

BMS Parents and Guardians:

Hello from the BMS counseling department! We hope this letter serves as an opportunity for you to start and/or continue an open conversation with your child about their cell phone use. Due to the notable increase in inappropriate social media use by students this year, we would like to provide some resources for families.

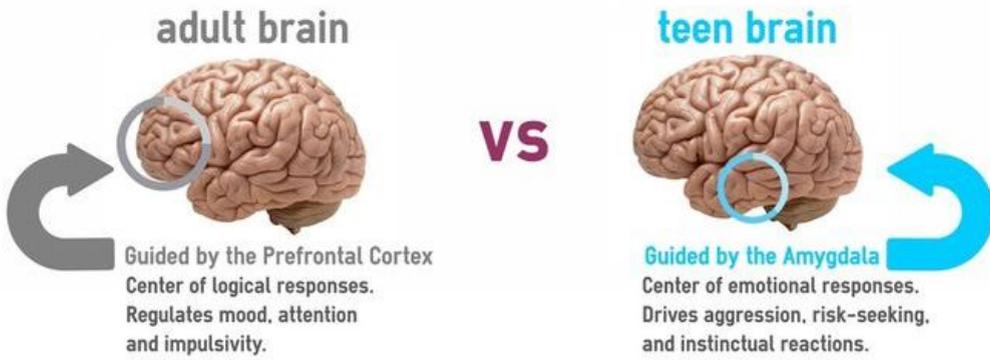
The safety of students is our priority along with protecting and guiding students for real world and virtual world issues! Scottsbluff Investigator Brandi Brunz emphasized the importance of knowing where your child is and who they are within the virtual world as well.

From a developmental point of view, let's consider these adolescent brains!

inside the teen brain

The adolescent brain is a work in progress—its emotional center is fully developed, but the rational center is not—and won't be until their mid-20s. So, unlike adults, teens have to depend on their "gut" to steer their behavior and choices rather than logic. This is why...

teens literally think differently than adults



Click Here for More Information



The Teenage Brain has an Evolutionary Advantage, Click Here to Learn More.

Research Supports the Following Advice for Parents/Guardians About Tween and Teenage Cell Phone Use:

- Be a role model with your phone.
- Quality sleep, regular exercise, family meals, and "unplugged" downtime should not be sacrificed for screen time.
- Establish rules while including your child in the decision making process. This allows them to take better ownership.
- Use a security app to monitor and limit your child's screen usage. (Contact your mobile carrier for more information).
- Teach your child about the risks of nude pictures and unhealthy neurological impact of pornography.
- Common Sense Media provides toolkits for parents.
- Read app user reviews and test the apps yourself.
- Any apps that allow pictures and video to disappear quickly adds to risk.
- The following link offers advice: [Addressing online pornography with teens](#).

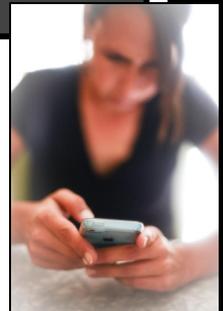
Interested in Replacing Screen Time?

[Try 50 At Home Screen Free Activities for Tweens and Teens.](#)

Also, as a friendly reminder, here are some foundational health tips for all of us are:

- Work on healthy sleep (strong link between poor sleep and depression, anxiety, ADHD, and bipolar)
- Movement is medicine - any exercise is helpful!
- Get outside for a better inside (vitamin D deficiency is linked to depression)
- Connect with nature daily with a goal of 30+ minutes
- Build social support. (Drops stress hormones, increases well-being)

Source: Dr. Stephen Ilardi, PhD 'Therapeutic Lifestyle Change'



Again we hope to open conversation between you and your child. We do not want to send a message to 'spy' on your child's phone. Instead, set the expectation that their phone is a privilege and you may routinely go through it together to learn more about their virtual world which is a part of who they are.

Please feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns.

Thank you,

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