



Keeping kids safe in a smartphone world

ABBAY ROAD SFC PARENT GROUP
PRESENTATION FEB 2025

Hi, I'm Suzanne, I'm here to talk about some of the issues around smartphones and children, and how we can work together to improve the situation for our kids. Smartphones and children have become a big talking point recently because this is an issue that every family in Britain today has to contend with. There's historically been very little advice out there on this issue, and many of us aren't sure what approach to take.

No previous generation of parents or young people have had to deal with this like we do. I'm a member of the grassroots movement Smartphone Free Childhood which has spread rapidly across the UK over the last year.

But, full disclosure, my y7 daughter has a smartphone, my yr 1 son doesn't. I'm not holier than thou - I'm navigating my way through these sticky waters like the rest of you. I'm not an expert either, I started researching this topic 18months ago when my then yr6 daughter wanted a phone, like her friends. Tonight I represent a group of 60+ Abbey Road parents who have joined a WhatsApp group sharing ideas and talking about the smartphone dilemma.

The topic is being more and more openly talked about. I'm not here to preach, here to open up the conversation, normalize talking about this and seeing how we can support each other.

Many of the slides we're going to show you tonight have been prepared by the SFC campaign and are being used up and down the country by parents to talk to other parents.



IN TWO DECADES, EVERYTHING'S CHANGED

2004



2004
Nokias ruled



2007
The first iPhone
launches



2008
Apple app
store opens



2012
4G launches in the
UK, enabling
internet
everywhere



2024
89% of 12-year-olds own a
smartphone, permanently
connected to the internet
via 4g/5g

Less than two decades ago, smartphones were a mere twinkle in Steve Jobs' eye.

The speed of this technological and sociological change has been unprecedented and it's affected everything, including childhood.

Even in the last five years the speed of change has accelerated dramatically - just a few years ago we were used to having to go into a cafe to get a Wifi signal because data was slow and expensive.

Now all of us expect to be connected to everything, everywhere at all times via superfast 4G & 5G connections.



THEY'RE NOT REALLY 'PHONES' AT ALL



MOBILE PHONE

Make calls, send texts, play Snake



POCKET SUPERCOMPUTER

24/7 access to the internet in your pocket

How much of your time do you spend on your smartphone actually making calls?

We call them 'phones', but it's a pretty misleading name.

It would be more accurate to call them **handheld supercomputers** – that put the whole of the internet and social media in your pocket 24/7.

It's important to point out that they **don't just give our children access to the internet – they give the whole of the internet access to our children.**



PARENTS WISH THINGS WERE DIFFERENT

94%

of primary school
parents think
smartphones
are harmful

Parentkind nationwide poll of 2,496
people, April 24

70%

of parents believe
smartphones
negatives impact
family life

HMD poll of 10,000 parents, June 24

33%

of parents of children
with smartphones
have cried over their
child's phone
obsession

HMD poll of 10,000 parents, June 24

Smartphones are an intrinsic part of our modern life,

But most parents are aware of the fact that smartphones are harmful for kids and that they can negatively impact family life.

A recent poll of 10,000 parents found that a third of parents have cried over their child's phone obsession - and half of them believe that smartphones changed their child's personality.



YOUNG PEOPLE WISH THINGS WERE DIFFERENT

67%

of 16-18 year olds
think smartphones
are harmful

Parentkind poll, 2024

1 in 5

of 16-18 year olds
have felt "life is not
worth living" due to
social media

Parentkind poll, 2024

50%

of teens say they are
"addicted" to social
media

Millennium Cohort Study, 2024

Young people themselves are far more self aware about the issue of smartphones than we sometimes give them credit for.

Two thirds of teens think that smartphones are harmful, a fifth say that social media has made them feel like 'life is not worth living', and half believe they are addicted.

The same Parentkind poll found that 68% of teens think that tech companies should do more to protect them from harmful content.

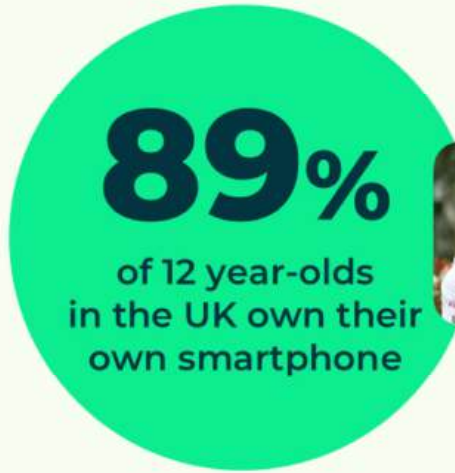


YET SMARTPHONES HAVE BECOME THE NORM



25%

of 5-7 year olds
in the UK own their
own smartphone



SOURCE: OFCOM Children and Parents: Media Use and Attitudes April 24

Despite the fact that we are all aware of the harms they are causing, smartphones have become the norm.

A quarter of 5-7 year olds in the UK own one - and by the age of 12, just 11% of kids are smartphone-free.

Another shocking Ofcom stat that we didn't have space to include on here is that a fifth of 3 and 4 year olds owns a smartphone in the UK. And every year the age of first smartphone-ownership is getting younger.



EVERYONE'S GOT ONE BECAUSE EVERYONE'S GOT ONE



Most parents believe smartphones are harmful, yet almost all children have them by Year 7



Because resisting peer pressure becomes almost impossible when children's social lives migrate online

The powerful network effects of smartphones and social media mean parents and young people feel like they have no choice

So if we all know that smartphones aren't necessarily a good thing for kids, why does almost every child have a smartphone?

Because everyone else has.

Resisting the peer pressure to get a smartphone is almost impossible if every other child in your kid's class has one.

No parent wants their child to be left out and isolated from their peer group.

The powerful network effect of these devices means that many parents and young people feel like they have absolutely no choice in the matter.



So what exactly *is* the problem?

Let's dig in to some of the specific issues with smartphones and children



When children first started getting smartphones in the early 2010s we didn't understand their impact.

Now we do, and the evidence is overwhelming.

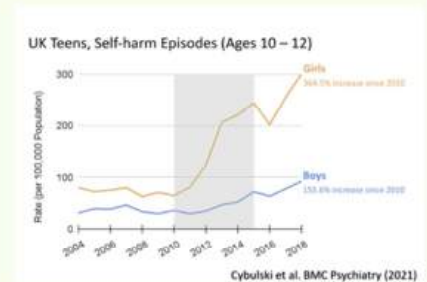
Smartphones have been with us for barely 15 years, and we're only now beginning to see the impact of these devices on a generation of children.



SMARTPHONES ARE FUELLING A MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS

Rates of depression, anxiety, self-harm and even suicide among teens have all dramatically spiked globally since 2010 – when children started getting smartphones.

A 2023 global study of 27,969 young adults from Sapiens Labs showed that the younger they got their first smartphone, the worse their mental health today.



3x

Teens with problematic smartphone-use are twice as likely to have anxiety and three times as likely to have depression

King's College London, 2024

1 in 5

UK 16 to 18 years olds say that their social media has made them feel that 'life is not worth living'

Parentkind Poll, 2024

53%

The number of children referred to emergency mental healthcare in England has soared by 53% in three years

Royal College of Psychiatrists, 2024

Since 2010, when children first started getting smartphones, rates of anxiety, depression and self harm have all spiked dramatically across the globe.

Some academics debate whether smartphones and social media have **caused** this mental health crisis or are just correlated with it, but even so the correlation is stark and no alternative explanations stack up.

More and more research points to the conclusion that too much time spent on these devices can be very harmful to children's mental health in the short and long-term.



“The mental health crisis among young people is an emergency. It is time to require a warning label on social media platforms.”



Dr Vivek Murthy
US Surgeon General, 2024

Last year, America’s most senior doctor – whose job it is to provide the nation with the best scientific information on how to improve their health – called on the government to impose smoking-style warning labels on social media.

He wants people who visit these platforms to be shown a message warning that they are "associated with significant mental health harms for adolescents".

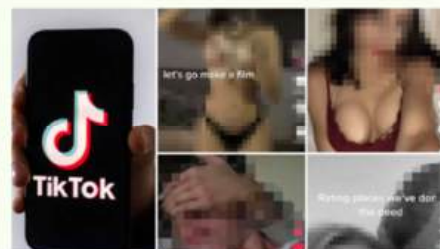
He said such a label would "regularly remind parents and adolescents that social media has not been proved safe".



SMARTPHONES EXPOSE KIDS TO HARMFUL CONTENT

Having unrestricted access to the internet in your pocket creates a gateway to extreme content and viewpoints that we'd never dream of exposing children to in real life.

Hardcore pornography, extreme political views, sexualised and violent imagery, trolling and material promoting suicide, self-harm and eating disorders have become part of the fabric of modern childhood.



51%

of UK 11-13 year-olds
have seen hardcore
pornography online

British Board of Film Classification Report, March 2022

75%

of UK 15 year olds
questioned had been
sent beheading videos

Digital Childhoods, children's commissioner report, 2022

90%

of girls and 50% of boys
say they are sent
unwanted explicit
content

Ofsted review of sexual abuse in schools, 2021

Smartphones are a gateway to extreme content and viewpoints, from hardcore pornography to sexualised and violent imagery, and videos promoting self harm, suicide and anorexia.

Even if children don't search this content out, they will be served it by the algorithm on social media, and sent it via their friends on WhatsApp.

Once they've seen these things, they can't unsee them. Being immersed in this sort of toxic content has the effect of normalising it over time for your child.

New research by UCL published in Feb 2024 found that social media algorithms amplify extreme content, such as misogynistic posts, which is normalising harmful ideologies for young people.



**“We’ll look back in 20 years
and be horrified by what our
children were exposed to”**



Dame Rachel de Souza

Children’s Commissioner for England, 2022



SMARTPHONES APPS ARE ADDICTIVE BY DESIGN

Tech companies spend billions on making apps and devices as addictive as possible because 'maximising engagement' is the fundamental objective of their business model.

So it's little wonder that many children are routinely 'spending six, seven, eight hours a day on social media – often more' (Ofcom, 2024).



46%

of teens say they use their phones "almost constantly"

Pew Research Centre, Aug 2022

29 hours

Per week is the average British 12-year-old now spends on their smartphone

Childwise Monitor Report, 2021

2 in 3

of 11-17 year olds 'often' or 'sometimes' find it difficult to put down their phone

Common Sense Media, 2023

The business model of the social media companies is simple.

The more time we spend on their apps, the more data they can harvest about us, the more targeted the adverts they can sell and the more money they make.

This is why they spend billions on 'maximising engagement', using teams of computer engineers and behavioural scientists to ensure that their platforms are as addictive as possible.

Things like infinite scroll, Snapstreaks, likes and comments all trigger our brain's dopamine circuits in a similar way to that of slot machine gambling.

Children's brains, which are not yet fully developed, are particularly vulnerable to this – it's no wonder that Ofcom reports that many children are routinely spending eight hours a day on social media.

One Harvard study found that social media platforms made nearly \$11 billion in advertising revenue off kids and teens in 2022.

***How many of us have struggled with managing our own phone usage – found ourselves doomscrolling, been horrified when seen the number of hours spent looking at our phones?* And we're adults.**



“Behind every screen on your phone, a thousand engineers have worked to make it maximally addictive. Children are particularly susceptible to this kind of manipulative design.”



Aza Raskin

Co-inventor of ‘infinite scroll’, turned campaigner

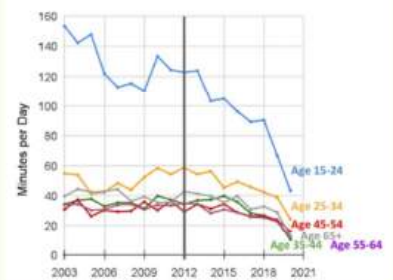


SMARTPHONES ARE FUNDAMENTALLY CHANGING CHILDHOOD

Smartphones are experience blockers, distracting children from engaging in the real world activities and connections that are crucial to healthy childhood development.

The opportunity cost to childhood is profound. The average UK 12 year-old now spends over four hours per day on their smartphone, displacing the kinds of activities that have shaped childhood for millennia.

Daily Avg Time with Friends (minutes)



43%

of US teenagers waking minutes are spent on screens

Gitnux Marketdata Report, Jan 2024

30%

Since 1975, the daily average time children spend playing outdoors has fallen by 30%, while screen-based activities have risen 23%

Zach Rausch - Mullan 2019

65%

The daily average time that teenagers spend with friends has plummeted by 65% since 2010

American Time Use Study

Beyond the harms we've already mentioned, perhaps the most serious and overlooked of all of them is the opportunity cost – all the things that children are not doing when they're spending hours per day on smartphones.

Childhood is short, and time is the most precious resource any of us have. In the UK, the average 12-year-old now spends 4 hours per day on their phone.

This is time when they could be hanging out with their family and friends, playing, reading, kicking a ball – vital real world activities and relationships that enable kids to learn the life skills they need to transition into adulthood.

None of these kids will look back fondly on the childhood memories they made scrolling Snapchat!



“When kids are on their phones all day, it’s not just what they’re doing on the phone that matters — it’s what they’re not doing. They’re missing out on crucial experiences that help them grow into healthy adults.”



Dr Jonathan Haidt
Professor of Social Psychology, NYU

And this from Jonathan Haidt, author of *The Anxious Generation* – a leading expert in this area.



~Susie

In the last decade there have been 70% less outdoor accidents and 93% more incidents of self harm in children... as a GP I can promise you it's much easier to mend a broken bone than a broken mind.



Dr Susie Davies, founder of Papaya Parents, citing NHS DATA

Dr Susie Davies, a GP in Bristol and a parent in the Smartphone Free Childhood WhatsApp groups, posted this message citing NHS data earlier this year

SADLY, WE COULD GO ON



SLEEP

Bedtime use of smartphones doubles children's risk of poor sleep



BULLYING

84% of bullying now takes place on a device



DISTRACTIONS

On average teens are bombarded by 237 smartphone notifications a day



ARGUMENTS

55% of parents say their child's smartphone use causes big family arguments



ROAD SAFETY

Mobile phone distraction is a major cause of road accidents involving children



CRIME

500 children a day were mugged in 2020 in the UK, almost all for smartphones

1: Jama Paediatrics, 2016; 2: Ofcom, 2022; 3: CommonSense Media, 2023; 4: HMD, 2024; 5: LookUp; 6: ONS, 2020

There are so many other harms to mention, but if we look at them all in detail we could be here all day.

Suffice to say that from sleep to bullying to road accidents, smartphones negatively impact children's lives in a wide variety of ways.



It's little wonder that many of the people who created this technology keep it away from their kids

STEVE JOBS

"We don't allow the iPad in the home. We think it's too dangerous for them"



EVAN SPIEGEL

Grew up without a TV and credits his own success on that tech restriction. Limits his kid to 1.5 hours screen time per week



BILL GATES

Didn't allow his 4 children smartphones or their own computers until they were 14



Many of the Big Tech moguls don't allow their own children to use these devices – they know full well how addictive and harmful the products they created can be to kids.



Parents are in an *impossible* position

SO where does that leave us?!

The fact is, that parents today are in an impossible position because of the rapid proliferation and technological advances of smartphones and social media



BECAUSE OUR 'CHOICE' ISN'T REALLY A CHOICE AT ALL



Either we...

Give our children access to a product that we know to be harmful.

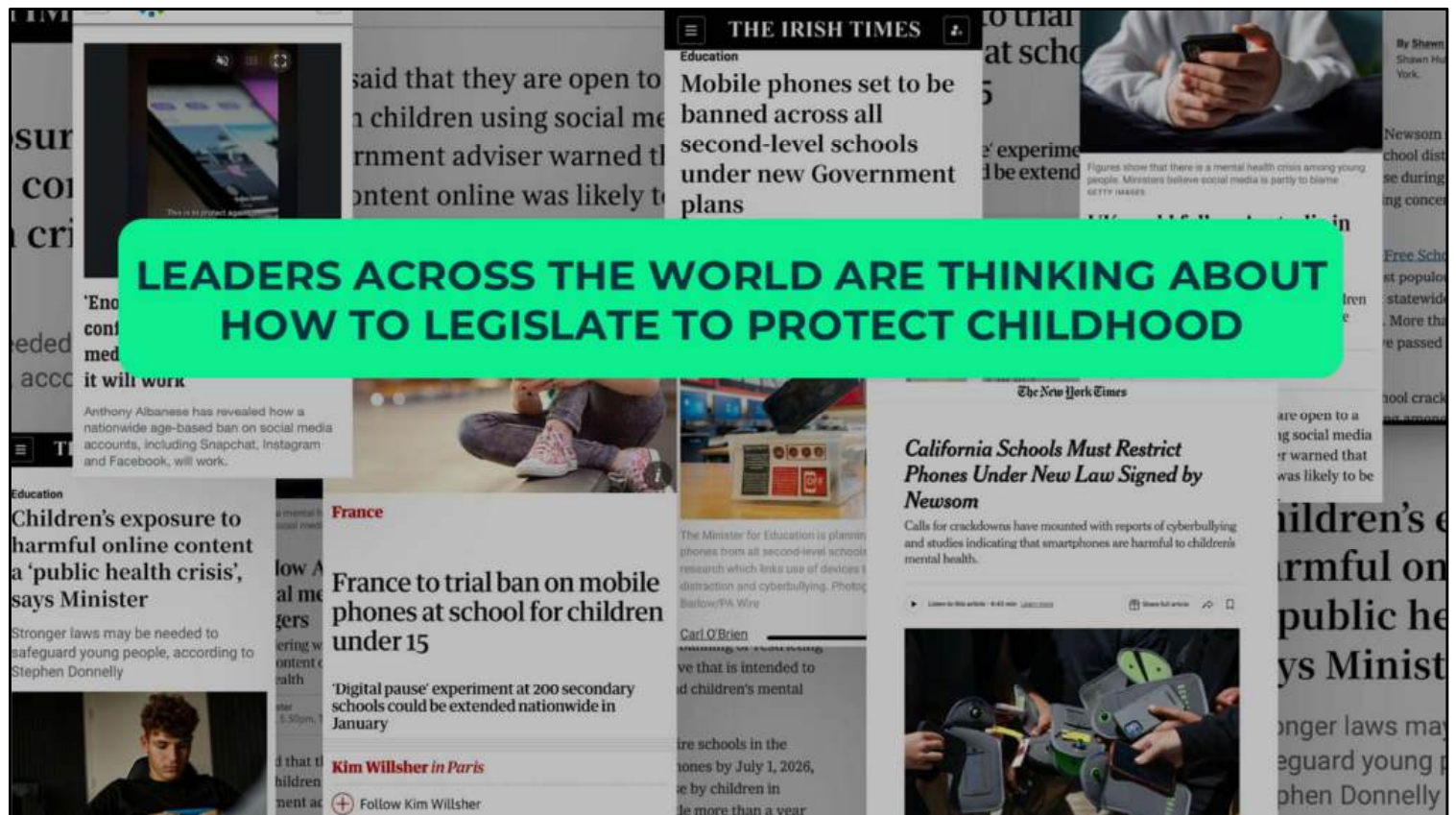


Or we...

Risk alienating them from their peers at a crucial stage of their development.

IT'S A LOSE-LOSE; FOR PARENTS, FOR CHILDREN & FOR SOCIETY

Either we give our children access to an adult product that we know to be harmful, or we risk cutting them off from their peers just at the moment when we want them to make new friends at a crucial stage of their lives.

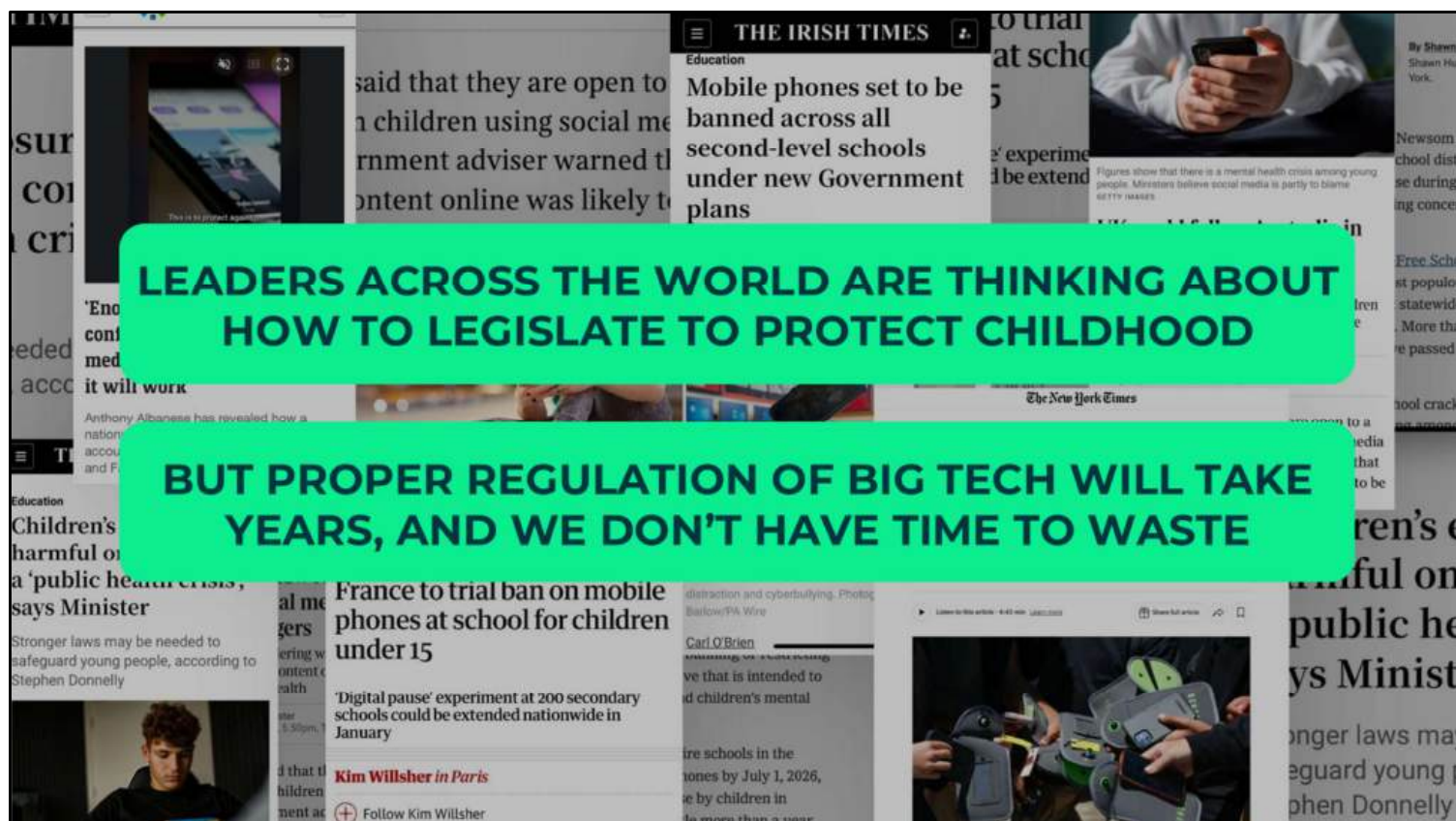


As I said at the beginning, there is a growing movement looking to change the current the status quo:

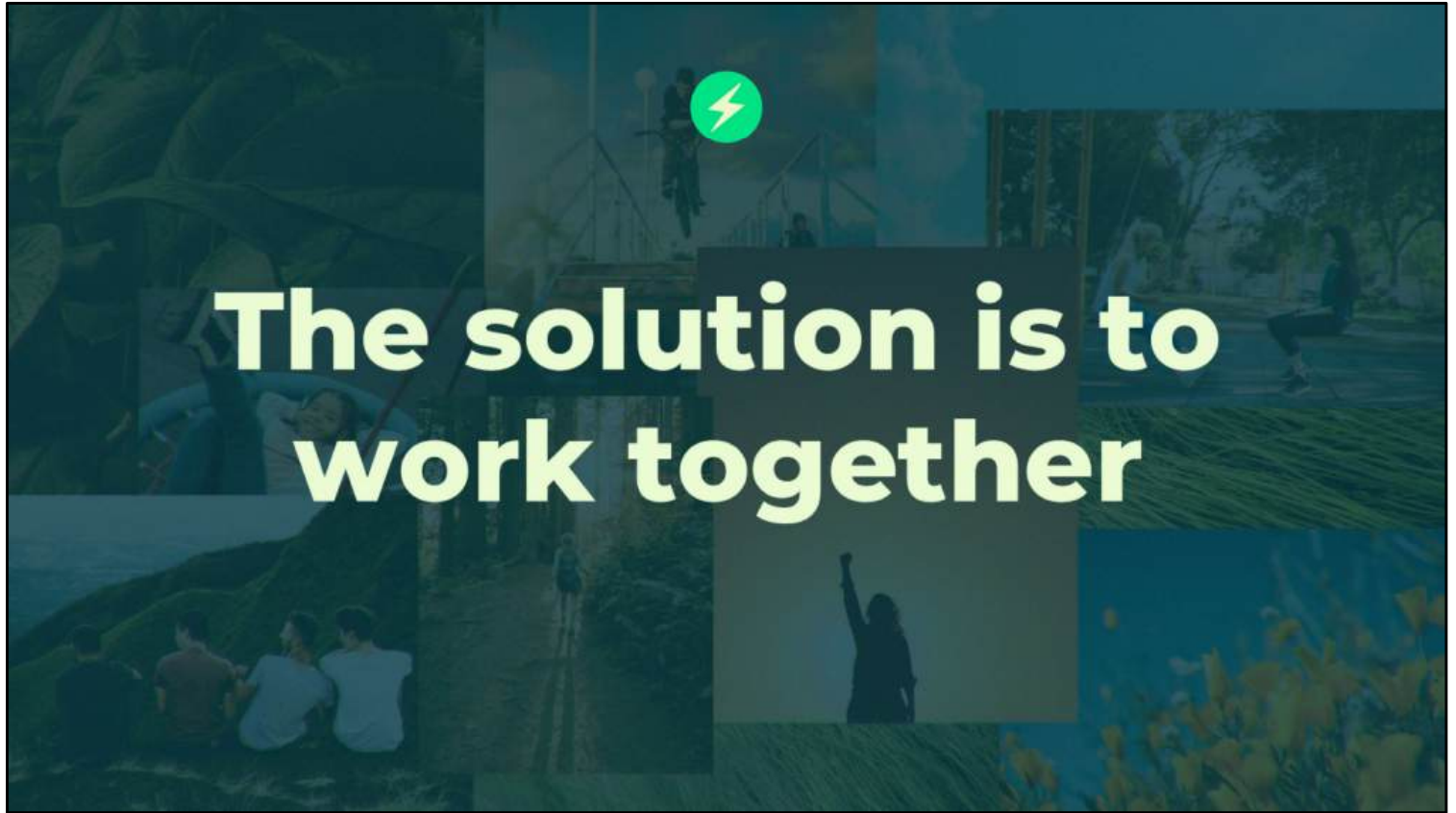
From France to Australia, Ireland to America, governments across the world are beginning to recognise the problem and think about how we can protect childhood.

Some regions have taken action within their own areas, for example the schools in St Albans have already gone Smartphone Free, and LB Enfield, announced last week that their schools would be smartphone free from Sept 2025. Increasingly schools and Trusts are looking at this.

Just a couple of weeks ago, some headteachers, safeguarding leads from local schools met with the Rushcliffe MP, James Naish, to discuss the issue. This is encouraging, but...

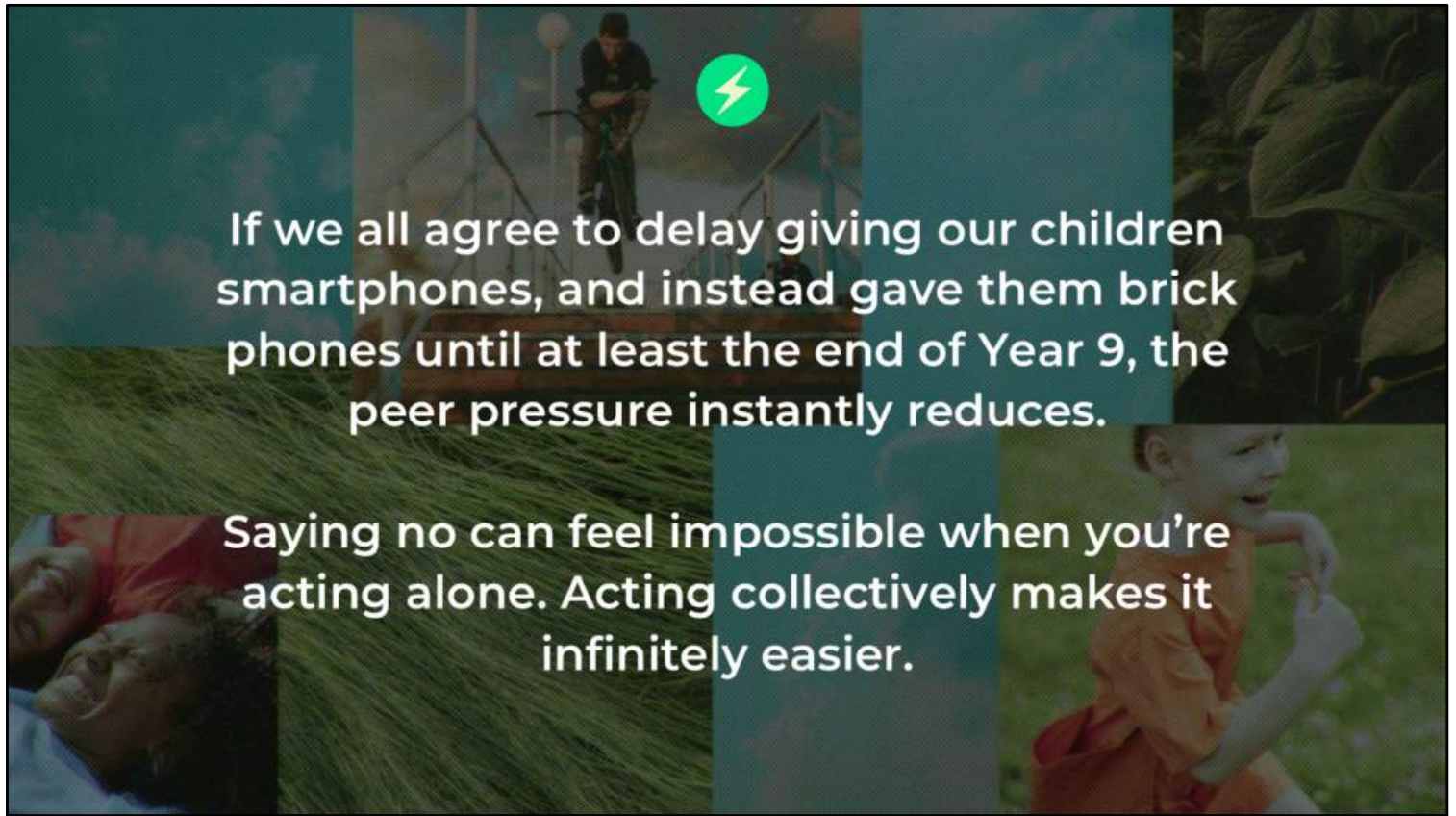


Unfortunately, our children could well be adults by the time smartphones and the internet are truly safe spaces for children – we simply don't have time to sit around and wait. If your child is in yr 5 or 6, you're facing these problems now.



**The solution is to
work together**

Thankfully, the power to protect our children right now, is in our hands



The key to solving this problem is each other - every one of us in this room. If we all agree to wait to get our children smartphones together, the pressure instantly dissolves.

Doing this alone can feel impossible when the peer pressure is so intense - but if we do it together, and your child knows that there are others in their class not getting a smartphone too, then they are happy to wait.

This is already happening in Abbey Road and we'll **hear from some yr 6 parents who have chosen to delay giving smartphones shortly.**



This is what Smartphone Free Childhood is all about.

It's a growing movement of 150,000 parents in the UK who are coming together to support each other in delaying access to smartphones and social media for their children.

It's coordinated via a national network of WhatsApp communities where parents can learn more about the issue, find other like-minded parents and support one another.

Smartphone Free Childhood is a growing movement of 150,000 parents across the country who are coming together to wait to get their children smartphones. There's a Smartphone Free Childhood WhatsApp community in every county in Britain, where parents can find support and advice about how to protect their children from the risks of smartphones and social media.



WE'RE NOT ANTI-TECH, WE'RE PRO-CHILDHOOD

Technology has immense benefits, and young people should be able to enjoy the opportunities it creates – when they're ready and when it's safe to do so.

But childhood is precious and fleeting. All children should have the opportunity to learn, develop and grow free from the addictive-by-design algorithms and age-inappropriate content of social media and smartphones.

We are aware that technology has huge benefits for all of us and creates amazing opportunities – children should be able to benefit from them when the time is right and where the products are safe.

But we also know that childhood is precious and fleeting – and we believe that all children should be allowed to grow up free from the addictive-by-design algorithms and inappropriate content of these devices.



SFC RECOMMENDED APPROACH

- Simple phone until at least the end of Year 9
- Delay social media until 16
- Internet & WhatsApp access via a shared family computer
- Track with an Airtag if you want to know where they are
- Give your child the skills to practice managing risk in real life



SMARTPHONE



SOCIAL MEDIA



SIMPLE PHONE



FAMILY COMPUTER



IRL SKILLS

SFC recommend that parents get their child a simple phone instead of a smartphone until the end of Year 9 at the earliest.

That means you can keep in touch when they're out and about using calls and texts, without any of the harms associated with smartphones and social media.

When they want to use the internet, they can do so on a shared family computer, which could even have WhatsApp on it if you feel comfortable with that.

This way they can get acquainted with the digital world and stay connected to their friends without the temptation of having it in their pocket 24/7.

Practice real life skills - Many parents say they want their child to have a smartphone to keep them safe. Does it do that? What about having their phone stolen, not paying attention to road safety due to looking at their phone etc. This is why teaching real life skills is so important - equip them with knowledge of what to do if there's a problem, how to solve it themselves, get help, not simply phone you. Encourage planning meet ups with friends, rather than it always being ad hoc. These are skills that will help them through the next few years – phone or no phone.



PARENTAL CONTROLS AREN'T THE SOLUTION

- Even the most tech-savvy parents struggle to manage parental controls
- Some apps require updates to hundreds of settings to make them age appropriate
- Even if your child's phone has parental controls, their friends may not so they may be sent inappropriate content regardless

58%

of teens say they've never had controls put on their phone by parents

(Parentkind poll, May 2024)

47%

of teens with controls in place say they have bypassed them

(Parentkind poll, May 2024)

And teens find multiple ways to bypass controls:

Performing a factory reset

Using VPN software

Hacking the WiFi router

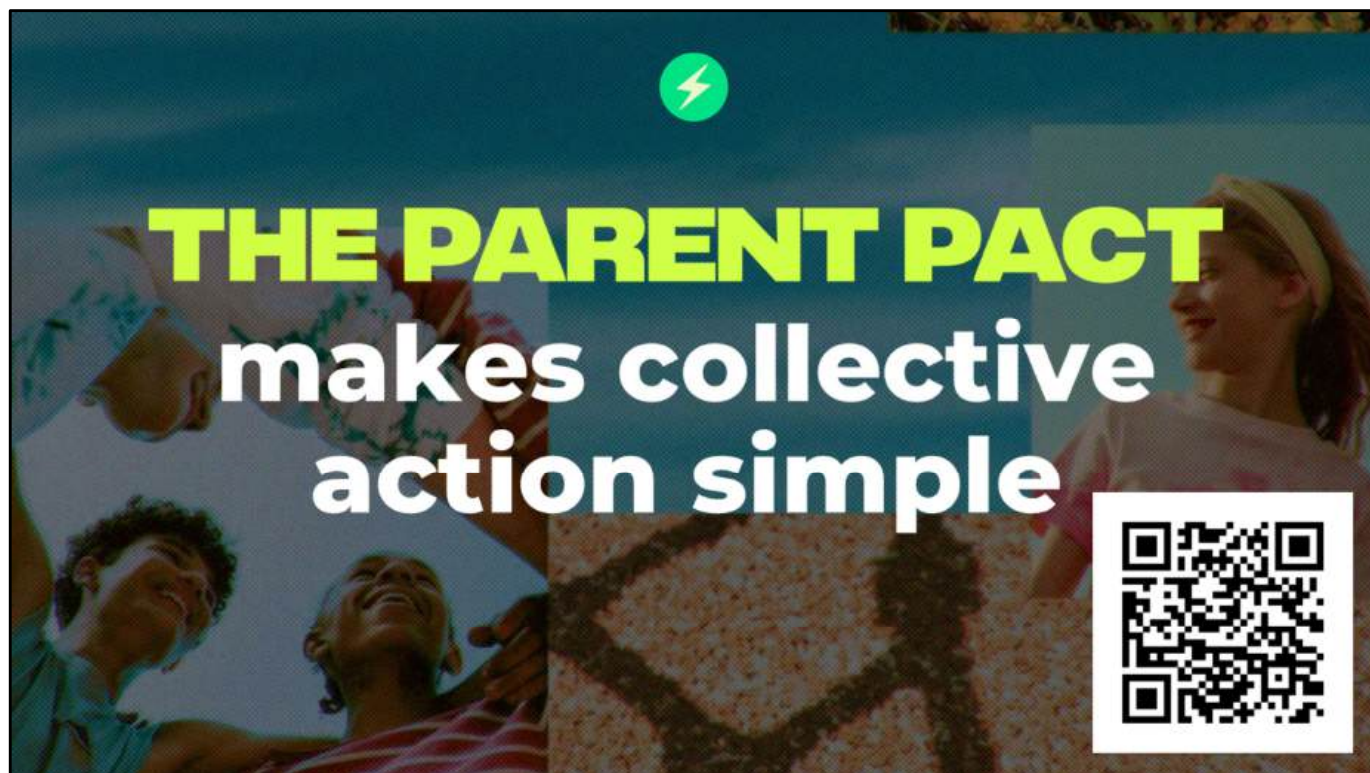
Memorising your passcode

Tech companies currently put all the responsibility on parents shoulders to keep their kids safe online, saying parents just need to use parental controls.

Unfortunately, these are not watertight and even the most tech savvy of parents can be thwarted by the complicated set up.

The majority of children have never had controls put on their phone by parents - and nearly half of those who have have bypassed them.

Ultimately we believe that the tech companies should have mandatory and universal safe set up of devices so that the responsibility does not fall on parents - and those children whose parents don't have the time or tech knowledge to do it, aren't exposed to harm.



Introducing the Parent Pact - the Smartphone Free Childhood solution to empower parents to come together to keep our children safe



The Parent Pact is an online tool that helps parents agree to delay with others in your community. The more of us who sign, the more powerful it becomes.

Step 01.
Select your region & child's school



Select your region ▾

Select school ▾

Select school year ▾

Name

Step 02.
Sign the Pact to delay until the end of Year 9



Sign the pact >

Step 03.
View results for your region, school & class



National (UK)

71,077

CHILDREN

9,453

SCHOOLS

It's an online tool where you can sign up to agree to delay getting your child a smartphone until the end of Year 9 at the earliest – and then see how many others in your school and year group have signed up to. You can then connect with those parents via your SFC school WhatsApp group in your regional SFC community. It's not legally binding, and none of your personal data is shared.



THE MOVEMENT IS GROWING ACROSS THE UK

97,273

Parent Pacts have been signed since
launching in September



Over 60k parents signed the pact in the first three weeks after it launched – at least one Pact has been signed at 29% of schools across the UK already! We aim to double this number over the next six months.



IT'S HAPPENING IN NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

1001

Parent Pacts have been signed in Nottinghamshire

61

Parent Pacts have been signed in Abbey Road School

SCHOOL NAME	PACTS
The Lanes Primary School, Beeston ↗	109
Round Hill Primary School, Beeston ↗	72
Abbey Road Primary School, West Bridgford ↗	61
Welbeck Primary School ↗	58
Fernwood Primary School ↗	40
West Bridgford Junior School, West Bridgford ↗	26
Radcliffe-on-Trent Infant School, Radcliffe-on-Trent ↗	24



The movement is building in Nottinghamshire too - the latest data shows that 1001 children have been signed up in 155 schools across Nottinghamshire



Abbey Road parents are choosing to delay now

This isn't just happening at other places. It's happening here, in Nottinghamshire, at Abbey Road and other schools. In Nottinghamshire 992 parents have signed the SFC Parent pact, committing to delay giving their children smartphones (until at least the end of year 9).

61 parents at Abbey Road School have signed the parent pact too

Tonight, two of those parents, are going to share their experiences as yr 6 parents who have decided to delay giving their children smartphones:

- Their personal reasons for delaying giving a smart phone
- Experiences so far
- Route going down - Retro phones or No phones?
- Real life pros and cons



TIPS FOR PARENTS DECIDING WHEN TO GET THEIR CHILDREN A SMARTPHONE



EDUCATE YOURSELF

Watching the Channel 4 documentary Swiped, on which Dr. Chatterjee is the expert voice, is a great start.

[Watch here](#)



OFFER ALTERNATIVES

Delaying doesn't mean forever, just until ready for the digital world. Consider using a or a simple phone or shared family device.



OPEN CONVERSATIONS

Talk openly with your child. Explain. Listen. Honest conversations build trust and understanding.



JOIN WITH OTHER PARENTS

SFC WhatsApp Groups, sign up to Parent Pact, talk to your friends



DISCUSS BENEFITS OF BEING SMARTPHONE FREE

Focus on what they'll gain, not what they're missing. Building independence IRL

Educate yourself – look at SFC website, read Jonathan Haidt's Anxious Generation, watch the Channel 4 Swiped documentary with Matt and Emma Willis. Make your own mind up.

Start conversations – with your children, with other parents. Are your kids ready for the digital world?

Think about the benefits of being smartphone free – what your children, and you, can gain. What Real life has to offer

Offer alternatives – a simple phone or family device to access Whatsapp

Join with other parents for support and advice - our SFC Abbey Rd grp, perhaps



ALTERNATIVES TO SMARTPHONES FOR KIDS

If you want to stay in touch with your kids, but don't want them to be exposed to all the potential dangers of unrestricted smartphones in their pockets, the answer may be....

Simple phones, brick phones, dumb phones, flip phones... New options coming to the market all the time – some look like smartphones, some have headphones.

Check out: <https://smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk/alternatives>

SIM CARDS

You can get SIMS with NO DATA, only calls and texts so no chance of accessing the internet



There's been more simple phones/brick phones come to the market recently

Some designed to look like a smart phone but aren't. There are flip phones, phones with the ability to listen to music.

Do some research. You might be pleasantly surprised.–

IMPORTANT. When you get a SIM card for your child's phone, make sure that it has NO DATA roaming, only calls and texts so that there is no chance that they can access the internet. Currently Asda are the only company that are offering this.



We're all trying to do the best for our kids

It's important to say here that we know that parenting is a really difficult job, and wherever you sit on this issue we know we're all trying to do the best we can for our children



WE'RE IN THIS TOGETHER

Navigating the fast changing world of smartphones and social media is complex.

This stuff's tricky, the evidence is evolving fast, and every family is different.

Wherever you sit on the spectrum, or whatever decisions you've made for your children, we respect your position.

Every family will come to their own conclusions; we just want to open up a conversation about these issues.

It's a new frontier of parenting, and we're all in it together.

Whatever approach you decide to take for your family, we respect your decision – every family and every child is different.

And there will of course be exceptions for specific medical reasons or children with special educational needs.

What we do think is important is that we're able to discuss this issue without shame or judgement, because this is a new frontier in parenting, and we're all in it together.

5 WAYS TO HELP KIDS BUILD HEALTHIER SMARTPHONE HABITS



SET UP PARENTAL CONTROLS

To limit screentime, block inappropriate content. Built in and 3rd party tools



NO PHONES AT MEALTIMES

Set a rule: no phones at the table. Real conversations instead



NO PHONES AN HOUR BEFORE BED

Reduces blue light exposure for a better, longer night's sleep



TAKE A BREAK

Have regular phone-free times e.g. Smartphone Free Sundays for whole family. Disconnect, recharge, get face-to-face



CREATE TECH-FREE ZONES

No phones in bedrooms, where you can't see what's going on.

These boundaries help your child build a healthier relationship with tech so they can thrive at school, with friends and at home.

This presentation has focussed heavily on the issues and considering if/when to get your child a smart phone.

But what if they already have one, how can you help your kids to build healthy habits?

Some tips here to help you set boundaries and be empowered as a parent. You always have the option to restrict access – short term or long term.



WHAT EFFECTIVE PARENTAL CONTROLS LOOK LIKE



Turn off devices



Configure devices



Talk to your children



Configure profiles



Agree allowed contacts & friends



Configure home Wi-Fi



Research & check contracts



Set a good example



Block & report others



Configure mobile connection



Ensure O.S. is up to date



Antivirus / security solution?



Set a good example



Balanced lifestyle



Use wellbeing tools & settings

We mentioned earlier that tech companies put the responsibility on parents to implement parental controls. It just isn't that easy. But these are **all** things that you need to be looking at when applying parental controls to your kids digital devices. Some technical, some lifestyle.

This may look overwhelming, but it's a great reminder of what you do have in your toolbox. And being on top of all these is what effective parental controls look like.

On the SFC WhatsApp groups, there are plenty of examples of parents who have regretted giving their child a smart phone, and who have decided to take parental control, restricting access for their child using various parent controls, and even swapping the smart phone for a retro phone. While there absolutely has been push-back, within weeks they have seen them 'getting their child back', them being less anxious, relieved even to not have to keep checking their phones and engaging with the family IRL again.



FIND OUT MORE ABOUT PARENTAL CONTROLS

Internet Matters (<https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls>)

Guides and resources for parent / guardians to configure settings on games consoles, mobile phones, tablets, laptops, etc.

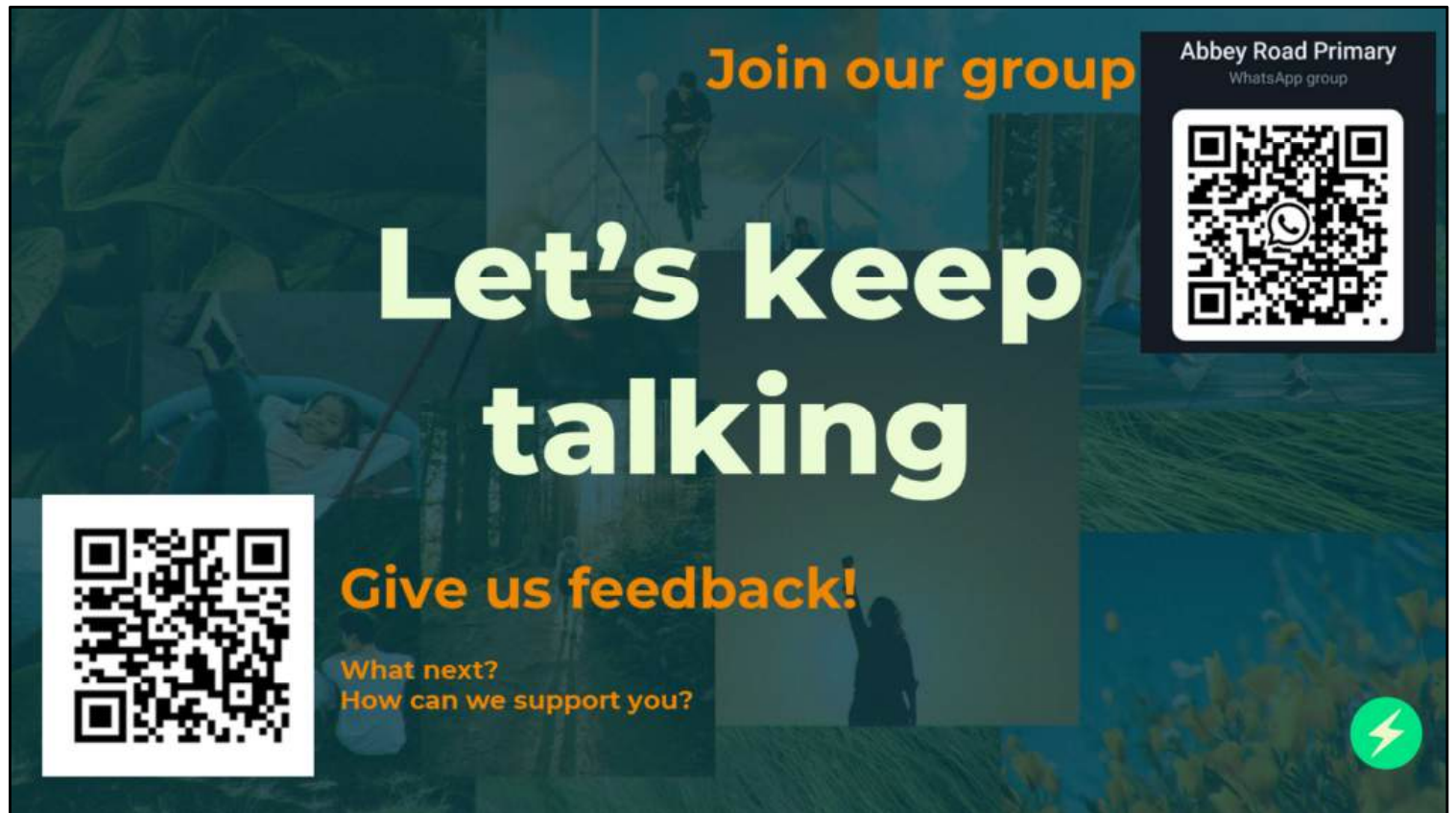


Internet Matters YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/@InternetMatters>)

Hundreds of video tutorials showing how to configure most digital devices used in the home as well as video guides to enable the whole family to use technology safely and responsibly at home.




There's a wealth of info out there, guides for pretty much all digital resources – e.g. Nintendo switch, playstation, different smartphone brands, you just have to go looking for it. Internet Matters is a great start




Join our group

Let's keep talking




Give us feedback!

What next?
How can we support you?



Abbey Road Primary
WhatsApp group



Would love to hear from you about what next?

- What support do you need from school?
- What support do you need from fellow parents?
- What's going to help you?
- You can join the Abbey Road SFC Whats App group too – the irony of this happening on WhatsApp is not lost on us!



SMARTPHONE FREE CHILDHOOD

www.smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk

[@smartphonefreechildhood](https://www.instagram.com/smartphonefreechildhood)



Smartphone Free Childhood is a restricted fund under the auspices of Prism the Gift Fund, Charity Number 1099682.

There are some great resources and information on the SFC website and Instagram page for anyone who'd like to find out more about the movement