

# THE NEST

A CCS Resource for Discipleship in the Home

## Let's Talk Tech . . .

I know - it always seems like a constant conversation. Too much television . . . the dangers of social media . . . the rise of AI . . . from snaps to tiktoks. It seems like we are constantly being inundated with technology, even in the school. So much is google class and online learning. How do we leverage what's the best of technology and minimize the negative impacts?

I think, first of all, acknowledgement is half the battle. I mean, gosh - we have super computers in our pocket. Literally! Did you know that the phone you're likely reading this is exponentially more powerful than the guidance computer on Apollo 11 that landed Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin on the moon?! It's incredible when we stop to think about what our technology is capable of. We are more connected than ever, experience global events almost instantaneously, and capture memories - so many pictures.

But what do we miss . . . well, it reduces our presence in the moment. I was at a concert back in August and the amount of people watching life through their phone . . . it's just amazing! We see it all the time: birthday parties, recitals, or even graduations. We watch the world through our phone. I wonder how that might distract us from actually fully engaging the moment? Is it possible that we are more concerned with capturing the moment than experiencing the moment?



## Key Thoughts:

How do we leverage the positive and minimize the negative impact of technology?

Are there tech free times and zones in your home?

Research is clear: every activity linked to screen reduces happiness, every nonscreen activity increases happiness.

Two resources highlighted in this issue:

"Reclaiming Conversation" by Sherry Turkle

"iGen" by Jean Twenge

**"Everyone thinks everyone else is occupied and preoccupied."**

SHERRY TURKLE

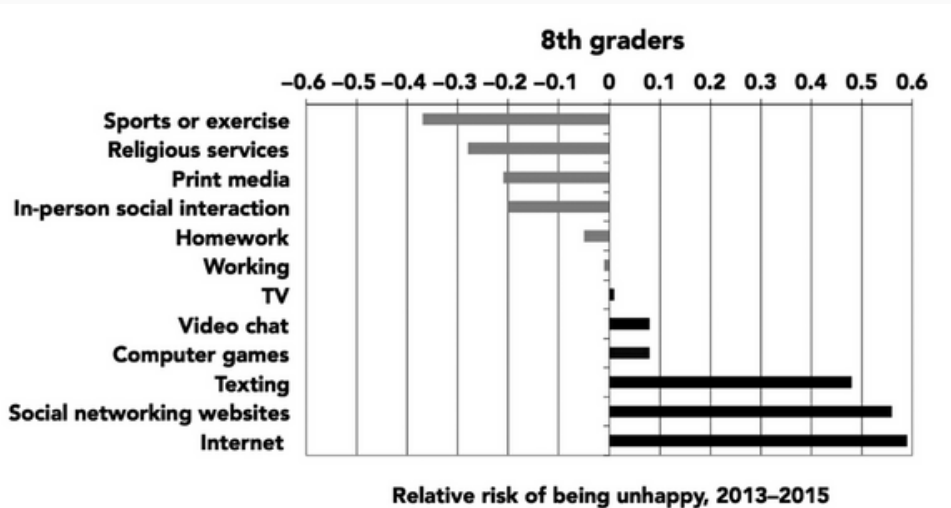
Sherry Turkle gives me pause for thought when it comes to technology. She has a couple of great books on the impact of technology in the home and on students. Consider this excerpt:

"I meet Tod when I visit a device-free summer camp. The ten boys in his bunk describe a vicious cycle. Parents give their children phones. Children can't get their parents' attention away from their phones, so children take refuge in their own devices. Then, parents use their children's absorption with phones as permission to have their own phones out as much as they wish . . . Everyone thinks that everyone else is occupied and preoccupied . . ."

Wow. That unfortunately hits a little too close to home for me. Is it possible that we're all sitting in the same room wishing that we would engage one another with greater focus and empathy?

Or consider this significant insight from Jean Twenge who writes in her book "iGen" about the impact of technology, physical activity and happiness as it relates to technology and middle school students:

"The results could not be clearer: teens who spend more time on screen activities (the black bars in Figure 3.5) are more likely to be unhappy, and those who spend more time on nonscreen activities (the gray bars) are more likely to be happy. There's not a single exception: all screen activities are linked to less happiness, and all nonscreen activities are linked to more happiness."



There's all kinds of other topics we can talk about when it comes to internet safety and social media practices . . . but the biggest factor before all of that is we actually just have a healthier relationship with the technology in our life. It could be little things like: 1) don't bring tech to the dinner table, 2) set up a docking station where everyone charges their phones/tablets in the same place each night (yeah - you might need to buy an alarm clock), and 3) encourage your family to break from technology at least a few blocks each week. Doesn't have to be a whole day, but it might be. It could mean no tech before school or leaving tech home when you go to the park. Be okay to live in the moment and experience life through your eyes - not the phone.

**Resource for the shelf:**

