

POP-UP CONVERSATIONS

My Kid Is ALWAYS On Their Phone – Is That Okay?

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Intro: Welcome to another Pop-Up Parent Conversation! We're so grateful you're here, and for investing your time in this guided conversation on behalf of your kids. Today we're going to dive into a topic that is inescapable for parents—the immersive relationship our kids have with their phones. Of course, we're hearing more and more about the impact of social media and even technology addiction on kids—the research is sobering, and is leading to serious conversations about cutting back, or cutting out, kids' access to social media. More and more schools have "check your phone at the door" policies, and even The Duke and Duchess of Sussex—Prince Harry and Meghan—are spearheading an effort with parents who've lost kids to suicide as a result of social media bullying. Let's watch as Dr. Daniel Emina gives us an overview of the psychology behind kids' relationship with social-media and technology, and offers some helpful hope for parents...

Dr. Daniel Emina (Video - 10 minutes): Social-media's influence on young people, and hope for parents.

Ask (7 minutes): First, what are your initial reactions to what you just heard? What's something that Dr. Emina said that gives you hope as a parent? *(Gather feedback, interact, and ask follow-up questions. If you're online, you could choose to have parents give feedback in the Chat instead of spoken. Be sure to take notes on spoken responses in the Chat.)*

Say: Kids will tell you that they know social media can have a negative impact on their lives, but it's simply embedded in the ecosystem of their lives. It's like living in a city with polluted air, but you have to breathe it anyway because that's where you live. And, of course, social media and technology are the connective tissue in their relationships. We've heard experts offer potential solutions to kids' over-connectedness, but those solutions often seem out of reach. What can we really do to help? As parents, we're never more aware of our need for God than when we feel helpless to do anything. This place of need can actually lead us to a good place—a renewed sense of dependence on God.

Let's Talk (Pairs or Trios - 10 minutes): We're going to split into Pairs/Trios now for a 10-minute conversation, then we'll gather back together to debrief what each Pair/Trio talked about. Reference your handout for the questions we'd like you to tackle together... *(or post the questions into three-person chat rooms if you're leading this online)*

- **What are the pro's and con's of your kids' relationship with their phone?**
- **What do you wish could happen with your kids' relationship with their phone, and why do you wish for that?**

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Debrief (Whole Group – 7 minutes): Gather back together and **ask:** What stuck out to you in your conversations, and why? *(Gather feedback, interact, and ask follow-up questions. If you're online, you could choose to have parents give feedback in the Chat instead of spoken. Be sure to take notes on spoken responses in the Chat.)*

Experience (Whole Group – 12 minutes): Maybe what we need the most as we lean into this challenge is a renewed and refreshed sense of God's presence. It helps to know God is in this with us, and that we can find our way forward with our kids as we learn to depend on Him more and more... We need ways to increase our capacity to be present to God. Let's try something right now... We're used to praying always with our eyes closed. But prayer is conversation, so let's try something simple with our eyes open:

1. Become aware of your need around this issue with your kids—what do you need from God? When you're ready, simply express out loud that need...
2. Become aware of what you are grateful for as God offers you His presence. When you're ready, simply express out loud that gratefulness.
3. Now, like a child, invite God's guidance as you consider how to move forward into this challenge. When you're ready, ask Him for a "next step"... *(Pause for at least 30 seconds)* Now, when you're ready, express out loud what you sensed was guidance from God...

Debrief (Whole Group – 5 minutes): In what ways do you feel different now that we've paused to invite God's presence? *(Gather feedback, interact, and ask follow-up questions. If you're online, you could choose to have parents give feedback in the Chat instead of spoken. Be sure to take notes on spoken responses in the Chat.)*

Closing Prayer: God, we're so, so grateful for your presence in our lives, and for your partnering help in our parenting. We need you. As we leave here today, we humbly ask that you would guide us as we try to help our kids have a healthier relationship with their phone. Prompt us with your guidance, and help us to sense it and act on it.