



*Your monthly empowerment guide
and practical tips for your family*

TIME IS ON YOUR SIDE

As you learned in the October newsletter - there is a sweet spot in brain development called the "Second Window of Opportunity" where children have a period of rapid learning from ages 9-14. Remember, the brain is not fully developed until age 25.

What you can do if you think it's too late?

- Make the switch from a smartphone to a dumb phone.
- Replace rec tech time with real life activities. Think board games!
- Identify and encourage your child when they exemplify good executive functioning skills like time management, empathy, organization, and self-control. Ex: "Mary, great job doing your chores without be asked!"
- Take authority. Children of all ages crave boundaries; re-establish your parental role.
- Be clear and consistent with all your communications. But remember that it's okay to change your mind when it comes to protecting your child.
- Consider executive functioning coaching.



DOPAMINE & TEMPTATIONS

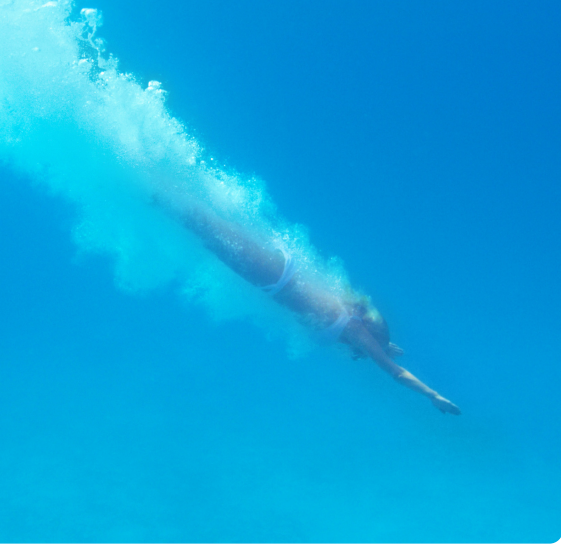


If you were trying to eat healthy, would you carry candy in your pocket?

Pocket Candy - It only takes one moment of weakness to experience a dopamine dump! Don't set yourself up for failure by putting all of your vices and attention stealing notifications in your pocket or alone with you in your bedroom.

Dopamine By Design - Dopamine Labs, a startup in Venice, CA, uses artificial intelligence and neuroscience to help companies hook people with their apps. Dopamine Labs uses computer coding to influence behavior, most importantly, to compel people to spend more time with an app and to keep them coming back for more. Co-founder Ramsay Brown, who studied neuroscience at the University of Southern California, says:

"We're really living in this new era that we're not just designing software anymore; we're designing minds."



PARENT CHALLENGE

Take a technology plunge!

You may think you already know the answer BUT try the following experiment **through the eyes of your child!**

Pick one week and indulge in technology.

- Pick an app - YouTube (Shorts and YouTube Kids,) Instagram, Facebook, TikTok or SnapChat.
- Create an account or use an existing one.
- Look for content on a child “safe” topic such as photographing animals or mermaids.
- Spend at least 30 mins per day on this app.

Follow up:

- Did you go over 30 minutes?
- Did you “want” to stay online longer?
- How did it make you feel? Ex. joyful, depressed, envious, grateful, content.
- Did you reprioritize your time for technology?
- Were you exposed to unrelated or inappropriate material?
- Do you see your child being able to navigate or easily turn away from the app?

Share your experience and feedback!

Email info@Smart-Families.org.

DO YOU KNOW?

Algorithms are mainly designed to amplify information that sustains engagement, meaning they keep people clicking on content and coming back to the platforms.

FAMILY DISCUSSION

Do you think humans are smarter today than they were hundreds of years ago?

Humanity has used sophisticated poetry and writing and has been searching for meaning and purpose for thousands of years. Take the Bible which is 2,000-3,000 years old, and it is wrestling with the same issues as modernity. "Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind."—Romans 12:2

We have more information and better tools but the human brain has evolved little in the last 10,000 years. We experience life and emotions the same way we always have, but our modern society's ability to induce chemical responses are increasing in magnitude and frequency.

100 years ago...

1. How do you think driving directions were given/taken?
2. How did family and/or friends make plans to get together?
3. Do you think there was peer pressure?
4. How did kids play?
5. What did parents do for entertainment?
6. Do you think we are smarter today than hundreds of years ago and why?

