

A Parent's Guide to Smartphones

AKHILESH SHARMA

WWW.SMARTPHONERISKS.COM



01

Introduction

02

Understanding the Risks of Smartphone Usage for Children

- The Dangers of Early Smartphone Usage
- Alarming Facts
- Social Media Companies Target Children
- Helpless Parents

03

Communicating & Setting Boundaries

- Talking to Your Child About the Risks
- Setting Family Rules & Boundaries
- Creating a Family Technology Agreement

04

Parental Control Solutions

- Qustodio
- Google Family Link
- Apple Screen Time
- Net Nanny
- Norton Family
- Bark
- Kaspersky Safe Kids



05

Disadvantages of Not Allowing Access to Smartphones

- Social Exclusion & Academic Challenges
- Technology Literacy
- Potential Resentment
- Overcoming the Disadvantages

06

Removing Snapchat

- Transitioning Your Child Off Snapchat in 6 Weeks
- Involving Other Parents

07

How to Use WhatsApp Without a SIM Card

- Why Use WhatsApp Without a SIM Card?
- What You Need
- Recommended Brick Phones & Plans
- Step-by-Step Guide
- WhatsApp Channels

08

About the Author - Akhilesh Sharma



01. INTRODUCTION

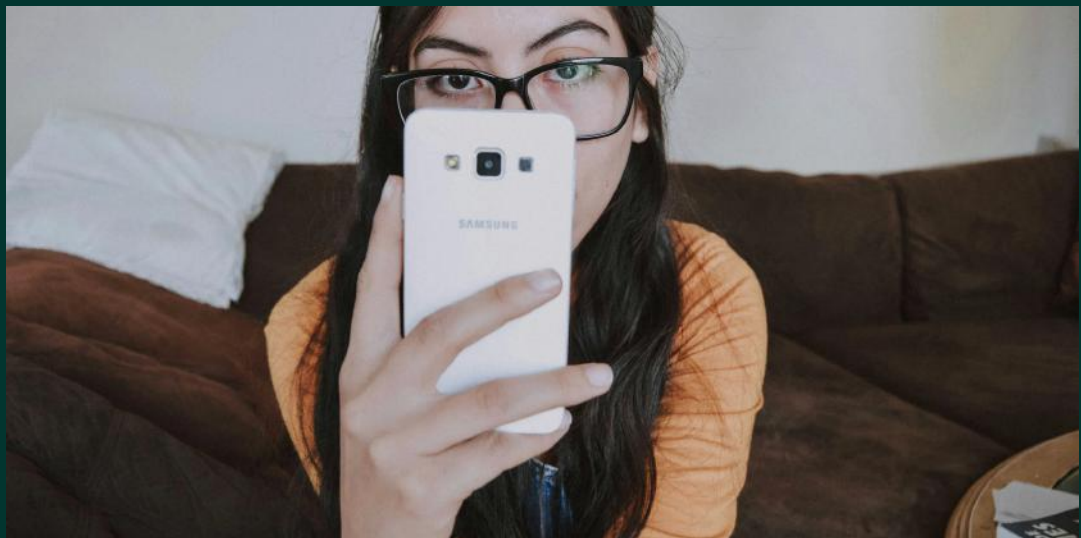
Everyday we are required to make decisions for our children and one of the most consequential is likely to be - at what age do you allow them access to smartphones.

I am a dad whose son will start secondary school soon . Some of his friends already have smartphone access and I am beginning to hear the first rumbles of peer pressure. Nevertheless I am of the opinion that children should not be given smartphones until at least the age of sixteen and I intend to do exactly that with my child.

Having said that, I do not pretend to speak for all the parents. In this short ebook I have attempted to present information that might be useful for parents struggling with this decision.

We owe it to our children to guide them well.

Akhilesh Sharma



WWW.SMARTPHONERISKS.COM



The Dangers of Early Smartphone Usage



01. Psychological

- Increased Anxiety & Depression
- Addiction and Dependency
- Reduced Attention Span
- Peer Pressure to Fit-in

- Distraction During Studies
- Lower Academic Performance
- Impact on Cognitive Development

02. Academic



03. Safety and Security

- Online grooming
- Exposure to Inappropriate Content
- Cyberbullying

- Eye Strain and Vision Problems
- Sleep Disruption
- Reduced Physical Activity
- Chronic neck and back pain, often referred to as "tech neck"

04. Physical Health



05. Social & Behavioural

- Reduced Face-to-Face Interaction
- Family Relationship Strain
- Aggression and Irritability
- Impulsivity



02. UNDERSTANDING THE RISKS

Alarming Facts



Over 50% of online grooming and sexual abuse cases originate from social media.



Significant increase in sextortion scams targeting children who are forced to send nudes.

WARNING

50% of 12-yr-olds regularly see online porn on their smartphones.



Significantly higher rates of self-harm directly correlated to social media usage on smartphones.



Think very carefully before you give your children early access to smartphones!



Social Media Companies Target Children



It's All About Money

Meta (owner of Instagram, Facebook, Whatsapp) reports average revenue of \$40 per user. Mainly from advertising.



Growth From Young Users

Most adults already have smartphones. The only growth is from going down the age curve to hook ever younger children.



Addictive Algos

Social media apps and recommendation algorithms are designed specifically to make users get addicted.



Online All The Time

The longer your child spends online, the better it is for the tech giants.

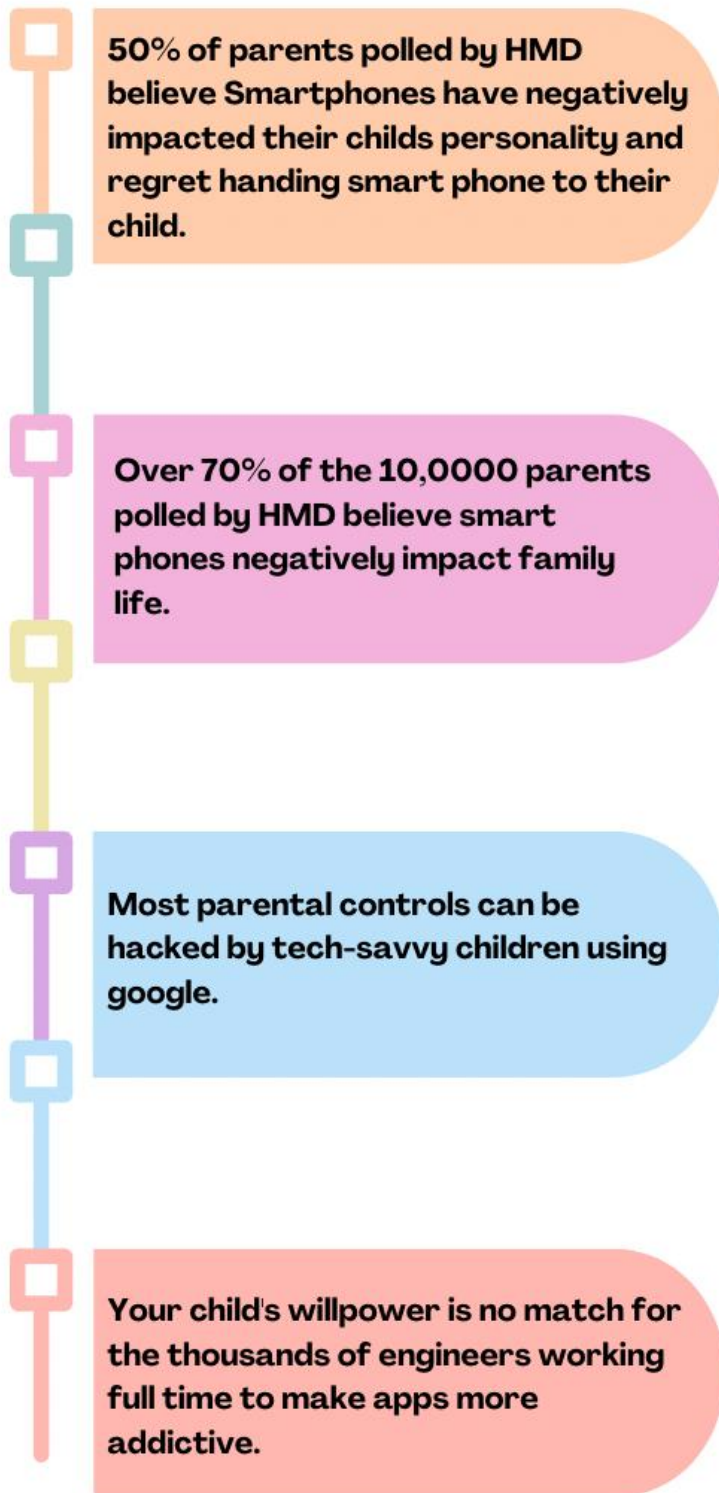
THINK!

Don't let your kids waste their precious childhood generating revenue for Big Tech.



02. UNDERSTANDING THE RISKS

MOST PARENTS ARE HELPLESS IN CONTROLLING SMARTPHONE USAGE



Talking to Your Child About the Risks

Age-Appropriate Discussions:

Tailor conversations to the child's age and use simple language for younger children. For example, explain to a younger child that "spending too much time on the phone can make you tired and unhappy."

Recognizing Suspicious Behaviour:

Teach children how to recognize and report suspicious behaviour. For example, if someone they don't know asks personal questions or wants to meet in person, they should alert a trusted adult immediately.

Using Stories and Examples:

Share real-life stories and create relatable scenarios to explain the risks. For instance, discuss news stories about cyberbullying or online predators to highlight the importance of being cautious online.

Maintaining an Open Dialogue:

Encourage questions and be honest and transparent in your discussions. Create a safe space for your child to share their experiences and concerns about smartphone use.



Talking to Your Child About the Risks

Cyberbullying

Signs of Cyberbullying:

Look out for signs such as sudden withdrawal from friends or changes in behaviour. The Cyberbullying Research Centre suggests monitoring changes in mood, sleep patterns, and eating habits as potential indicators.

How to Handle and Report:

Teach children how to handle and report cyberbullying incidents. Encourage them to save evidence, block the bully, and report the incident to the platform and a trusted adult.



03. SETTING BOUNDARIES

Setting Family Rules and Boundaries

Establishing Clear Rules

Involve children in rule-making to ensure they understand and respect the boundaries. For example, set specific times for device use, such as no phones during meals or homework time.

Consistent Enforcement

Consistency is key to enforcing rules and maintaining a balanced tech environment. Make sure all family members, including parents, follow the same rules to set a good example.

Creating a Family Technology Agreement

Draft a family contract outlining the rules and responsibilities regarding smartphone use. Include details such as screen time limits, acceptable apps, and consequences for breaking the rules.



Popular Parental Control Tools

Qustodio

Features:

Screen time management, app blocking, content filtering, activity monitoring, location tracking.

Pros:

Comprehensive features, user-friendly interface, works across multiple platforms.

Cons:

Higher cost for premium plans.

Pricing:

Free version with limited features; premium plans start at £39.95 per year.

Reviews:

PCMag: 4/5 –

“Qustodio is easy to use and provides a robust set of features, including extensive monitoring and control capabilities. The downside is its higher price point for premium plans.”



04. PARENTAL CONTROLS

TechRadar: 4.5/5 –

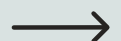
“Qustodio offers comprehensive parental control tools that are easy to use and very effective, making it one of the best options on the market.”

Tom’s Guide: 4/5 –

“Qustodio is a great all-around parental control solution with powerful features and a user-friendly interface. It’s a bit pricey, but the range of controls it offers is well worth it.”

CNET: 4.2/5 –

“Qustodio’s broad feature set and ease of use make it an excellent choice for parents looking to manage their kids’ online activities.”



Google Family Link

Features:

Screen time management, app approval, location tracking, activity reports.

Pros:

Free, integrates well with Android devices.

Cons:

Limited functionality on iOS devices, basic compared to other options.

Pricing:

Free.

Reviews:

PCMag: 3.5/5 –

“Google Family Link is a great free option for parents, especially those with younger children using Android devices. However, its functionality on iOS is limited.”

Tom's Guide: 4/5 –

“Family Link offers solid basic controls for Android users but lacks the depth and advanced features of other paid solutions.”



04. PARENTAL CONTROLS

TechRadar: 4/5 –

“Google Family Link is an effective tool for managing your child's screen time and app usage, especially if your family uses Android devices.”

Common Sense Media: 4/5 –

“Family Link provides a good set of basic parental controls and is especially useful for families using Android devices. It’s not as comprehensive as some other paid options, but it’s a strong choice for basic needs.”



Apple Screen Time

Features:

Screen time management, app limits, content and privacy restrictions, activity reports.

Pros:

Built into iOS devices, no additional cost, detailed usage reports.

Cons:

Limited to Apple devices, can be bypassed by tech-savvy kids.

Pricing:

Free with iOS devices.

Reviews:

Macworld: 4/5 –

“Apple Screen Time is a useful tool for monitoring and managing your child’s device usage, particularly if you’re already invested in the Apple ecosystem.”

Common Sense Media: 4/5 –

“Screen Time offers a solid set of features for iOS users, but it’s not as comprehensive as some third-party solutions.”



04. PARENTAL CONTROLS

PC Mag: 3.5/5 –

"Apple's Screen Time provides good basic monitoring and control capabilities, but more advanced users might need additional third-party solutions."

Tech Radar: 4/5 –

"Screen Time is a valuable tool for managing and monitoring screen time on Apple devices, though it's not foolproof and can be bypassed by tech-savvy kids."



Net Nanny

Features:

Web filtering, screen time management, app blocking, activity monitoring, location tracking.

Pros:

Strong web filtering, works on multiple platforms (iOS, Android, Windows, Mac), real-time alerts.

Cons:

Requires a subscription, can be complex to set up.

Pricing:

Plans start at £39.99 per year.

Reviews:

PC Mag: 4/5 –

“Net Nanny provides comprehensive parental control features with strong web filtering capabilities, making it a great choice for families.”

Tom's Guide: 4.5/5 –

“Net Nanny is one of the best parental control solutions available, offering a robust set of features and effective web filtering.”



04. PARENTAL CONTROLS

CNET: 4/5 –

“Net Nanny’s comprehensive features and strong web filtering make it a standout choice for parents, though it comes at a higher price point.”

Tech Radar: 4.5/5 –

“Net Nanny offers top-notch parental control tools with excellent web filtering and a user-friendly interface.”

.5



Norton Family

Features:

Web supervision, time management, app supervision, location tracking, video supervision.

Pros:

Comprehensive protection, detailed activity reports, easy-to-use interface.

Cons:

Requires a subscription, some features limited on iOS.

Pricing:

£29.99 per year.

Reviews:

PC Mag: 4/5 –

“Norton Family offers a wide range of features and robust web filtering, making it a solid choice for parental control.”

Tom's Guide: 4/5 –

“Norton Family provides comprehensive monitoring and control features, but its iOS functionality is somewhat limited.”



04. PARENTAL CONTROLS

Common Sense Media: 4/5 –

“Norton Family offers a comprehensive set of features and is particularly strong in web filtering and activity monitoring.”

Tech Radar: 4/5 –

“Norton Family is a capable parental control solution with a user-friendly interface and a wide range of features, though it’s not the best for iOS users.”



Bark

Features:

Content monitoring, web filtering, screen time management, alerts and recommendations.

Pros:

Focuses on detecting harmful content, works on multiple platforms, comprehensive monitoring.

Cons:

Subscription required, can generate many alerts.

Pricing:

Plans start at £9.00 per month.

Reviews:

PC Mag: 4/5 –

“Bark is excellent for monitoring social media and messaging apps, providing detailed alerts and recommendations.”

Tom's Guide: 4.5/5 –

“Bark offers the most comprehensive monitoring for social media and messaging apps, making it a top choice for concerned parents.”



04. PARENTAL CONTROLS

Common Sense Media: 4/5 –

“Bark provides robust monitoring and alert features, though it can sometimes generate an overwhelming number of alerts.”

Tech Radar: 4.5/5 –

“Bark’s focus on content monitoring and its broad platform support make it an excellent choice for modern families.”



Kaspersky Safe Kids

Features:

Screen time management, app usage control, web filtering, location tracking, social network monitoring.

Pros:

Affordable, wide range of features, works on multiple platforms (iOS, Android, Windows, Mac).

Cons:

User interface can be challenging to navigate, some features less robust compared to competitors.

Pricing:

Free version available; premium version for £14.99 per year.

Reviews:

PC Mag: 4/5 –

“Kaspersky Safe Kids offers an impressive array of features at a very reasonable price, though its interface can be tricky.”



04. PARENTAL CONTROLS

Common Sense Media: 4/5 –

“Kaspersky Safe Kids offers excellent features for monitoring and controlling your child’s online activities, though it may require some effort to set up and manage.”

Tech Radar: 4/5 –

“Kaspersky Safe Kids delivers great value with a wide range of features, though the interface could be improved.”

Tom's Guide: 4/5 –

“Kaspersky Safe Kids provides comprehensive features for a low price, making it a strong choice for budget-conscious parents.”



05. DISADVANTAGES OF NO ACCESS TO SMARTPHONES

Disadvantages of Not Allowing Access to Smartphones

While limiting or not allowing smartphone access to children has many benefits, it's important to consider some potential disadvantages. Understanding these drawbacks can help parents make more informed decisions and find a balanced approach.

Social Exclusion

Peer Pressure and Social Dynamics

Feeling Left Out:

Children without smartphones may feel left out of social activities and conversations. For example, group chats on messaging apps like WhatsApp and Snapchat are common among school-aged children.

Missing Social Events:

Many social events and gatherings are coordinated via smartphones. Children without access may miss out on invitations or last-minute changes.



05. DISADVANTAGES OF NO ACCESS TO SMARTPHONES

Academic Challenges

Digital Homework:

Schools increasingly use apps and online platforms for homework assignments and study resources. Children without smartphones might struggle to keep up.

Missing Learning Opportunities:

Many educational apps and tools are designed for smartphones, offering interactive and engaging ways to learn. Without access, children might miss these learning opportunities.

Technological Literacy

Falling Behind in Digital Skills

Future Preparedness:

In a technology-driven world, digital literacy is crucial. Children without smartphones may lag in developing essential tech skills.

Missing Early Exposure:

Early exposure to technology can foster interest in coding and other tech-related skills. Without access, children might miss out on these early learning opportunities.



05. DISADVANTAGES OF NO ACCESS TO SMARTPHONES

Family Coordination

Contact During Emergencies:

Smartphones can provide a direct line of communication in case of emergencies. Children without phones might find it harder to reach their parents quickly.

Lack of Safety Features:

Apps that allow parents to track their child's location can provide peace of mind. Without smartphones, this safety feature is unavailable.

Learning Self-Regulation

Tech Management Skills:

Exposure to smartphones under parental guidance can help children learn to manage their screen time and use technology responsibly.

Delayed Self-Regulation:

Completely shielding children from smartphones might delay their ability to develop self-regulation skills needed in adulthood.



05. DISADVANTAGES OF NO ACCESS TO SMARTPHONES

Potential Resentment

Strain on Relationships:

Strict rules without clear explanations can cause resentment. Children might feel that their parents are overly controlling, leading to friction.

Overcoming the Disadvantages

Social Exclusion

Encouraging Face-to-Face Interactions:

Encourage your child to invite friends over for face-to-face interactions and plan social activities that don't require smartphones.

Coordinating with Other Parents:

Work with other parents to ensure your child is included in social events and activities, using alternative communication methods such as email or landline calls.



05. DISADVANTAGES OF NO ACCESS TO SMARTPHONES

Overcoming the Disadvantages

Academic Challenges

Providing Access to Shared Devices:

Provide access to a family computer or tablet for educational purposes, and set specific times for using these devices for homework and research.

Exploring Traditional Learning Methods:

Supplement your child's education with books, educational board games, and hands-on projects.

Technological Literacy

Enrolling in Tech Classes:

Enroll your child in coding classes or technology camps, and use family computers to teach basic digital skills and responsible internet use.

•Using Educational Toys:

Introduce educational toys and kits that teach coding concepts without the need for a smartphone, and encourage participation in school tech clubs or competitions.



05. DISADVANTAGES OF NO ACCESS TO SMARTPHONES

Overcoming the Disadvantages

Family Coordination

Providing a Basic Phone:

Give your child a basic phone that allows for calls and texts without internet access, and set up a check-in system where your child regularly updates you on their whereabouts.

Establishing Safe Communication Practices:

Agree on safe routes and places for your child to visit, and ensure they know how to use the basic phone in emergencies.

Developing Responsible Usage

Gradually Introducing Technology:

Introduce technology with clear rules and boundaries, using shared devices and supervising usage to teach responsible habits.

Modeling Healthy Tech Habits:

Discuss the importance of balance and model healthy tech habits yourself, and involve your child in creating family tech rules and agreements.



05. DISADVANTAGES OF NO ACCESS TO SMARTPHONES

Overcoming the Disadvantages

Potential Resentment

Communicating Openly:

Explain the reasons behind your decisions, and involve your child in creating family tech rules and agreements to foster cooperation and mutual understanding.

Using Collaborative Approaches:

Hold regular family meetings to discuss technology use, allowing each family member to voice their opinions and contribute to the family's tech policy.



Transitioning Your Child Off Snapchat in 6 Weeks

Building Trust and Confidence:

Taking away Snapchat from your child is challenging but crucial for their well-being. This comprehensive 6-week plan will help you gradually reduce Snapchat usage, address objections, build trust with your child throughout the process, and even involve other parents for a community-based approach.

Week 1: Open the Dialogue

Step 1: Initiate the Conversation

Talk Openly:

Sit down with your child in a comfortable setting. Explain your concerns about Snapchat using facts about the negative effects of excessive social media use.

Example: "I've been reading a lot about how Snapchat can affect your sleep and concentration, and I'm worried about your health. Can we talk about this?"

Step 2: Listen to Their Concerns

Empathize and Understand:

Allow your child to express why Snapchat is important to them. Listen without interrupting.



06. REMOVING SNAPCHAT

Talk Openly:

Sit down with your child in a comfortable setting. Explain your concerns about Snapchat using facts about the negative effects of excessive social media use.

Example: "I've been reading a lot about how Snapchat can affect your sleep and concentration, and I'm worried about your health. Can we talk about this?"

Step 2: Listen to Their Concerns

Empathize and Understand:

Allow your child to express why Snapchat is important to them. Listen without interrupting.

Example: "I know Snapchat helps you stay in touch with your friends. Can you tell me more about why it's important to you?"

Step 3: Set Initial Limits

Establish Boundaries:

Set a reasonable daily limit for Snapchat usage to start the reduction process.

Example: "For this week, let's try limiting Snapchat to 30 minutes a day. We'll see how it goes and adjust if needed."



Week 2: Implement Monitoring

Step 4: Introduce Monitoring Tools

Parental Controls:

Set up monitoring tools like Qustodio or Family Link on your child's device. Walk them through the setup process.

Example: "We'll use this app to keep track of your Snapchat time. It helps us understand how much time you're spending on it and ensures we stick to our limits."

Step 5: Discuss the Benefits of Reduced Usage

Highlight Positives:

Explain how less screen time can improve sleep, grades, and social interactions.

Example: "Less time on Snapchat means more time for other fun activities and better sleep. Let's see how this positively affects your daily life."



Week 3: Encourage Alternative Activities

Step 6: Introduce New Activities

Explore Interests:

Help your child find new hobbies or activities they can enjoy without screens. This could be sports, arts and crafts, or reading.

Example: "Let's try something new together. How about joining a football team or starting a weekly baking session?"

Step 7: Schedule Social Interactions

Facilitate Friend Time:

Arrange for in-person meetups with friends to show that they don't need Snapchat to stay connected.

Example: "Why don't we invite your friends over for a movie night or a picnic this weekend? It'll be fun to hang out without phones."



Week 4: Further Reduce Usage

Step 8: Decrease Snapchat Time

Reduce Limits:

Cut Snapchat time to 15 minutes a day. Discuss this change openly and get their input.

Example: "We're doing great with the 30 minutes limit. Let's try reducing it to 15 minutes a day and see how we feel."

Step 9: Reinforce Benefits

Show Progress

Highlight any improvements in sleep, mood, or grades that you've noticed.

Example: "I've noticed you're sleeping better and seem less stressed. How do you feel about it?"



Week 5: Prepare for Complete Removal

Step 10: Discuss Complete Removal

Be Honest:

Explain that next week, Snapchat will be removed entirely. Prepare them for this change.

Example: "Next week, we'll be removing Snapchat completely. Let's talk about how we can make this transition easier."

Step 11: Plan for Objections

Anticipate Pushback:

Prepare responses to common objections, such as social exclusion.

Example: "If you feel left out, we can find other ways for you to stay connected with your friends. Maybe we can have more get-togethers or use other communication methods like texting."



Week 6: Remove Snapchat

Step 12: Remove the App

Uninstall Snapchat

Take the app off your child's device together. Make this a moment of empowerment, not punishment.

Example: "Today, we're removing Snapchat. We've prepared for this, and I believe it's for the best. Let's do it together."

Step 13: Support Transition

Be Supportive

Offer extra support and reassurance during this adjustment period.

Example: "I know this is a big change, but I'm here for you. Let's find some fun things to do together to take your mind off it."

Step 14: Reinforce Positive Changes

Celebrate Success:

Acknowledge the positive changes since reducing Snapchat usage.



Post-Removal: Maintain the Balance

Step 15: Continue Open Communication

Check-In Regularly

Keep the lines of communication open about how they're feeling without Snapchat.

Example: "How are you feeling without Snapchat? Is there anything you're missing that we can address?"

Step 16: Monitor New Habits

Encourage Healthy Habits:

Keep encouraging alternative activities and monitor screen time.

Example: "Let's keep up with our new routine and see how much better it makes us feel. I'm proud of your progress."



Involving Other Parents: Building a Supportive Community

Step 1: Initiate the Conversation

Reach Out

Contact the parents of your child's friends. Arrange a meeting or casual get-together to discuss concerns about social media usage.

Example: "Hi [Parent's Name], I've been thinking about the impact of social media on our kids. Could we meet up to discuss it?"

Step 2: Share Your Plan

Be Honest and Open

Explain your plan to reduce and remove Snapchat from your child's life. Share your reasons and the benefits you hope to achieve.

Example: "We've decided to gradually reduce and remove Snapchat from [Child's Name]'s phone over the next six weeks. We're worried about the effects on their sleep and concentration."



Step 3: Provide Information

Share Research

Bring along articles, studies, or personal observations about the negative effects of excessive social media use.

Example: "I found some interesting research about how social media can affect kids' mental health. Here's an article that explains it well."

Step 4: Suggest a Collective Approach

Community Effort

Propose that you all work together to reduce social media usage among your children. Offer to support each other through the process.

Example: "It would be great if we could support each other in this. Maybe we can all encourage more in-person activities and less screen time."

Step 5: Address Objections

Listen and Reassure

Be prepared for objections and concerns. Listen to their worries and offer reassurance based on your own experiences.



Example: "I understand it's a big change, but I've noticed positive changes in [Child's Name] already. We can share ideas on how to make it easier for all our kids."

Step 6: Plan Joint Activities

Organize Events

Plan regular get-togethers or group activities that don't involve screens. This helps reinforce the idea that fun doesn't require social media.

Example: "Let's plan a monthly picnic or game night for the kids. It'll be a great way for them to connect without their phones."

Step 7: Maintain Communication

•Regular Updates

Keep in touch with the other parents to share progress, challenges, and successes. This creates a supportive network.

Example: "Let's check in every couple of weeks to see how things are going and support each other through this."



Tips for Involving Other Parents

Be Non-Judgmental

Approach the conversation with understanding and respect for different parenting styles.

Highlight Benefits

Focus on the positive outcomes for the children, such as improved social skills, better sleep, and more quality family time.

Share Success Stories

If other parents have already seen positive changes, share these stories to inspire and motivate the group.



How to Use WhatsApp Without a SIM Card

Why Use WhatsApp Without a SIM Card?

Safety and Monitoring

Parents can better monitor communication without giving full smartphone access.

Limiting Internet Exposure

Prevents children from accessing the internet unsupervised.

Cost-Effective

Utilizes existing Wi-Fi at home, avoiding additional data costs.

Focus on Communication

Allows children to communicate with family and friends without the distractions of apps and games on a smartphone.



What You Need:

A Brick Phone: For basic calling and texting, especially in emergencies.

A Tablet or Spare Smartphone: For installing and using WhatsApp over Wi-Fi.

A Wi-Fi Connection: To enable internet access for WhatsApp without a mobile network.

A Parent's Smartphone: To assist in the initial setup process.

Recommended Brick Phones

Nokia 105

Durable, long battery life, basic calling and texting. Around £20-£30.

Alcatel 1066

Compact design, affordable, includes a camera and FM radio. Around £10-£15.

Doro 1360

Features: Easy-to-use keypad, large display, emergency button. Around £25-£35.



Recommended Plans for Brick Phones

Giffgaff

Plan: £6 Monthly Goodybag

Features: 500 minutes, unlimited texts, 1GB data (data not required for brick phones but included)

Coverage: Uses O2 network, good coverage across the UK

Tesco Mobile

Plan: £7.50 Monthly SIM Only

Features: 500 minutes, 5000 texts, 500MB data

Coverage: Uses O2 network, reliable coverage

Lebara

Plan: £5 Monthly Plan

Features: 1000 minutes, 1000 texts, 2GB data

Coverage: Uses Vodafone network, extensive coverage

iD Mobile

Plan: £6 Monthly SIM Only

Features: 250 minutes, unlimited texts, 1GB data

Coverage: Uses Three network, good coverage in urban areas



Step-by-Step Guide for Setting Up WhatsApp

Install WhatsApp on the Tablet or Spare Smartphone

Download and install WhatsApp from the Google Play Store or Apple App Store on the tablet or spare smartphone that will be used at home.

Insert the SIM Card Temporarily

Use your SIM card temporarily to verify the WhatsApp account. Insert your SIM card into the tablet or spare smartphone. Alternatively, you can use the child's brick phone SIM card for this step.

Open WhatsApp and Verify the Number

Open WhatsApp and follow the on-screen instructions to verify the phone number.

Enter the phone number associated with the SIM card in the brick phone (or the temporary SIM card).

You will receive an SMS with a verification code. Enter this code in WhatsApp to complete the verification process.

Remove the SIM Card

Once verification is complete, remove the SIM card from the tablet or spare smartphone.

Insert the SIM card back into the brick phone if you used the child's SIM card.



07. WHATSAPP WITHOUT SIM

Connect to Wi-Fi

Ensure the tablet or spare smartphone is connected to a stable Wi-Fi network. WhatsApp will now work over Wi-Fi without needing the SIM card.

Set Up WhatsApp for Safe Use

Contact List

Pre-load the contact list with approved family members and friends. This ensures your child can only communicate with trusted contacts.

Privacy Settings

Adjust privacy settings in WhatsApp to limit who can see your child's information. Go to Settings > Account > Privacy and adjust options such as Last Seen, Profile Photo, and Status to 'My Contacts' or 'Nobody'.

Parental Controls:

Set up parental controls on the tablet or spare smartphone to restrict access to other apps and ensure WhatsApp is the only messaging app used.

Screen Time:

Use built-in features like Apple's Screen Time or Google's Digital Wellbeing to set limits on how long WhatsApp can be used each day.



WhatsApp Channels

WhatsApp Channels are a feature introduced by WhatsApp to allow users to receive updates from individuals or organizations in a more streamlined way, similar to the broadcast channels found in other messaging apps like Telegram.

Unlike group chats, channels allow for one-way communication, meaning only the admin can send messages, and subscribers cannot respond within the channel.

Exposure to Inappropriate Content

Children can easily encounter harmful or unsuitable content through public channels. Parental monitoring and content filtering tools are crucial to mitigate this risk, ensuring children only access age-appropriate information



Akhilesh Sharma

Akhilesh is a financial trainer and a qualified personal finance coach. He has more than twenty years of experience in banking & finance, having previously worked for Barclays, Deutsche Bank and BNP Paribas.

Akhilesh is a family finances coach with a passion for helping parents, especially mums, navigate the complexities of money and investments. He also runs Money Camps for children, fostering early financial education and open communication about money within families. Connect with him on [LinkedIn](#) or email him on [**akhyyl@gmail.com**](mailto:akhyyl@gmail.com)

He started researching smartphone usage for children when, to his consternation, his ten year old son started enquiring about when he might get his own iphone!

Akhilesh is currently working on an online training course "**Smartphone Risks for 10+ Kids**". This short course aims to help parents explain to their children all the dangers of owning a smartphone. The training would be most effective if taken together by the child and the parent.

If you are interested in being notified when the course becomes available, please leave your email on

SmartphoneRisks.com

