

Wait Until Later

Introducing Waiting Until Later

IPS, April 2nd, 2025
Dr Silja Litvin



Why I Joined the Movement

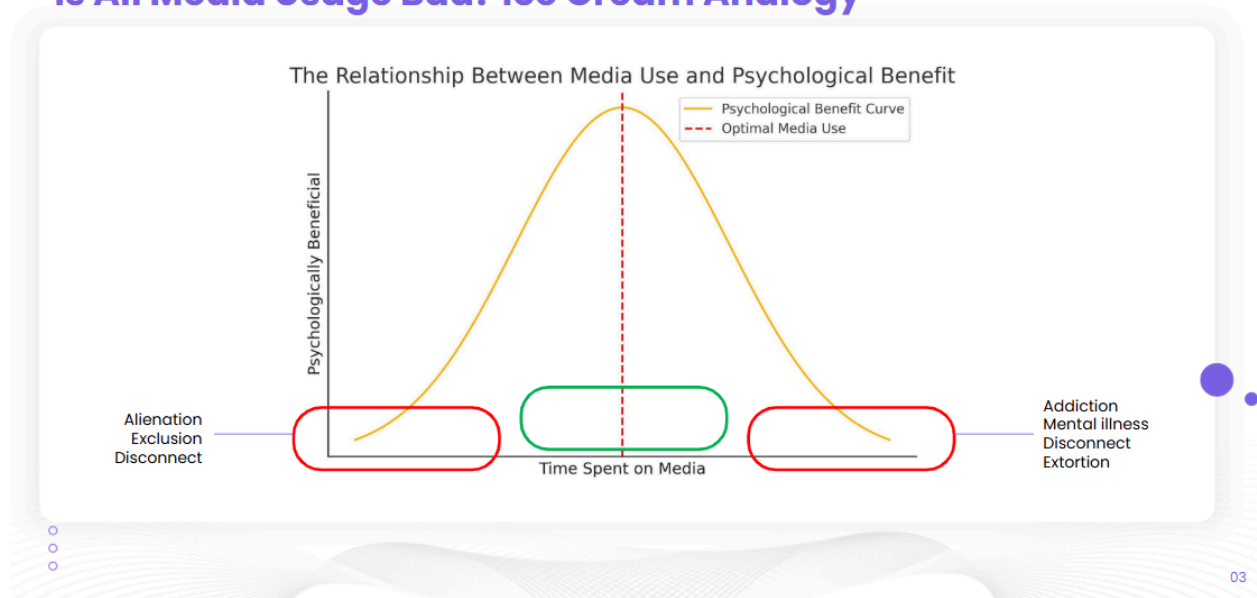
- Real-time data shows undeniable cause-relation
- Parents need Psychoeducation
- Kids can't do it on their own

Male Participants			Av. Score	Female Participants			Av. Score
PHQA_5	Sleep Problems	1.53	1.53	PHQA_5	Tired/Little energy	1.58	1.58
PHQA_5	Tired/Little energy	1.52	1.52	PHQA_5	Sleep Problems	1.56	1.56
PHQA_7	Trouble Concentrating	1.25	1.25	PHQA_7	Trouble Concentrating	1.47	1.47
GAOT_5	Irritable	1.34	1.34	GAOT_5	Worrying too much	1.43	1.43
GAOT_5	Worrying too much	1.44	1.44	GAOT_5	Irritable	1.44	1.44
PHQA_6	Feeling bad about self	1.41	1.41	GAOT_2	Feel nervous	1.34	1.34
GAOT_1	Feel nervous	0.89	0.89	PHQA_6	Feeling bad about self	1.41	1.41
PHQA_2	Little interest in things	0.95	0.95	GAOT_2	Can't stop worrying	1.47	1.47
PHQA_1	Feeling down	0.89	0.89	PHQA_4	Appetite problems	1.43	1.43
GAOT_4	Trouble relaxing	0.87	0.87	PHQA_1	Feeling down	1.38	1.38
GAOT_2	Can't stop worrying	0.84	0.84	GAOT_4	Trouble relaxing	1.38	1.38
GAOT_7	Afraid of something awful	0.85	0.85	PHQA_2	Little interest in things	1.32	1.32
GAOT_5	Restless	0.78	0.78	GAOT_7	Afraid of something awful	1.30	1.30
PHQA_4	Appetite problems	0.77	0.77	GAOT_5	Restless	1.07	1.07
PHQA_6	Feeling too slow/flat	0.76	0.76	PHQA_6	Feeling too slow/flat	0.88	0.88

Real-time data from over 500,000 young people aged 14–22 reveals a mental health crisis. Over the past 20 years, resilience has steadily declined while rates of depression and anxiety continue to rise. Our data shows that the top three symptoms reported are all closely tied to sleep deprivation. Teens are staying on their phones late into the night, lacking the self-regulation skills to switch off. Meanwhile, many parents are unaware of just how underdeveloped these regulation skills are.

The human brain continues to develop self-regulation abilities until around age 25. We cannot expect young people to consistently make wise, self-protective choices on their own. Instead, they need **firm yet kind boundaries** set by informed adults. Parents need access to clear information in order to make decisions that support their children’s wellbeing.

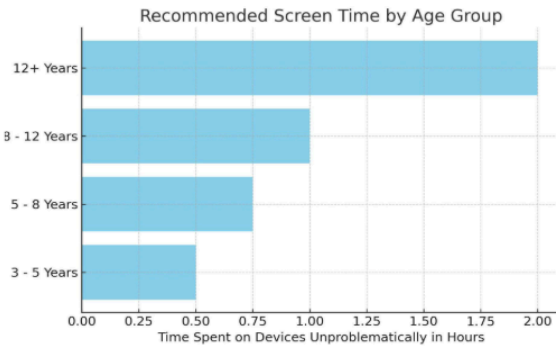
Is All Media Usage Bad? Ice Cream Analogy



Media usage in itself isn’t “healthy,” but it’s also a part of modern life.

Media can offer creative inspiration, social connection, and moments of rest. The key is finding the *right balance*—understanding not just how much time is spent on screens, but what kind of content is being consumed.

“Unproblematic” Device Usage



Twenge JM, Campbell WK. Associations between screen time and lower psychological well-being among children and adolescents: Evidence from a population-based study. *Prev Med Rep.* 2018 Oct 18;12:271-283. doi: 10.1016/j.pmedr.2018.10.003. PMID: 30406005; PMCID: PMC6214874.

All current research agrees:

- The **younger** the child, the **less** screen time they should have.
- For anyone over 12, more than **2 hours of screen time per day** begins to negatively affect concentration, wellbeing, and mental health.
- Less is often more when it comes to screens.

Still: Quality Trumps Quantity

High users (7+ hours/day) are over twice as likely to be diagnosed with depression or anxiety compared to low users (1 hour/day). Moderate use (4 hours/day) is also associated with reduced well-being

Exposure to materials that will impact your kids lives for years can happen in minutes (Peer exposure) - Thus "Wait Until Later"

0
5

It's not just *how much*, but *what kind of media matters*.

Ten minutes of exposure to violent, pornographic, or emotionally abusive content can do more harm than five hours of silly or wholesome videos. That's why guidelines like:

- "No screens in bedrooms,"
 - "No screens outside shared spaces like the kitchen or living room," and
 - "No private social media before age 16,"
- are powerful tools for protecting your child's mental and emotional health.

Reasons NOT to delay

"They won't stop asking."
🗨️ And they might not — if they think persistence works.
Hold your line. Find support. Talk to your kids. Join the movement.



"They'll hate me if I say no."
🤔 Maybe — for a bit. Being the first wave of parents who delay can be rough. Hold a family meeting and co-create alternatives (like an iPad that stays in the living room).



"I need to stay in touch with my child."
✅ Totally valid — just not with a smartphone. 'Dumb' phones (calls + texts only) keep kids connected without apps or distractions.



"It's a digital world — they need these skills!"
📱 87% of the time kids spend on screens is passive consumption — not skill-building. Digital literacy is important — but timing matters.



"My kid loves games, videos, and content creation."
👏 Great! That's where family iPads come in. Shared devices in common areas during set hours = digital joy + healthy limits.



"I still don't want my kid to be the only one."
👥 That's why we need community. A critical mass of just 25% — 5 or 6 kids in a class of 22 — is enough to shift group norms. Let's not do this alone.



"I don't want my child to be the odd one out."
👥 Many teens who didn't get a smartphone until later now say they're grateful — up to 93% of them. What feels isolating as a child is often deeply appreciated as an adult.



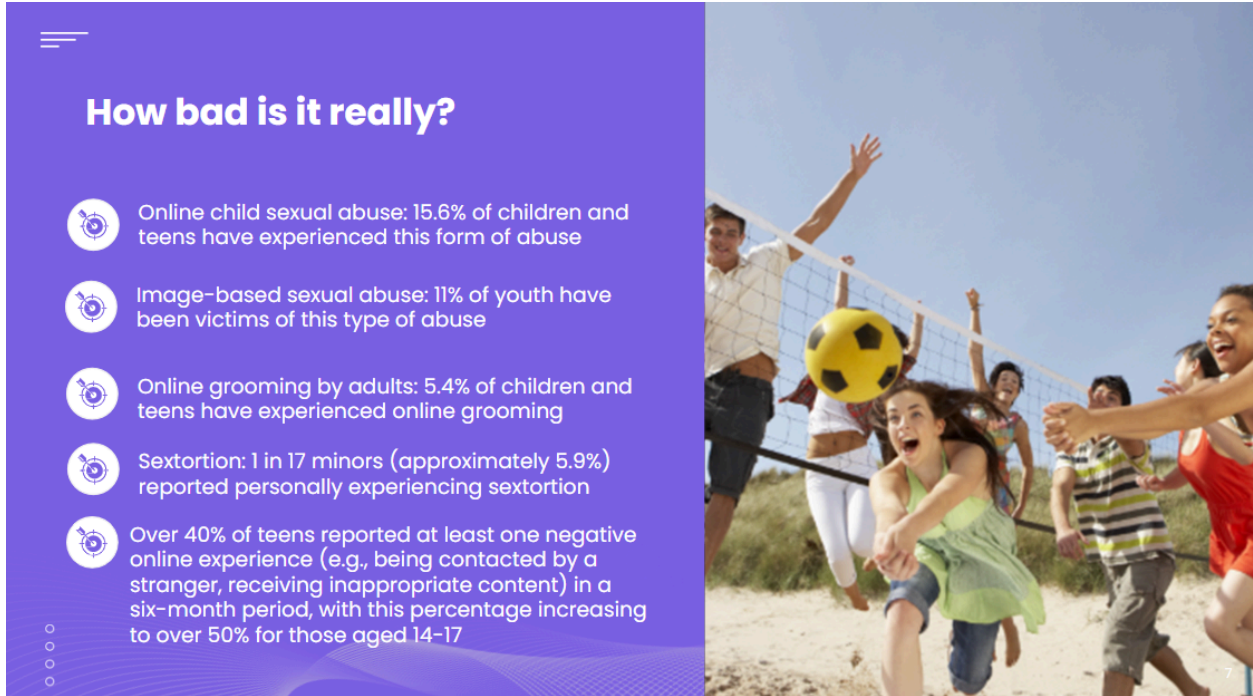
"I don't think it's as bad as you paint the picture to be."
🗨️ Next Slide, please...



We understand why parents want to give their kids smartphones early.

It's hard to say no when *everyone else* is doing it, and you could easily say yes. But there is no shortcut or cheat sheet here. What helps:

- Building a foundation of **consistent boundaries from early childhood**
- Holding **family meetings** to co-create screen rules with your children (positive discipline)
- Offering **psychoeducation** so your child understands your reasoning and can (at least partly) agree



How bad is it really?

- Online child sexual abuse: 15.6% of children and teens have experienced this form of abuse
- Image-based sexual abuse: 11% of youth have been victims of this type of abuse
- Online grooming by adults: 5.4% of children and teens have experienced online grooming
- Sextortion: 1 in 17 minors (approximately 5.9%) reported personally experiencing sextortion
- Over 40% of teens reported at least one negative online experience (e.g., being contacted by a stranger, receiving inappropriate content) in a six-month period, with this percentage increasing to over 50% for those aged 14-17

7

The teenage brain is wired for:

1. Risk-taking
2. Instant gratification (dopamine)
3. Sexual curiosity

Even the most cautious child can be vulnerable online. Predators, harmful content, and peer pressure are a real threat. Limiting or delaying access makes a huge difference. It doesn't eliminate risk—but it lowers it significantly until your child is more prepared to navigate it.

Privilege Well Spent



Research shows a clear indication that protection goes well into the use of media

- For every additional year of maternal education, daily media time decreased by about 7 minutes.
- The difference was significant: children from families earning less than \$35,000 annually spent nearly 3.5 hours a day on screens, while those from families earning over \$100,000 spent less than 1.5 hours.



Upcoming consequences

- Private schools in the U.S. reported a 30% surge in applications after adopting phone-free policies.
- Leading UK law firms are now including attention and focus metrics in their assessment centre evaluations.
- Top universities worldwide are increasingly viewing teenage years without personal smartphones as a positive admissions factor.



Most parents want to give their children the best start in life.

They want their kids to grow up healthy, self-reliant, confident, and resilient. But in today's landscape, giving a child unrestricted access to a smartphone may be one of the biggest, yet most overlooked, obstacles to achieving that.

In fact, all recent research suggests that a **smartphone-free childhood is becoming a privilege**—and children who grow up without constant access to smartphones are better positioned emotionally, mentally, and socially.

The Main Challenges of Allowing Smartphones While Trying to Manage Usage

- Screen Time Creep and Monitoring Fatigue
- Tech Literacy Gap
- Attention Control Damage
- Emotional Dependency
- Constant Policing Erodes Trust



Skarabok, J., Sellert, A. & Lindberg, S. The mere presence of a smartphone reduces basal attentional performance. *Sci Rep* 13, 9363 (2023). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-023-38392-9>

Glass, A. L. & Kang, M. (2018). Dividing attention in the classroom reduces exam performance. *Educational Psychology*, 38(2), 395–408. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01444189.2018.1489286>

0
9

Smartphone management is possible—but complete delay is often easier.

Teens are smart. They find workarounds. Teachers report students sharing messages through **Google Sheets** to bypass school VPNs. That's why abstinence—at least for a few more years—is easier and more effective than constant monitoring and moderation.

Benefits of Delaying as a Community



For the Parents

- No need to be hypervigilant
- No need to have daily fights about boundaries
- No need to discuss why your kid is the odd one out (new normal)
- A community of parents who need to have active lives (you're not alone)



For the Children

- Less probability of mental illness
- Higher wellbeing
- Stronger social skills & real-world interactions
- Higher academic performance & focus
- Less fomo
- Less bullying

0
10

There is strength in numbers.

When parents join forces and support each other, delay becomes easier. Studies show that if just **25% of a group opts out**, no one feels left out. That's about **5–7 families per classroom**—a reachable goal.

At *Wait Until Later*, we're here to help you do exactly that.

What Can I do?

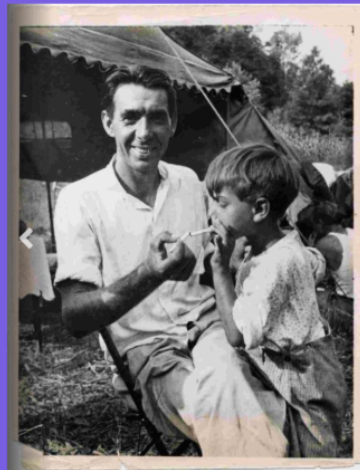
- Make Up Your Mind:** Once you are committed, you will need to get your inner circle on board. Partner, older kids, grandparents, nannies, etc.
- Find your Tribe:** There are multiple groups out there, Wait Until Later is just one of them. Join, sign up, pledge, join WhatsApp groups, Facebook groups, anything that has a structure
- Gather and Gain:** Find the 5 – 6 other parents in your child class and band together: gather parents, gain influence.
- Organize:** Get together on a monthly or bi-monthly basis. Discuss, help and support each other. Keep inviting and converting parents. Especially important at the beginning of a school year.

0
11

👉 Visit www.waituntillater.com and click on “Free Resources.”

Building A Strong Community

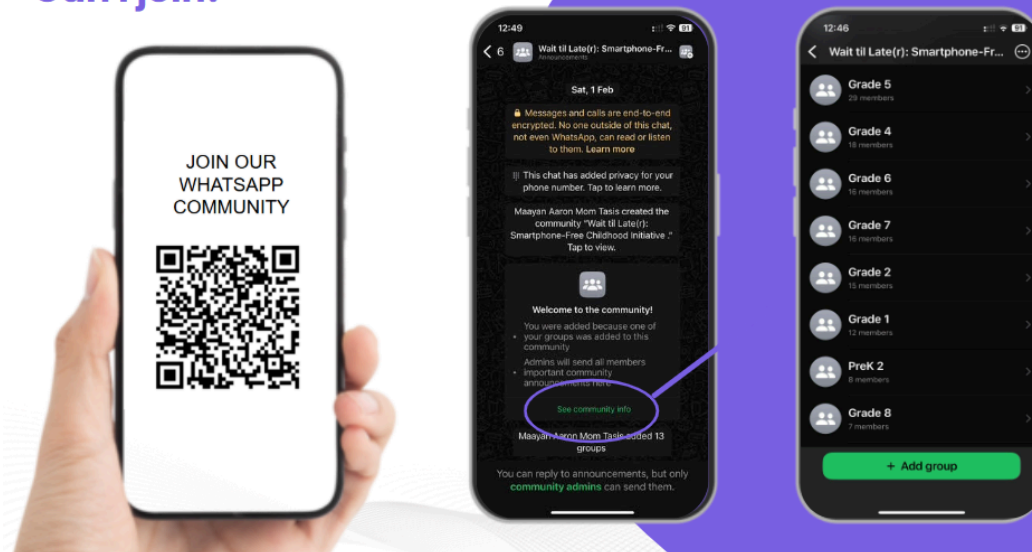
- Step 1: Find 3-6 parents, create WhatsApp group
- Step 2: Share information (nonjudgmentally)
- Step 3: Normalize the delay
- Step 4: Check-ins around Key thresholds
- Step 5: Expand and sustain



12

You'll find step-by-step guides for creating WhatsApp groups within your school or local community. These are especially helpful for families with children aged **8 and up**, who are nearing "smartphone age." Planning ahead for key transition moments—such as holidays, birthdays, or the start of a school year—can make all the difference.

What WhatsApp Groups Can I join?



13

You may face resistance.

Despite your best efforts to offer your child a 'free-range' childhood, much of society is deeply

embedded in media culture. You will likely encounter difficult conversations with other parents, relatives, and even organizations like sports clubs where media use is less controlled. This is why it's crucial to also prepare your child to:

- Recognize when they're uncomfortable
- Know how to safely exit a situation
- Feel supported in speaking up



Important Areas to Keep in Mind

- Playdates
- Sleep overs
- School
- External family members
- Sport Clubs



There are many creative ways to delay smartphone use.

In our WhatsApp chat group, we've even created a dedicated subgroup for **tips and tricks** that make smartphone delay more manageable.

If you have ideas, questions, or feedback, reach out to us at:

 help@waituntillater.com

Together, we can **make this the new normal.**

How Can My Child Navigate Life Without A Smartphone?

- Family iPad
- Dumb phone (flip phone)
- The Brick
- Smartphone Lockdown
- Smart watches



15

Basic Phones (Talk & Text Only – Pre-Uber)



Best for: Communication without distractions

- Nokia 3310 / Light Phone / Punkt MP02
- Gabb Phone (No internet, no social media, just calls & texts)
- Bark Phone (Parental control-focused phone with call & text options)



Benefits:

- No internet access (prevents distractions & social media addiction)
- Allows calls & texts for safety and emergencies
- Longer battery life
- Less expensive than smartphones



16

Smartwatches for Kids

Best for: Safe communication & tracking without social media

- Garmin Bounce (GPS tracking, no web browsing)
- Gabb Watch 3 (Simple communication, location tracking, no apps)
- TickTalk 4 (Voice/video calling, parental control)
- AngelSense Watch (For kids needing extra safety monitoring)

Benefits:

- Parents can track location with GPS
- Limited calling/messaging only to approved contacts
- Sometimes no social media or YouTube (avoids digital addiction)
- Waterproof & kid-friendly

CON: Distractors



17

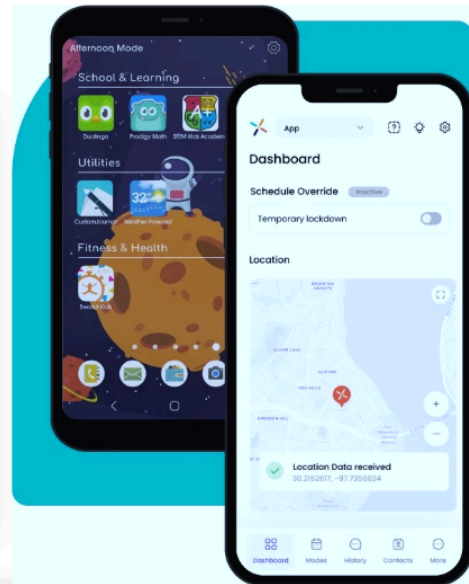
Family Phones with Strict Parental Controls

Best for: Older kids who need gradual introduction to tech

- Pinwheel Phone (Allows only educational & parent-approved apps)
- Troomi Phone (No social media, flexible parental settings)
- Wisephone (Simple interface, no addictive apps)

Benefits:

- No social media, addictive apps, or internet browsing
- Parents control what apps and features are allowed
- Safe introduction to tech responsibility



18

iPads or Tablets with Parental Controls



Best for: Limited digital exposure with education in mind

- Amazon Fire Kids Tablet (Strict parental controls & educational apps)
- iPad with Screen Time settings (For controlled use)
- Kano PC (A build-it-yourself educational tablet)



Benefits:

- Larger screen reduces eye strain compared to smartphones
- No cellular data (can be Wi-Fi-only for controlled access)
- Can block social media & install only learning apps
- Used for homework, reading, and creativity



19

THANK YOU!

JOIN OUR
WHATSAPP
COMMUNITY



Help@waituntillater.com

20