



Center on Media  
and Child Health  
**DIGITAL WELLNESS LAB**

# **DIGITAL WELLNESS**

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**The Mediatrixian**



**HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL  
TEACHING HOSPITAL**



**Boston Children's Hospital**  
Until every child is well™



**HARVARD T.H. CHAN**  
**SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH**



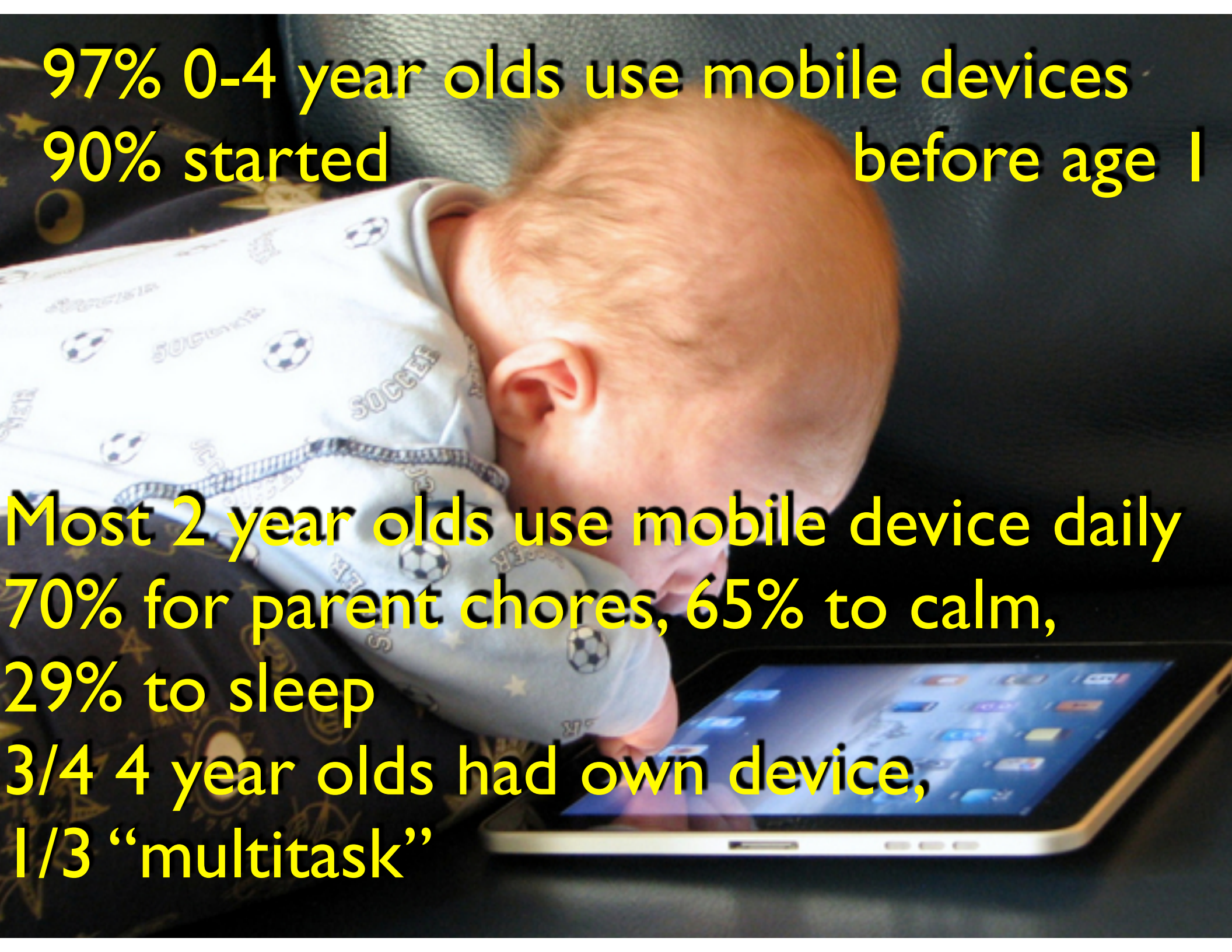
OMG!  
I JUST GOT  
BORN!

STEVENS



97% 0-4 year olds use mobile devices  
90% started before age 1

Most 2 year olds use mobile device daily  
70% for parent chores, 65% to calm,  
29% to sleep  
3/4 4 year olds had own device,  
1/3 “multitask”



# WHY DID THE AAP DISCOURAGE SCREENS UNDER 2?

- No significant learning from receptive screen media use under 30 months
- Human brain embryonic at birth
- Demand forms connections
- Disuse results in pruning

Human interaction

Acting on the physical environment

Free play and creative problem-solving

Sources: Rideout 2011, Anderson 2005, Council 2013





# Screen Media Use

**0 - 2 years: 0:42, 17% mobile**

**2 - 4 years: 2:39, 36% mobile**

**5 - 8 years: 2:56, 35% mobile**

**8 - 12 years: 4:36, 38% mobile**

**13 - 17 years: 6:40, 52% mobile**

**“multitasking” ~1/3 of time**

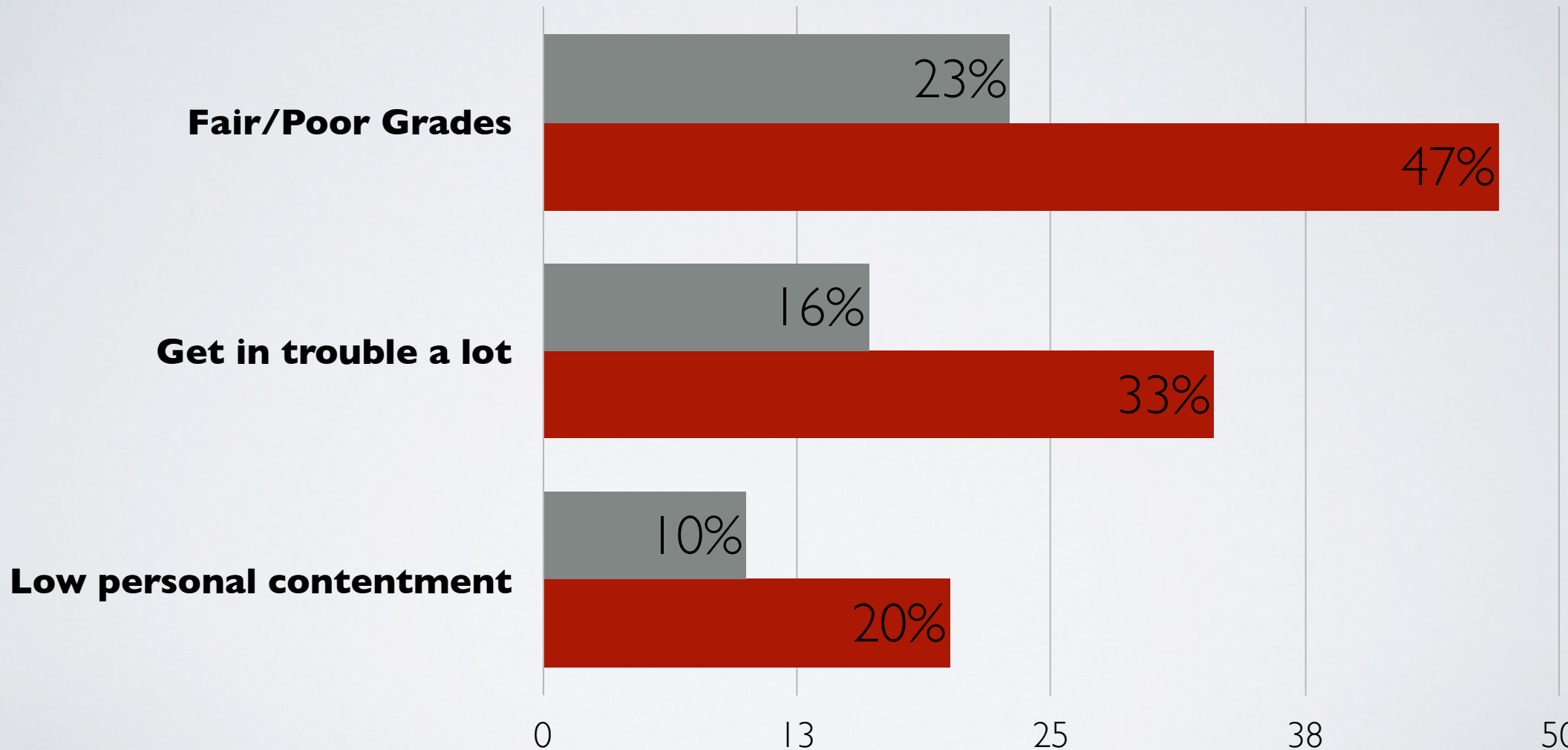
**= 11:45 of screen exposure**



# CAN THERE BE TOO MUCH MEDIA TIME?

■ **Light Users <3 hrs/day**

■ **Heavy Users >16 hrs/day**



# Social Media, Texting and Face-to-Face Interactions Among Depressed Youth

- No difference in affect when texting
- Negative affect 21% higher when using social media
- Negative affect 36% lower, sadness 54% lower during voice/video calls
- Positive affect 18% higher when in face-to-face conversations







## **Less sleep**

**29% teens, 12% parents  
sleep with phone in bed**

## **Poorer sleep**

**36% teens, 26% parents  
wake up to respond**

**FOMO  
FOBLO**



# Learning from History

**1921**

infectious diseases, birth defects, cancer



# Environment



Crowded Housing   Poor Sanitation   Toxic Waste

# Learning from History

# 2021

Injury, homicide, suicide  
Obesity, substance use, risk-taking

Acquired health risk behaviors

# Environment



**Internet and entertainment media #1 and #2  
information source**



# Adolescence 2020



95% online daily

45% constantly



# Experience





# Independence





# Social Consciousness





# Identity



makeuupbyjack



Liked by jayblissy and 35,984 others



4,650 likes

makeuupbyjack Chillin in my mums salon be like..





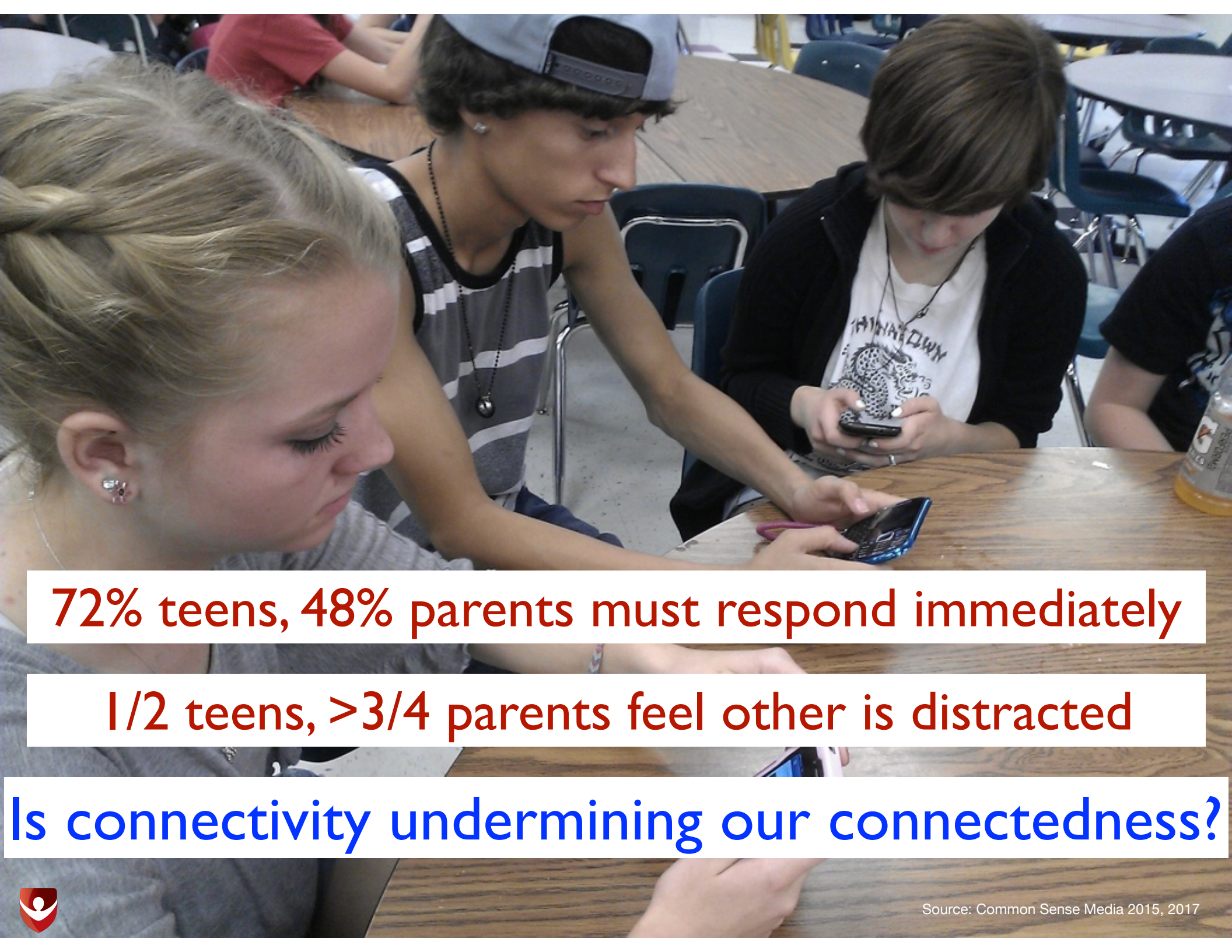
# Connection

# facebook

# >2.7 billion/month







72% teens, 48% parents must respond immediately

1/2 teens, >3/4 parents feel other is distracted

Is connectivity undermining our connectedness?





# Problematic Interactive Media Use

## Binge Eating Disorder

Overuse of a necessary  
resource

Driven by anxiety,  
impulsivity, mood disorders

Continued loss of control  
despite negative  
consequences

Abstinence is not the  
solution



# PIMU

πμ

- **Gaming**
- **Social media**
- **Pornography**
- **Information/  
video bingeing**



Clinic for Interactive Media  
and Internet Disorders



# Recommendations

- **Use media with kids: learn and teach**
- **Devices are tools, not treats**
- **Develop critical thinking**
- **Prioritize  
and manage  
day with  
child**
- **Create!**

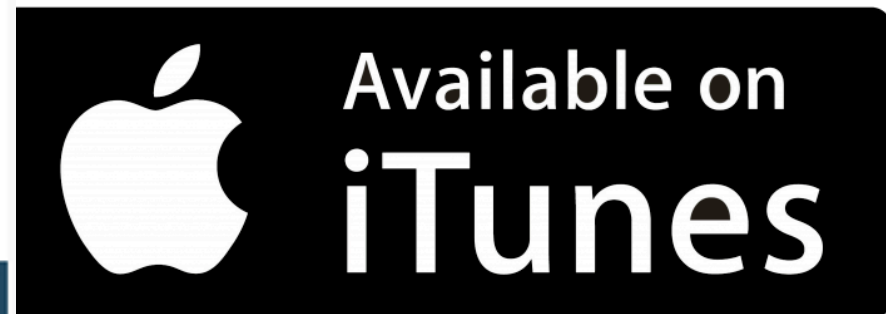
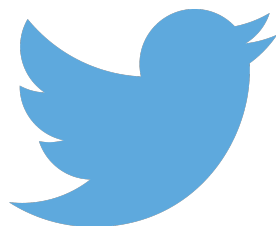
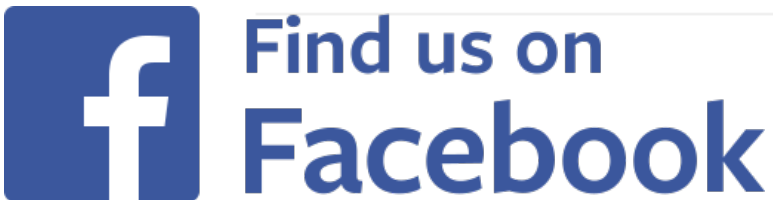




# AskTheMediatrician.org



What should I know about Fortnite – is it ok for kids to play?







**[cmch.tv/familydigitalwellness/](https://cmch.tv/familydigitalwellness/)**

**[cmch.tv/special-features/back-to-school/](https://cmch.tv/special-features/back-to-school/)**



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