Essential Guide for Parents on

HOW TO CUT YOUR KID'S CELL PHONE ADDICTION

Let's face it, almost everyone over the age of ten is the proud owner of some kind of electronic device. Some kids only have to celebrate a few birthdays before they receive their first handheld electronic device or cell phone.

The bottom line is that every day more and more children are becoming well versed in the world of technology and social media. While this has its advantages, it can also be problematic.

Research has already highlighted the negative aspects of excessive cell phone use among children and teens. A 2016 report from Common Sense Media revealed that half of the children surveyed felt as thoughthey were addicted to their devices. The results also showed that 78 percent admitted to checking their devices at least once every hour. These results can legitimately classify cell phone use as an addiction.

There also seems to be a growing trend in a lack of face to face communication and personal relationships. This is due to the fact that so many people, and children, uses cell phones and social media to communicate with each other. This has been crippling our communication skills, and also causing anxiety. Here are a few suggestions to get your kid off the technology kick before it becomes too big of a problem to handle:

MONITOR THEIR DAILY USAGE

Assign your child a set time to use their devices and when to put them away. This only works when you enforce it. And by monitoring their usage, it gives you a chance to see what your child is viewing. This can also help parents catch other potential problems.

MODEL HEALTHY SMARTPHONE USAGE

Children learn by example. By putting your phone down and engaging your children, they will see that it is okay to walk away from their devices. If you are constantly texting and scrolling on your phone, you are just as responsible for your child's cell phone addiction.

MAKE A "TECH BUCKET"

Setting some rules in the home, such as no cell phones during breakfast, lunch or dinner. This will easily limit a few hours each day. Have the members of your family place their phones in a bucket prior to engaging in certain activities.

CELL PHONE FREE ACTIVITIES

Some kids get addicted to their cell phone out of sheer boredom. But if kids are busy, there is no time to text, talk or like something on social media. Activities like martial arts teach kids the opposite of what they will learn spending hours at a time on a cell phone.

FAMILY NIGHTS ACTIVITIES

Family time outside the home does not need the addition of electronic devices. Making time for a family excursion, even if it is just for an hour or two, does not necessitate the use of handheld devices.

Make it a point to leave all cell phones at home during your next family night out. One phone can be kept in the car's glove box for emergency purposes. This could be a regular outing for families.

• Do not give them one - Perhaps the best cure for cell phone addiction is to not give your kids one. Outside of safety, there is no legitimate reason why children need a cell phone.

This could be part of a parenting plan that starts early and continues. Kids have survived for thousands of years without cell phones, so your little one should be just fine without a handheld device.