

Technology, Social Media, Entertainment and Youth

1. A quick review and some opening questions:

- What is a shaping influence?
- How is it that these things shape us?
- What influence does your example have on your children?
- Is it permissible for parents to limit or exclude technologies or social platforms?
- What fears might exist for parents wrestling with the decision to limit or exclude?
- What does our culture teach about privacy? Is this biblical?

2. Technology

- What forms of technology are accessible and relevant to this discussion?
- What are the purposes of these technologies? Are they needful? Required?
- What dangers do these technologies pose?
- What are the safeguards available and how effective are they?
- How much time does your technology consume?
- What would happen if the technology were not available?
- How might these technologies affect relationships?
- Do you have a theology of technology and its uses?
- Does your technology use have a Godward orientation?

3. Social Media

- What social media options are available and relevant to this discussion?
- What are their uses?
- How much time do you spend on social media?
- What benefits are derived from these platforms?
- What harms derive from them?
- What would happen if these platforms were no longer available?
- What are you getting out of social media? To what degree do you use them for self-validation or affirmation?
- How is social media impacting your reputation?
- How are your posts heard by others?
- What do your posts suggest about your beliefs, values, priorities, etc.?
- Do you have a theology of social interaction?
- Does your social media usage have a Godward orientation?

4. Entertainment

- What are our common sources of entertainment?
- What is the nature of "entertainment"?
- What are some dangers that exist within the arena of entertainment?
- How might these dangers be averted or mitigated?
- How much time does entertainment consume?
- Do you have a theology of entertainment?
- Does your entertainment have a Godward orientation?

5. Scripture to consider:

"He who walks with wise men will be wise, But the companion of fools will suffer harm."
(Proverbs 13:20)

“The first to plead his case seems right, Until another comes and examines him.” (Proverbs 18:17)

“A gentle answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger.” (Proverbs 15:1)

“Be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger” (James 1:19)

“Sheol and Abaddon are never satisfied, Nor are the eyes of man ever satisfied.” (Proverbs 27:20)

“The eye is not satisfied with seeing, Nor is the ear filled with hearing.” (Eccles. 1:8)

“But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.” (Romans 13:14)

“Little children, guard yourselves from idols.” (1 John. 5:21)

6. Other questions to be laid alongside an examination of Tech uses:

- Are you teaching your children to engage with Scripture?
Reading, study, meditation?
- Are you teaching your children how to engage with other adults?
- Are you teaching your children how to engage with peers in person?
How to ask questions and listen?

Self-validation through social media.

The Following from NIH

The average Canadian child watches nearly 14 h of television each week. By his/her high school graduation, the average teen will have spent more time watching television than in the classroom.

Today, television has become a leading sex educator in Canada. Between 1976 and 1996, there has been a 270% increase in sexual interactions during the family hour of 2000 hours to 2100 hours. Television exposes children to adult sexual behaviours in ways that portray these actions as normal and risk-free, sending the message that because these behaviours are frequent, 'everybody does it'. Sex between unmarried partners is shown 24 times more often than sex between spouses, while sexually transmitted infections and unwanted pregnancy are rarely mentioned.

Teens rank the media as the leading source of information about sex, second only to school sex education programs. Numerous studies document adolescents' susceptibility to the media's influence on their sexual attitudes, values and beliefs.

Tech Leaders Limit Technology for kids

In 2007, Gates, the former CEO of Microsoft, implemented a cap on screen time when his daughter started developing an unhealthy attachment to a video game. He also didn't let his kids get cell phones until they turned 14.

Evan Spiegel (CEO Snapchat) and his wife Miranda Kerr impose an hour and a half of screen time per week on their kids, he told the Financial Times.

Jobs, who was the CEO of Apple until his death in 2012, revealed in a 2011 New York Times interview that he prohibited his kids from using the newly-released iPad. "We limit how much technology our kids use at home."