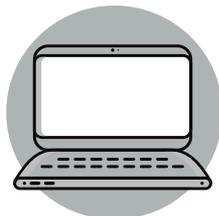
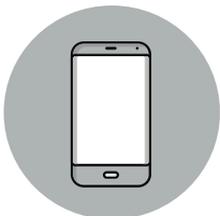


## PARENTING MATTERS: TECHNOLOGY

□ BIRTH - 2 YEARS OLD □

### LIFE LOOKS A LITTLE LIKE...

Your baby is discovering the world around them and learning how to interact with each new challenge and experience. Even at this young age, screens have an amazing ability to capture the attention of your squirmy, fidgety, always-on-the-move child. As a parent, you are relying on technology to capture memories, search for answers, and stay connected to the adult world. Now is the time to define what boundaries you will put on technology, to realize the power of natural play, and to start leading by example.



# YOU PARENT THEM WELL WHEN YOU...

## KNOW:

Technology impacts your child's neurological development, sleep and behavior. By a child's third birthday, their brain has reached 85% of its adult volume and by the time they turn six, their brain is 95% developed. Everything that your child is exposed to in the first years of their life affects them mentally, socially, physically and spiritually. Limiting screen time and choosing high quality programs for your child can help them learn to engage the world around them in healthy and positive ways.

## EXPECT:

It will be incredibly tempting to play another episode. You are overwhelmed, busy and tired, and that screen works wonders to help you get a little more done. As true as that is, expect to see your child copying more and more actions and words. Keep this in mind when choosing shows for them to watch and apps for them to play. You are the biggest influence in their life, so model and show them things that you want them to imitate.

## PREPARE:

Setting boundaries may not seem quite as important now as it will when they are older, but laying a foundation of expectations is important. Decide on technology free zones such as the dinner table, the car or around bedtime. Look for ways to help your child play and engage without screens. Set up playdates, make time to explore nature, and give your child sensory activities to keep them busy rather than turning on a screen. Spend some time watching popular kids shows to weed out the quality from the nonsense. Connect with your family to decide on screen time limits and commit to upholding the boundaries you create.

## TALK:

Start conversations with your spouse, caregivers, and family members about the importance of technology boundaries and the values that you have as a family. Clearly communicate what your limits are and why they exist. Model what positive personal relationships look like. With others, show them what kindness looks like. One on one, talk to your child about the world around them! Make the most of your time with them by pointing things out, explaining your actions and asking them questions.

# YOUR NEXT STEPS ARE...

## Action Plan:

Challenge yourself to set an example for engaging with technology. Put an action plan in place that includes some of the following:

- Decide what your tech free zones are, both physically in your home and in your family experiences.
- Set a goal for how much technology-free time you would like to spend with your child each day.
- Commit to reading at least two books or articles about how technology effects your child.
- Establish boundaries for how much screen time your child experiences each day.
- Touch base with anyone who cares for your child and help them get on board with your plan.

## Discussion Questions:

How have we used technology to better our relationship? To better our parenting?

How has technology harmed our parenting or negatively effected our family time?

What boundaries should we set for technology in our family? When do we leave technology out of our family time? How long should we let our kids experience screens each day?

How can we effectively hold each other accountable to the boundaries we have established? How will we show grace when we fall short?:

## ENGAGE YOUR FAITH BY...

### *Phillipians 4:9*

What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me-- practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

Parenting a baby or toddler is overwhelming. There is so much to learn and so many opinions to hear from countless sources. Take some time in this phase to focus on what God has to say through scripture and prayer. Observe how Jesus teaches others with grace and conviction. See how God shows his deep love and his huge power. Abide in the example that God has set and find peace in him as you set boundaries and make big decisions.

## RESOURCES...

### > Apps

*ParentCue* • Connect Church and Home  
*365 Bible Stories* • Bible Story Devotional

### > Web

*ChildMind.org* • Brain Development and Behavior Research  
*CommonSenseMedia.org* • TV and Movie Ratings  
*iMom.com* • Relatable Topical Parenting and Family Posts  
*Safekids.org* • Inclusive Safety Information  
*ConnectSafely.org* • Relevant Articles on Technology Safety

### > Books

*The Tech-Wise Family: Everyday Steps for Putting Technology in It's Proper Place* by Andy and Amy Crouch  
*The Big Disconnect: Protecting Childhood and Family Relationships in the Digital Age* by Catherine Steiner-Adair and Teresa H. Barker  
*Unplug: Raising Kids In a Technology Addicted World* by Lisa K. Strohman and Melissa Westendorf



PARENTING  
MATTERS