Kids online

COMPASS, March 2014

How many hours per week does the average American child between the ages of 8 and 18 spend with media and technology?

(53h/week = average ~7h/day!)

In our house, the lure is so strong - even making the kids wear funny hats to use Internet devices doesn't deter them...

What I hear at home. Everyone else...

- has a … iPhone 5, laptop, Android tablet, Wii, Xbox, etc...
- keeps their device/TV in their bedroom
- gets to watch PG-13/R movies or play R rated apps
- is allowed to play Call of Duty, be on Facebook, Skype with friends, etc...
- is able to chose when they want to be online, and for how long (no limits)
- is allowed to post any video they make on YouTube, for the public to view

The reality is likely different for every family.
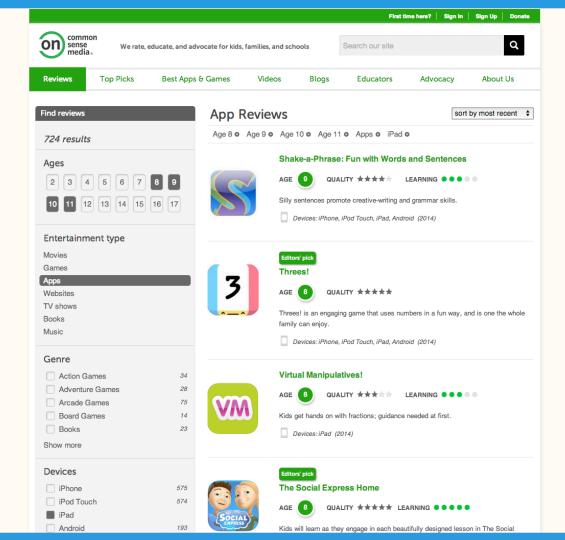
Essential facts of digital life

- Kids are the creators - making, mixing, communicating, posting, expressing, exploring
- The audience is vast, invisible, and often anonymous
- Everything leaves a digital footprint - delete doesn't mean gone
- Information cannot be controlled - forward, copy, mix, post, link
- Distance and anonymity separate actions and consequences

(from [Common Sense Media](#))

What we've tried in our house

- Family conversations - talking, sharing, asking, wondering
- Understanding their online activities
  - embrace their world
  - fun and learning and connection - it all blends together
- Looking at our own behavior, and what we're signaling to our kids
- Online controls
  - search settings (e.g. Google search)
  - safe filters (e.g. YouTube); third-party filter software (e.g. NetNanny)
  - supervised users (e.g. Chrome supervised user)
  - private user (e.g. Instagram account, Google+, Facebook)
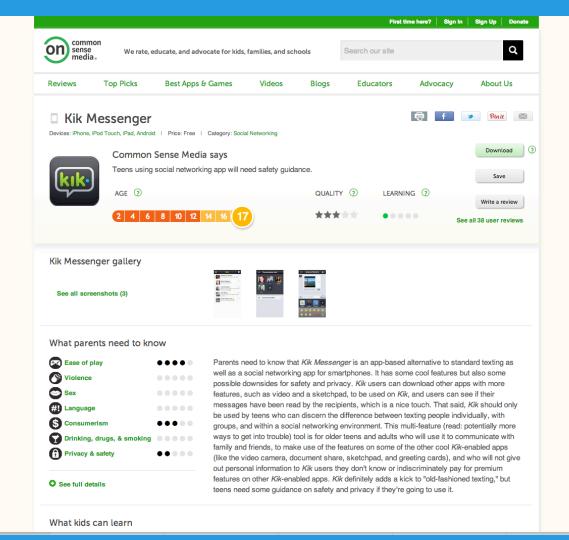 - timers
- Family Internet contracts

www.commonsensemedia.org

Great resource to find age appropriate movies, books, music, apps...

www.commonsensemedia.org

… and not so appropriate ones

Our family agreement

1. Trust is very important. We trust each other to follow these rules.
2. We do our homework before having free time on devices.
3. We use the Internet to connect and share with friends and family - not strangers. "Friends" are people we know in real life. We don't send or respond to messages from people we don't know. No direct contact with strangers. We always use privacy settings for sharing.
4. We only type things that we would say in person, or that we would be OK seeing on the front page of the newspaper. If we are upset, we use the phone or talk live. We respect other people's feelings.
5. We never post pictures of body parts. We never post a picture of someone else without getting their permission first.
6. Parents help us have fun on the Internet, help us learn using the internet and keep us safe. We will share our passwords with our parents so they can see what we do online. What we do online is not secret or confidential, and we do won't hide what we are doing. Parents will review texts and messages.
7. We visit web sites that are appropriate for our age. We don't look at things that we know are inappropriate. We tell our parents about anything we see or read that makes us scared, uncomfortable, embarrassed or have bad feelings.
8. We can use devices for up to one hour per school day. We can use them for more time on weekends with parent permission. We can use our devices before 8pm.
9. Parents own all devices in our house. Kids will take good care of the ones they use (put them away, plug them in).

Other options @ Commonsensemedia.org

Resources

Common Sense Media
http://www.commonsensemedia.org

American Academy of Pediatrics Media and Children
http://www.aap.org/en-us/advocacy-and-policy/aap-health-initiatives/pages/media-and-children.aspx

Top Ten Software Filter Review
http://internet-filter-review.toptenreviews.com/

Content Barrier - now called "Family Protector"
http://www.intego.com/mac-family-protector

Google Safety Center
https://www.google.com/safetycenter/families/start/