



**SMARTPHONE  
FREE CHILDHOOD**

# Smartphones: the new frontier in parenting

PARENT PRESENTATION NOVEMBER 2024



# 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

2024



# 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



## 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



# 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



# YET SMARTPHONES HAVE BECOME THE NORM



**25%**

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

**89%**

of 12 year-olds  
in the UK own their  
own smartphone



# 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*

## A stolen childhood video clip

In this film, it considers the dangers of smartphones and social media on our children's mental health.

It provides suggestions on what we can do as parents and teachers to help our children.

Please note: You may find some of the information shared quite distressing and upsetting, as we do hear from students and the impact it has had on them.





~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

# SADLY, THESE ARE JUST SOME OF THE IMPACTS OF SMARTPHONES



## 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



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





Parents are in an  
*impossible* position



# 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.



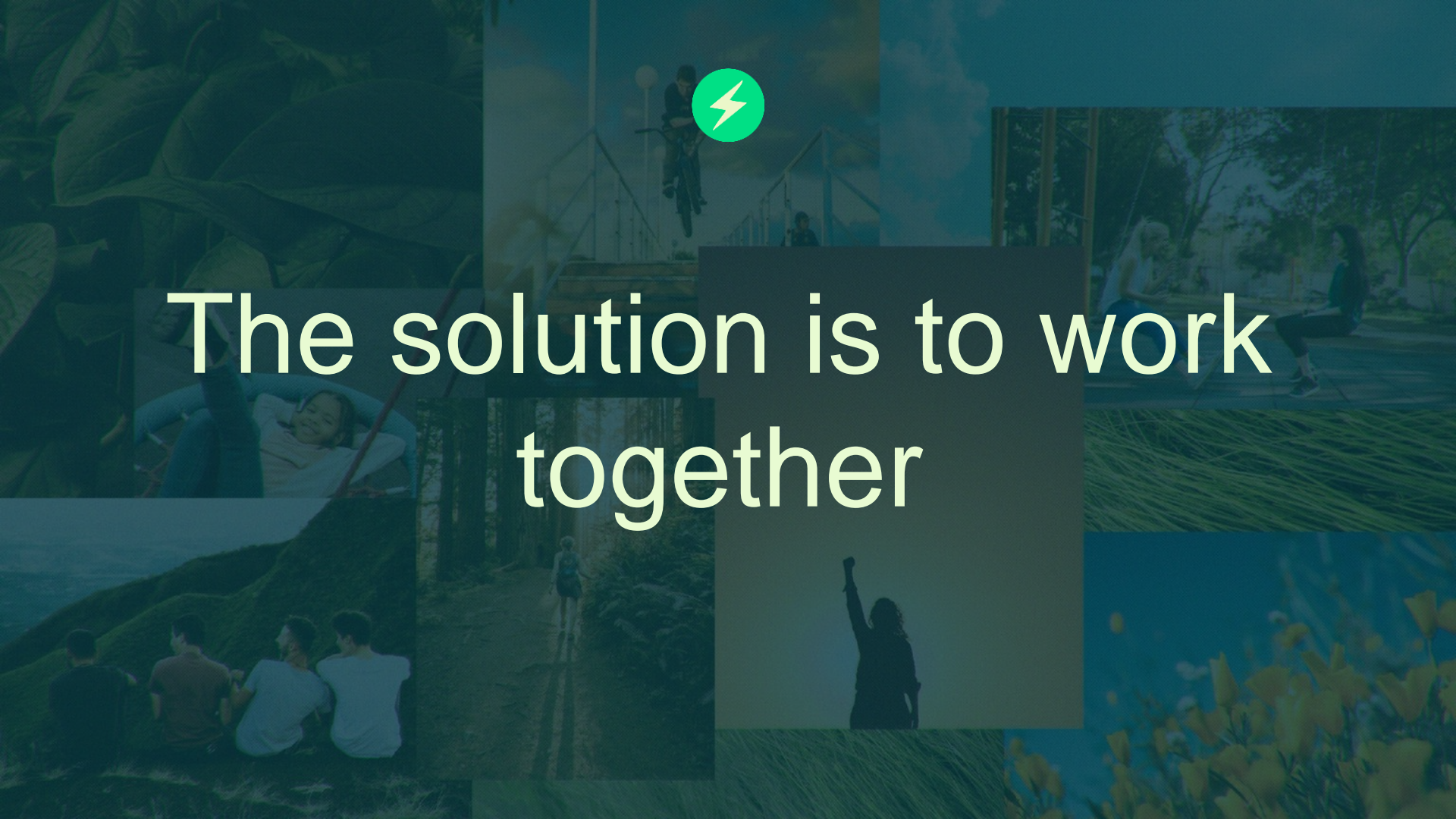
Or we...

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

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



The solution is to work  
together



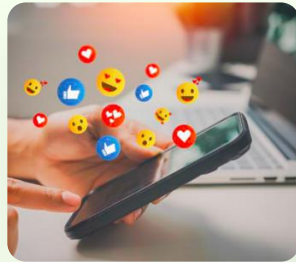


# OUR RECOMMENDED APPROACH

- 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



**SMARTPHONE**



**SOCIAL MEDIA**



**SIMPLE PHONE**



**FAMILY COMPUTER**



# 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.





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.

Schools have also got their own WhatsApp community.



# THE PARENT PACT

makes collective action  
simple



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



Step 02.

Sign the Pact to delay until the end of Year 9



Step 03.

View results for your region, school & class



National (UK)

61,700

CHILDREN

8,734

SCHOOLS



# THE MOVEMENT IS GROWING ACROSS THE UK

77,368

Parent Pacts have been signed since launching in September



# THE NUMBERS CONTINUE TO INCREASE EACH DAY!

1,175

Parent Pacts have been signed  
in West Midlands

88

Parent Pacts have been signed  
at St Augustine's

St Augustine's RC Primary school, Solihull <a href="#">↗</a>	88
St George & St Teresa RC Primary School, Bentley Heath <a href="#">↗</a>	54
Tidbury Green School, Tidbury Green <a href="#">↗</a>	51
Dickens Heath Community Primary School, Dickens Heath <a href="#">↗</a>	50
Dorridge Primary School, Dorridge <a href="#">↗</a>	43
Knowle CE Primary Academy, Knowle <a href="#">↗</a>	40
Boldmere Junior School, Boldmere <a href="#">↗</a>	37
Solihull School, Solihull <a href="#">↗</a>	31
St John's CE Academy, Allesley Park <a href="#">↗</a>	27
Bentley Heath CE Primary School, Bentley Heath <a href="#">↗</a>	17



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



# Let's keep talking

Next meeting will take place in 2025!