!" as practice for knowing & using alternate routes.
5. **Get low & Go**—Practice with your children crawling through the house in the escape route.
6. **Practice using an escape ladder**—Store rope ladders so they are easy to find.
7. **Stop, drop and ROLL**—once you've made it out.
8. **Choose an outside safe meeting place**—and stay PUT!!



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Sonya McDaniel
Family & Consumer Science
Extension Educator

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Egg Carton Spiders



Have your child help decorate for trick or treaters this year by making spiders to hang on the porch! Cut the egg cups out of a cleaned cardboard egg carton. Cut pipe cleaners into 3-inch sections.

To make each spider, poke four pipe cleaners through each cup sideways and bend to make legs. Give each of your children one of the spiders. Have the children paint their spiders black with (or use a black marker).

After they have dried, attach a length of elastic thread to the middle of each spider. Let the children hold onto their threads and bounce their spiders up and down as they take them for a walk!!

Fancy Headbands

Use a plastic headband as the base for many different kinds of antennae or ears. Cover the band with foil and attach foil balls to it with pipe cleaners for a space creature's antennae. Fold pipe cleaners into bunny ear shapes and cover them with felt before attaching them to the band. Let your imagination go wild!



Help keep your family healthy this season by washing hands **OFTEN with soap and water**.

Be sure to sing a song like Happy Birthday to make sure you are scrubbing long enough.

Dry with a paper towel so germs go in the trash, and not into a towel used by someone else later!



White Bean and Avocado Wraps

3 tablespoons vinegar (red wine, white, or apple cider)
1 1/2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 teaspoon honey
1/8 teaspoon pepper
1 medium carrot, shredded
2 cups shredded green or purple cabbage OR 2 cups shredded romaine lettuce or torn baby spinach
1/2 cup cherry tomatoes, quartered
1 tablespoon coarsely chopped fresh cilantro and 1 tablespoon coarsely chopped fresh cilantro, divided use
(1) 15.5-ounce can no-salt-added white beans, such as navy, cannellini, or Great Northern, rinsed and drained
1 medium ripe avocado, quartered
(4) 8-inch whole-wheat or corn tortillas (lowest sodium available)

In a medium bowl, whisk together the vinegar, oil, honey, and pepper. Stir in the carrot, cabbage, tomatoes, and 1 tablespoon cilantro, tossing gently. Let stand for 15 minutes. In a small bowl, gently stir together the beans and avocado. Using the back of a fork, mash the mixture until thoroughly blended and spreadable. Place the tortillas on a cutting board or clean, flat surface. Spoon two heaping tablespoons of the mixture down the center of each, stopping about two inches from the edges. Stir the cabbage mixture. Spoon two heaping tablespoons on top of the bean mixture. Sprinkle with the remaining 1 tablespoon cilantro. Fold the sides of the tortillas over the filling.

Source: American Heart Association