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AZ Local: A Parenting Seminar To Know About Technology & Kids

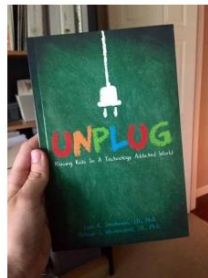
August 14, 2015 By ManagedMoms.com Leave a Comment

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It seems like everyday I hear about a new form of social media. No longer just Facebook, Twitter or Instagram. There is also Snapchat, ask.fm, Vine and more. And it is all readily available on smart phones, tablets and laptops with one click of the mouse.



It is truly hard to keep up with and definitely a bit unnerving, so when licensed clinical psychologist, Dr. Lisa Strohmman offers to write a guest post for this blog, I always say yes. And good news, Dr. Strohmman has a very useful book out for parents called *Unplug Raising Kids in a Technology Addicted World* that I highly recommend.



She also has a good event to know about on August 19th in Scottsdale that is a FREE parenting seminar for the new school year. Called the 'Do's, Don'ts and Dangers of Social Media' I recommend this for parents plus she will have a book signing immediately following the seminar. You can get details about that here. If you would like to attend or get more information, email Dr. Strohmman at dr.lisa@technologywellnesscenter.com or call (480)220-4702.

Be sure to read on because her guest post today outlines some dangers about technology that you may not have considered and I do believe that knowledge is power when it comes to our kids and their technology. Ignorance is not bliss with this very important subject, so take a look...

Dr. Strohmman says:



Understanding the Dangers of Technology

For parents there is nothing more worrisome than something that threatens the wellbeing of our children. Unfortunately, I've found that many parents aren't taking into account the threat that stems from technology.

Parents no longer have the luxury of assuming that when their children are at school or at home they are free from danger. When I speak to parents about the risk of sexual predators, cyber bullying, pornography or gaming addiction, many are dismissive and don't believe it could affect their children. In the last 10 years working as a psychologist, I've learned that it happens all the time. Not only does it happen, it happens to families that have sweet, smart, kind kids with great, loving, involved parents. The Internet allows children to go into corners of the world that are unregulated and unsupervised.

Six is the average age for a child receiving their first phone, and nearly all phones are now equipped with Internet access and data plans that rarely come with usage restrictions. What parents need to understand is children have little to no impulse control. The combination of naiveté and age can create a recipe for disaster.

According to the latest statistics from the Pew Research Center, nearly 92 percent of teens go online daily and 24 percent admit they are constantly connected.



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With such easy access to the Internet, it is impossible for parents to monitor all of their child's online activity.^[1]

After talking to countless teens and counseling families, I see technology as the new gateway drug. While this may seem a bit dramatic, to help explain I am sharing two very serious dangers our children are now more susceptible to as a result of our increasing dependency on technology.

Sex Offenders

Sex offenders prey on children by tapping into their insecurities and finding a way to instill a trust. Fortunately and unfortunately, the Internet is a convenient tool for accessing personal information. For the most part, parents are willing participants: posting birthdates, sporting associations, school functions and pictures that have traceable meta tags online for all to see. What many parents don't realize is sex offenders use these tools to learn what they need to feel liked and important. They use the information to get closer to children through flattery, interest, and sympathy – the very things insecure adolescents crave.

Pornography

Most parents are shocked when I tell them that research indicates nearly 53 percent of boys and 28 percent of girls younger than 15 have viewed pornography online.^[2] When you look at the statistics for children up to the age of 18, studies report nine out of 10, or 87 percent, of boys and one out of three girls, 31 percent, admit to accessing porn online.^[3] The porn industry is a \$97 billion industry worldwide and many of these sites are enlisting children as their newest clients. More alarming, one of the most lucrative aspects of pornography involves children and many children are unaware that they're entering the pornography industry when they participate in the creation of sexually explicit videos. Once these videos or other graphic material are online there is very little that can be done to remove it.

Knowing and understanding the dangers that potentially face your child online is the first step to preventing these negative interactions from happening. Tomorrow we will share part 2 of my article for this blog. I will share with you some important tips on how to directly combat misuses of technology. Crucial stuff for parents to know in this day and age.

[1] <http://www.pewresearch.org/areas-of-expertise/technology-use/>

[2] Brown, J. & L'Engle, K. 2009, Communications Research, 36(1), 129-151, X-Rated: Sexual attitudes and behaviors associated with U.S. early adolescents' exposure to sexually explicit media.

[3] Carroll, Jason S., et al. "Generation XXX: Pornography Acceptance and Use Among Emerging Adults. Journal of Adolescent Research 23.1 (2008) 6-30. (Study examined population of emerging adults, aged 18-26)

