

Wait Until Later: A Community Program Template for Parents to Delay Smartphones for Kids

Why This Program?

Smartphones are increasingly linked with rising rates of anxiety, sleep issues, and social comparison in children and teens. But it's hard for one family to say "no" alone. When parents unite, it becomes easier to delay smartphones until a healthier, more developmentally appropriate age. This program helps you build a supportive, organized parent network within your school to create a new norm: **delay smartphones, together**.

Program Goals

1. **Build micro-communities** of like-minded parents.
2. **Create social proof and positive peer pressure** to delay smartphones.
3. **Equip parents with talking points, resources, and support** to reinforce their decision.
4. **Make it easy to say "not yet" together** at key decision points: birthdays, new school years, and holidays like Christmas.

Step-by-Step

Step 1: The Founding Parent(s)

- A few parents need to start the movement at your year group.
- Be extra mindful around ages 8 - 10 (e.g., Year 5 or 6) when smartphone pressure begins.
- Send a warm message in the class WhatsApp group: "Hi everyone! A few of us are looking to delay giving our kids smartphones as long as possible. Would anyone like to join a group to support each other in that?"

Step 2: Create a Dedicated WhatsApp Subgroup on WaitUntilLater

JOIN OUR WHATSAPP COMMUNITY



- Title it distinctly so other parents can find you: "IPS Grade 5"
- Keep it **supportive, non-judgmental, and factual**.
- Use the group to share:
 - Pledges from other parents
 - Stories or articles about kids thriving without smartphones
 - Alternatives: watches, family phones, or simple devices
 - Scripts for kids and extended family members

Step 3: Share the Research (without preaching)

- Use persuasive but empathetic framing:
 - "We want our kids to stay kids a little longer."

- "Delaying phones gives them space to develop real-life social skills."
- Share data in digestible ways:
 - Highlight studies linking smartphones with anxiety, depression, and sleep problems.
 - Use resources from Wait Until Later

Step 4: Normalize the Delay

- Encourage parents to share their own "why."
- Join the pledge (on the website): "We commit to no smartphone until the age 16."
- Display how many families have joined (Wait Until Later will share when 10 people of a grade of the same school have joined the pledge).
- Share "what our kids CAN do" lists (walk to school, join clubs, use a home line).

Step 5: Plan Check-Ins Around Key Thresholds (Wait Until Later will provide ample material)

Smartphone pressure spikes at these moments:

- **Christmas** (kids ask for devices as gifts, grandparents gift without asking parents)
- **Birthdays** (especially age 11/12)
- **New school year** (peer comparison begins)

Plan ahead (Wait Until Later will provide ample material):

- Share talking points, articles, or memes the week before.
- Organize informal coffee chats for parents to talk through worries.
- Offer celebration alternatives (like experience gifts).

Step 6: Expand Gradually

- Once you reach a small critical mass (10+ parents), invite more classes/years to join.
- Offer a simple starter kit PDF:
 - WhatsApp message templates
 - Common objections and answers
 - A QR code to the pledge

Step 7: Sustain the Movement

- Rotate admin responsibilities to avoid burnout.
- Celebrate milestones (e.g., 6 months phone-free!)
- Share stories of older kids who were glad they waited.
- Invite a speaker to a parent meeting (psychologist, teacher, or teen)

Key Psychology Principles

- **Tipping Point (Malcolm Gladwell):** Behavior change accelerates once 20-30% of a group commits visibly.
- **Social Proof:** People follow what others around them are doing.
- **Commitment & Consistency:** Publicly pledging increases likelihood of follow-through.
- **Loss Aversion:** Frame the loss of childhood freedom and imagination from too-early smartphone use.
- **Belonging:** Frame this as a collective journey, not an individual battle.

Final Thoughts

This isn't about fear. It's about **freedom, connection, and growing up slower**. When parents unite around shared values, they shift norms. And kids benefit from boundaries backed by community.

Let your message be simple: **"Not yet. Let's wait together."**

<https://waituntillater.com/>

Empowering Parents with delaying access to smartphones

We empower parents to confidently say YES to waiting for the smartphone! The Wait Until Later Community unites families in a collective effort to postpone giving children smartphones until at least the age of 16. Protect your child's formative years from digital distractions and online risks by delaying smartphone use.

Protect Childhood – Reduce digital distractions

Join a Supportive Community – Connect with like-minded parents

Make Waiting Easier – Gain access to resources and support