

APPENDIX D

Questions for Consideration Across an Electronic Developmental Lifespan¹

Following are some sample questions for consideration by couples and families across the development. Each question is meant to be asked about the various technologies (e.g., smartphones, cellphones, online gaming, video gaming, laptops, tablets, games, music devices, social networking sites, applications, YouTube, digital calling, texting, emailing, television streaming, etc.) with which person(s) have contact. This is not an exhaustive list, but is one way to help couples, families, and professionals to begin a conversation regarding the who, what, when, where, why, and how around technologies for them at various points across the developmental lifespan.

Who?

- Who has permission to use technologies with (and without) supervision?
 - Who makes the decisions around technological usage?
 - Who physically shares technologies?
 - Who engages in technologies together?
 - Who makes the decisions around attaining technologies?
 - Who initially purchases technologies?
 - Who maintains the cost of technologies?
 - Who can afford their technologies?
 - Who monitors whose technological usage?
 - With whom do members share information about their technological use?
 - Who makes the decisions around technological appropriateness?
 - Who are members' friends, acquaintances, family, dating, etc. apart from technologies and how can these same kinds of relational boundaries, rules, and roles apply to technological relationships?
 - Who in the family, as well as outside of the family, do you interact with online via gaming, social networking, emailing, etc.?
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What?

- What age(s) are technologies permitted for use in supervised (and unsupervised) formats?
 - What age(s) are technologies not permitted for use?
 - What are the needed technologies?
 - What are the desired technologies?
 - What factors (e.g., economic, educational, relational orientation, ethnicity, gender, able-bodiedness, sexual orientation, gender orientation, religious or spiritual affiliation, etc.) go into considering technological usage?
 - What factors (e.g., economic, educational, relational orientation, ethnicity, gender, able-bodiedness, sexual orientation, gender orientation, religious or spiritual affiliation, etc.) go into considering technological purchasing?
 - What is considered appropriate (and inappropriate) usage of technologies?
 - What are considered appropriate (and inappropriate) forms of technologies?
 - What influence do members outside of the couple or family have on the usage of technologies?
 - What influence do members outside of the couple or family have on the purchasing of technologies?
 - What barriers are needed (not needed) around technologies?
 - What regulations are in place by others around technological usage?
 - What is the normative time to spend daily using technologies?
 - What is the normative time to start and stop using various technologies?
 - What are the benefits (and drawbacks) to the technologies for each member and for the couple or family as a whole?
 - What are the resources that can help with monitoring technological usage?
 - What are the resources that can be accessed to inform us as to which technologies are rated appropriate for which ages?
 - What are the consequences of inappropriate technological engagement?
 - What are members' thoughts, behaviors, and feelings before, during, and after technological engagement?
 - What, if any, kind of technological schedule should there be for members?
 - What are the rules, roles, and boundaries around various technologies?
 - What things are private about members and should not be shared via technologies?
 - What technologies are more appropriate for some family members, but not others?
 - Which information can and cannot be communicated via technologies?
 - What are the rules, roles, and boundaries around technologies in other contexts (e.g., work, school, etc.) for various members of the couple or family?
 - What are the technologies, if any, that people are permitted to share with members outside of the couple or family?
 - What are the risks around the usage of certain technologies for members of the family?
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When?

- When (time of day, during which activities, etc.) are people permitted (or not) to use technologies?
 - When do members share about their technological usage with each other?
 - When making decisions around technology usage are some technologies considered more developmentally appropriate than others?
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Where?

- Where are people permitted to use technologies?
 - Where do members share information about their technological usage?
 - Where do the rules, roles, and boundaries around technologies come from?
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Why?

- Why are certain technologies permitted (or not)?
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How?

- How do mature or adult members of the family model appropriate technological usage to less mature or younger members of the family?
- How do members of the family who hold power model appropriate technological usage to those with less power in the family?
- How is technological usage modeled in the family?
- How do members outside of the couple or family use technologies?
- How are decisions around technological appropriateness made?
- How is the losing or breaking of technologies managed?
- How are technologies used as punishment?
- How are technologies used in rewarding ways?
- How are the risks around the usage of certain technologies managed?
- How do technologies positively (or negatively) influence the physical health of couple or family members?
- How do technologies positively (or negatively) influence the mental health of couple or family members?
- How do technologies positively (or negatively) influence the social and relational health of couple or family members?
- How are decisions about usage of technologies similar to or different from other developmental decisions?
- How does each member of the family view technologies?
- How do the rules, roles, and boundaries established for other activities across the lifespan influence the rules, roles, and boundaries around technological usage?
- How portable are our rules, roles, and boundaries around technologies outside of the family and family home?
- How can technologies be used in a beneficial way as a family before, during, and after engagement?
- How are the family rules, roles, and boundaries around technologies communicated to those outside of the family?
- How do people decide when it is time to revisit these questions?

Note

1. Questions for Consideration Across an Electronic Developmental Lifespan modified from the original version contained within the following source: Hertlein, K. M., & Blumer, M. L. C. (2013). *The couple and family technology framework: Intimate relationships in a digital age*. New York, NY: Routledge.