

# Facilitator's Guide

# RAISING RESPONSIBLE DIGITAL CHILDREN

For Parents with Children Ages 6-12

A resource to strengthen parents' knowledge  
and skills to improve their child's social and  
emotional wellbeing

## Parents Matter Project

**MIDDLE CHILDHOOD MATTERS**  
—COALITION TORONTO—



An agency of the Government of Ontario  
Un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario



## Middle Childhood Matters Coalition Toronto (MCMCT)

The Middle Childhood Matters Coalition Toronto (MCMCT) is a group of 20 social service, child welfare, education, recreation, health organizations and parent leaders promoting and influencing a system that prioritizes children ages 6-12 (middle childhood), and their families. MCMCT envisions a city where children ages 6-12 and their families have equitable opportunities and resources to thrive.

The Coalition believes, and research states, that this is an important time in a child's life. To support children's healthy development during this stage, MCMCT promotes high quality, affordable, accessible and culturally appropriate out-of-school time programs (before and after school time, summertime and holidays). The Coalition was one of the driving forces behind the development of the City of Toronto's first Middle Childhood Strategy, which prioritizes programming for this age group.

Our member organizations work with thousands of parents and children across Toronto. MCMCT recognizes the vital need to educate and support parents, caregivers and adult allies living, working and caring for these children across Toronto.

### CONNECT WITH US



@MCMCToronto

[www.middlechildhoodmatters.ca](http://www.middlechildhoodmatters.ca)



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# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Thank you to all the Middle Childhood Matters Coalition Toronto parent leaders and coalition members, who gave their time and insights into making this guide possible. As well, to all the Toronto service providers who promote the unique developmental needs of children ages 6-12, we are grateful to you all.

We also thank the Child Welfare Institute for creating the evaluation tools and data analysis for all the parent learning sessions.

Our deep appreciation to Shaden Jebahi, Project Coordinator, for her leadership and commitment to the Parents Matter Project.

**Content contributors:** Tina Zita, OCT.

**Compiled by:** Diana Grimaldos

**Designed by:** [www.visaodesign.com](http://www.visaodesign.com)

# INTRODUCTION

The Parents Matter Project endeavors to support and educate newcomer, low-income and racialized parents in Toronto with children ages 6-12 (middle childhood) on how to best improve developmental and social outcomes for their children. This includes the creation and implementation of topic-specific parent learning sessions. Parenting and family relationships provide the foundation from which children ages 6-12 can develop the skills to overcome challenges and thrive to adulthood. These parent learning sessions aim to build upon the assets, capabilities and strengths of parents to help increase their knowledge on a number of topic areas relevant to their child's social and emotional development.

This facilitator's guide provides practical learning sessions to increase familial relationships, including resources that can be utilized and accessed beyond the life of the session. This is grounded in the knowledge that families crave more meaningful time together and the need to have access to materials, tools and skill building knowledge on an ongoing basis that is accessible at all times. By attending a learning session, a parent will leave with more knowledge, awareness and confidence in their ability to parent throughout this developmental stage. The interactive activities and supplementary resources will help parents to solidify their learnings.

In addition to Raising Responsible Digital Children, 15 evidence-based learning sessions have been developed in collaboration with experts in the fields such as:

- Sleep and Bedtime Routines
- Body Image and Self-esteem
- Healthy Eating and Nutrition
- Physical Activity
- We All Have Mental Health
- Growing Healthy Minds
- Children's Mental Health Challenges and Seeking Support
- Counting on Math
- Reading is Everywhere
- Keeping Children Safe Online
- More than Just Video Games
- Cognitive Development in Middle Childhood and Adolescence
- Emotional Development in Middle Childhood and Adolescence
- Social Development in Middle Childhood and Adolescence

# FLOW OF THE LEARNING SESSION

LEARNING SESSION STRUCTURE	DESCRIPTION
<b>Learning Objectives</b>	What parent participants can expect to learn by attending each learning session.
<b>Warm-up/ Check-in</b>	An activity to introduce and ground parent participants. The purpose is to begin getting to know each other by creating an inclusive and welcoming environment where all voices are heard and valued.
<b>Group Agreements</b>	An opportunity to collectively co-create the conditions of how learning will unfold. Creating a group agreement demonstrates that the space is shared by all.
<b>Reflection Moment</b>	Guiding questions are used to prompt reflection on current knowledge of the topic presented.
<b>Content Development</b>	How the information will be delivered and resourced (learning discussions) -how learning happens- what do we need to know.
<b>Action Moment</b>	Each learning session will motivate concrete actions for parent participants to go from “reflection to action-now what?” with tips, tools and hands-on experience.
<b>Evaluation and Check-out</b>	Reinforce new learnings, takeaways and evaluate the learning.

# FACILITATION TIPS

- Prepare your session in advance; read content carefully and resources needed.
- Be clear and concise in your interactions.
- Listen to what is said.
- Remember to integrate important points that have not been raised by parent participants.
- Validate questions outside of the lesson plan raised by parent participants and direct them to their service provider.
- Be ready to accommodate changes and respond to your audience. Flexibility will be required from time to time and you may need to adapt the agenda in some situations.
- When appropriate, share your own lived experience as a parent or caregiver. However, be conscious not to dominate the conversation.



## Useful Tips to Successfully Facilitate a Group Discussion

### 1. Adults learn better when:

- They are personally motivated and engaged.
- They have the opportunity to reflect on what they are learning.
- They can exchange knowledge and experiences with others.
- They can have better understanding of what they learn and the implementation of that learning at home.

### 2. Adapting for inclusion:

- Know the diversity within the group: who are the participants? What experiences do they bring?
- Integrate cultural experiences: consider how both the facilitator and parent participants can bring their cultural experiences into the session.
- Be sensitive to emotional responses: depending on parent participants' lived experiences, sometimes exercises can trigger participants' emotions.

# RAISING RESPONSIBLE DIGITAL CHILDREN

## Overview

Technology changes very fast and sometimes it is hard to keep up with it. How can we help our children use these tools responsibly and set healthy boundaries/rules?

## Learning Objectives

- a. To increase parents' comfort with the technology that their children are using.
- b. To increase parents' knowledge of the benefits and challenges of the rapidly changing technologies.
- c. To provide parents with a simple family agreement about technology that they can use to start a conversation at home with their children.



### Materials and Supplies

#### FLIP CHART



#### MARKERS



#### POST-IT NOTES



#### PENS



#### VISUAL AIDS



#### INTERNET ACCESS



#### LEARNING TOOLS



#### FLIP CHART PAPER



#### ATTENDANCE FORM



#### EVALUATIONS



# LEARNING SESSION OUTLINE

Agenda	Length of the learning session (1 hour)
1. Welcome and Introduction	(5 minutes)
2. Check-in	(10 minutes)
3. Reflection Moment	(10 minutes)
4. Content Development	(25 minutes)
5. Action Moment	(5 minutes)
6. Evaluation and Check-out	(5 minutes)

## 1. Welcome and Introduction (5 minutes)

Facilitator(s) will welcome parent participants and organization(s) supporting the learning session. Housekeeping items should be introduced: washroom facilities, fire exit and additional information needed for the learning session.

Materials needed: Pens

**Appendix 1 - Tool 1.1** Agenda

**Tool 1.2** Attendance and Photo Release Form

**Tool 1.4** Evaluation (Pre)

## 2. Check-in (10 minutes)

Getting to know each other: Introductions of parent participants (5 minutes)

Facilitator asks parent participants to sit/stand in a circle and invites them to state their names, their children's names and ages. Along with this introduction parent participants are asked to answer the following question:

*If you were a device (gadget), what kind of device would you be and why?*

## 2.a Group Agreements

(5 minutes)

Materials needed: post-it notes, markers, flip chart paper, pens.

Facilitator asks parent participants any of the following

### ?

### Guiding Questions

- What do we need from each other and ourselves to create a safe learning space?
- How are we going to learn together in this space?



If not brought up during group agreements, facilitator should explore the importance of **confidentiality** and sharing in a safe space.

Parent participants are asked to write their answers on a post-it note and place it on the flip chart. Facilitator will read them out loud for parents' consensus.

The list should be posted visibly for the length of the learning session.

*Building a group agreement with parent participants is an important step to take when working with groups. It invites members to co-create a safe space for sharing where all voices are heard and valued.*

## 3. Reflection Moment

(10 minutes)

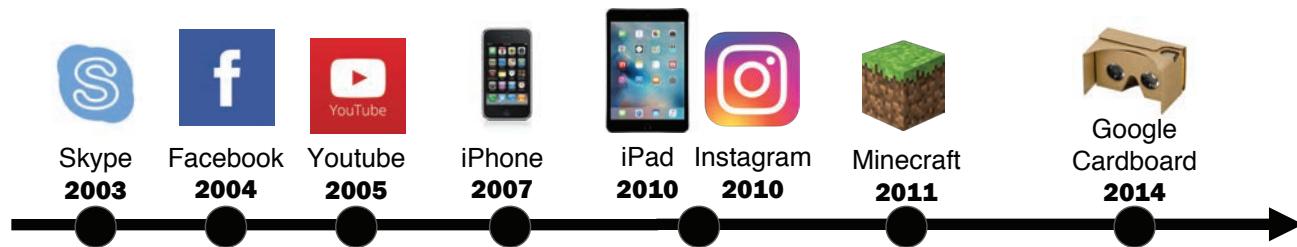
### Speed of Change

Materials needed: Computer, projector, **Appendix 2 - Learning Tool 2.1 Timeline Task**

Facilitator provides parent participants with **Learning Tool 2.1** and invites them to answer the following question:

***Can you put the technologies in order from oldest to newest?***

As a group, parent participants are asked to order the innovations on the cards from oldest to newest and match them to the years they were created.





### Facilitator Tip

Have participants check their timeline with the timeline presented, and point out the age of the technologies in relation to their children's ages (e.g. YouTube is the same age as my niece, son, daughter, etc.).

### ? Guiding Questions

*Did anything surprise you?  
How did you do?*



### Facilitator Tip

Sharing a personal story will allow parents to see that it happens to everyone.



### Discussion Points

- Share a story as a presenter of when technology made you say wow (e.g. moment factory display at Kontinuum in Ottawa last year where we became part of the interactive art).



Vist link: <https://momentfactory.com/work/all/all/kontinuum>

- Another example of a wow moment can be the first time you did a videocall.
- Share a story of when technology overwhelmed you as a presenter (e.g. when I got stuck on the login screen right before the presentation started).

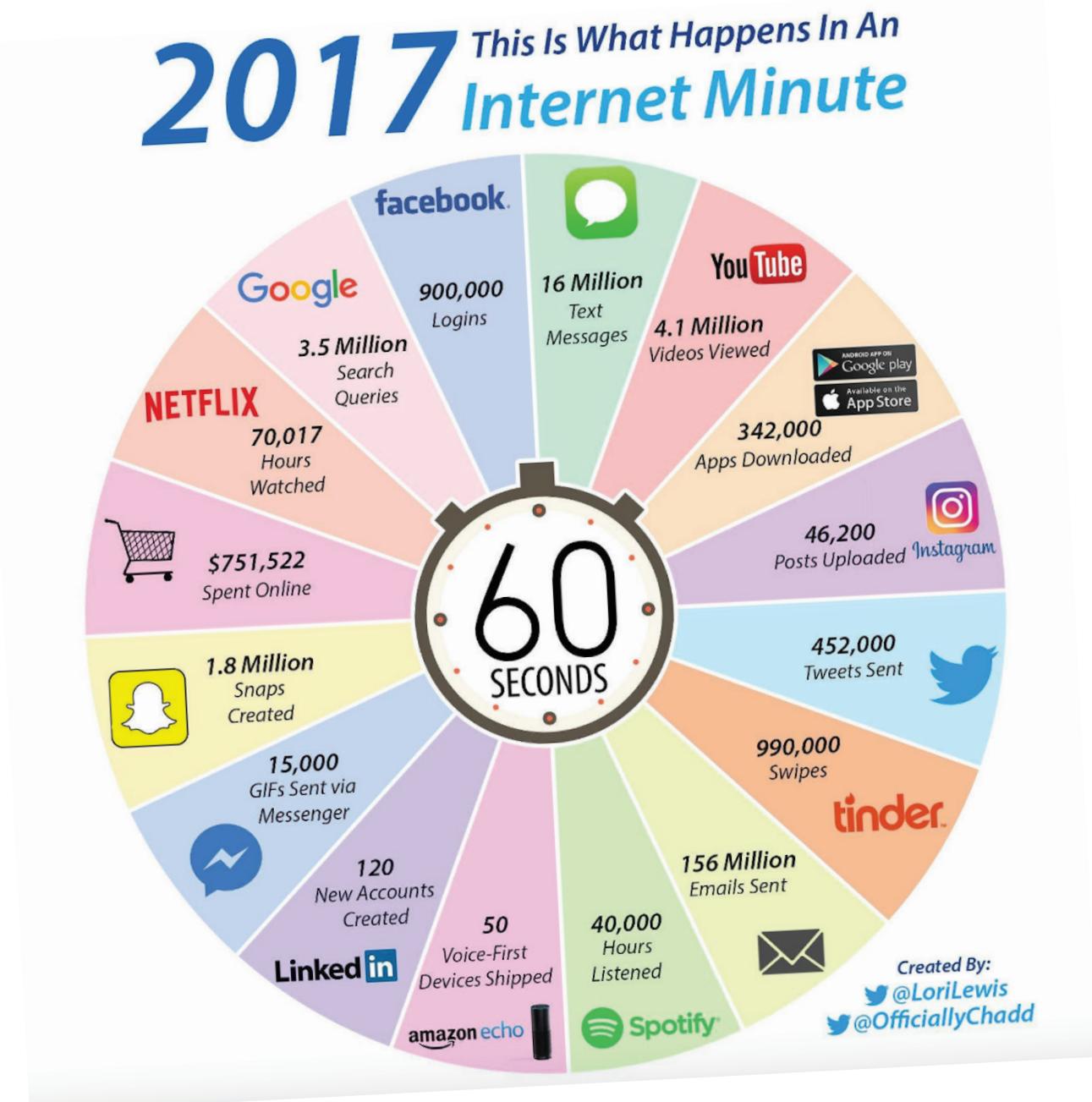
## 4. Content Development

(25 minutes)

### 4.1 Every Minute on the Internet

Materials needed: Appendix 2 - Learning Tool 2.2 Every Minute on the Internet.

Facilitator shares the **Every Minute on the Internet** graphic. Choose a few pieces that stand out to you or you think the group will be excited to see (e.g. 46,200 pictures uploaded to Instagram every minute).



**Turn and Talk:** Facilitator invites parents to turn to an elbow partner and discuss the following questions:

- Which technology made you say wow?
- What surprises you the most about the graphic?
- What worries you the most?

### Discussion Points

- Explain that with new technologies we now can get information and communicate in different ways.

## 4.2 So is it Educational?

*Materials needed:* Projector, computer and speakers.

### Discussion Points

- With the many changes, it is often hard to know: Is it safe? Is it good? Are they learning?
- How can we know more as parents?

There are tools designed to help parents make informed choices when navigating technology and media.

Facilitator presents Common Sense Media by walking them through the following:

**Common Sense Media:** is a tool designed to help families make smart media choices.

It offers the largest, most trusted library of independent age-based and educational **ratings and reviews** for movies, games, apps, TV shows, websites, books, and music. It also provides advice for parents including frequently asked questions and research to help families understand and navigate the problems and possibilities of raising children in the digital age.

This tool is offered in both: English and Spanish (Latino).

Common Sense Media is a great online tool to support parents to make informed choices about media. It has many helpful sections covering a range of relevant topics.

For example, let's explore the App Reviews Section.

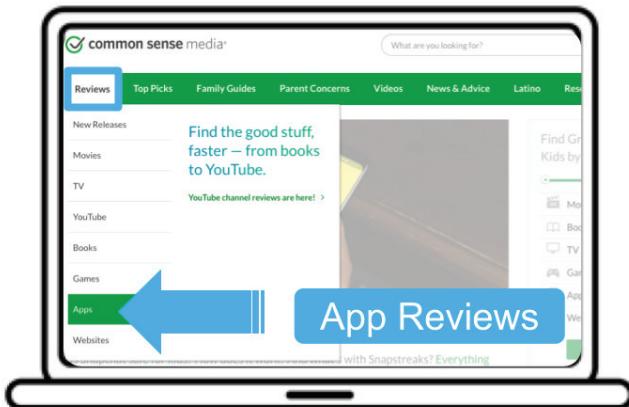


Vist link: <https://www.commonsense.org/education/reviews/all>

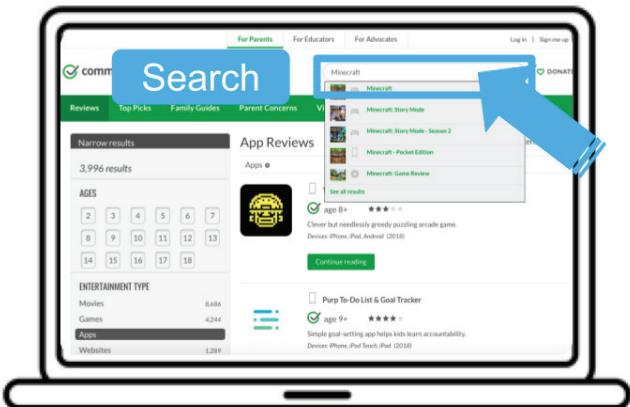


## Facilitator Tip

Although walking through the website may be best, screenshots have been included in case there is no internet access.

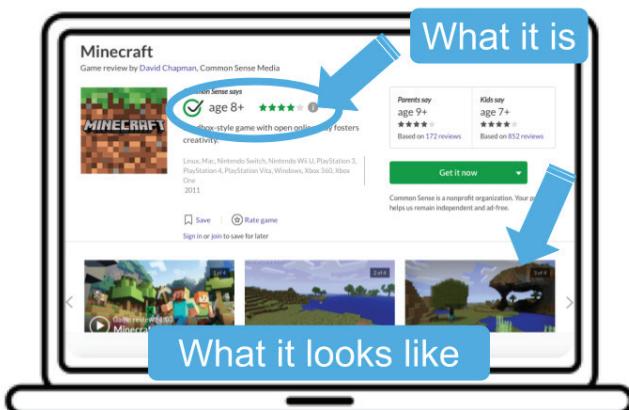


**STEP 1: Click on the top For Parents, hover for Apps and Games, click on App Reviews**

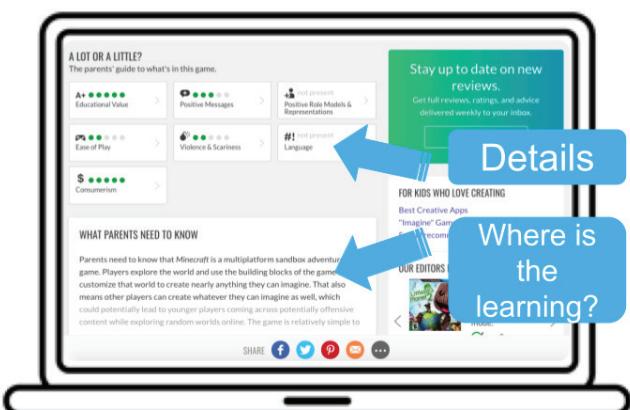


**STEP 2: Search for an app your child has mentioned: e.g. Minecraft, Fortnite, Snapchat.**

**Choose the app from the list.**



**STEP 3: At the top you will see a suggested age level and a star rating. You can also see some screenshots of the app.**



**STEP 4: Scroll down and you will get a detailed review around educational pieces, violence and more. Below is a more detailed description.**

**You may want to try exploring the app with Google Translate as it is very text heavy.**

### Suggestion:

If there is time and internet access you may want families to explore the site independently. You could also have families share an app their children use as you navigate the site.

### 4.3 A Need for Balance

Materials needed: Projector, computer and speakers, Goodnight iPad book, Goodnight Moon book (if there is no internet access).

#### How much is too much technology?



##### Discussion Points

- Another question we often hear is how much time children should spend on devices.
- Sometimes trying to get your family to turn off their device is comical - like the following story:

Facilitator asks parent participants if they are familiar with the children's book "Goodnight Moon" and invites them to watch the following video:

(Video duration: 2 min 4 sec)



Visit link: <https://goo.gl/yiu797>



##### Facilitator Tip

If you don't have internet access you may be able to find the book at the local library along with the original Goodnight Moon story book (for those that aren't familiar with it)

**Turn and Talk:** Facilitator invites parent participants to turn to an elbow partner and share the following:

- What are your device rules at home?
- What is the hardest part as families?



##### Discussion Points

In the news we hear differing views on how much time a child should spend looking at a screen.

However, not all screen time is the same.



Passive



Interactive



Communicative



Creative

It is important to remember that not all screen time is the same and children consume technology in many different ways.

- **Passive:** watching TV or YouTube, listening to music.
- **Interactive:** playing games, browsing the internet.
- **Communicative:** social media, video chatting.
- **Creative:** making stories, art or music.

We want to make sure children are not just using the device in a passive or interactive way. Technology is a powerful resource that can help us in a lot of ways if we are smart about it. Technology can be also used as a tool for families to talk and play together.

### Tips from the Canadian Paediatric Society

- **Interact together**
- Have times with **no screen** like dinnertime
- No screens at least **1 hour before bed**
- Limit **recreational** screen time to 2 hours each day (watching television, messaging friends or playing computer games)

### 5. Action Moment

(5 minutes)

Materials needed: Projector, computer and speakers

#### Appendix 3 - Learning Tool 3.1 Take Home Postcard

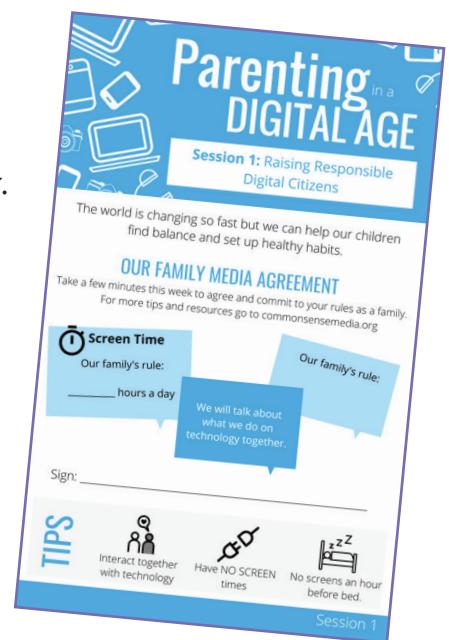
### Bringing it Home Challenge

#### Discussion Points

- Every family needs to set their own rules. It is what you are comfortable with and what works for your family.
- Let's look at a tool that can help you set rules for your family.

Facilitator presents families with **Learning Tool 3.1**. Facilitator walks families through the Family Media Agreement on the postcard and challenges them over the next week or two to sit down as a family and decide on their 3 rules.

As 'homework' have parents sit down with their family to discuss their own personal rules. If time permits parents can turn and talk and share their ideas.



**Turn and Talk:** Facilitator invites parent participants to turn to an elbow partner and share the following:

One (1) new learning from the workshop and how it might be applied in their children's life.

## 6. Evaluation and Check-out (5 minutes)

Materials needed: Pens, **Learning Tool 1.5** Evaluation Form (Post)

**Evaluation:** Facilitator hands out **Learning Tool 1.5** and invites parent participants to give their feedback. Provide participants with pens and evaluation forms to be filled out. Encourage them to be honest. Their responses are anonymous and they don't have to answer any questions they don't feel comfortable answering.

**Check-out:** Thank parent participants for their participation and time.

# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1

- Tool 1.1** Agenda
- Tool 1.2** Attendance and Photo Release Form
- Tool 1.3** Facilitator's Check List
- Tool 1.4** Evaluation (Pre)
- Tool 1.5** Evaluation (Post)

## APPENDIX 2

- Learning Tool 2.1** Timeline Task
- Learning Tool 2.2** Every Minute on the Internet

## APPENDIX 3

- Learning Tool 3.1** Take Home Postcard

## APPENDIX 4

- References

## APPENDIX 1.1 - AGENDA

### Tool 1.1 Agenda

1. Welcome and Introduction (5 minutes)
2. Check-in (10 minutes)
3. Reflection Moment (10 minutes)
4. Content Development (25 minutes)
5. Action Moment (5 minutes)
6. Evaluation and Check-out (5 minutes)

**APPENDIX 1.2 - ATTENDANCE AND PHOTO RELEASE FORM****Tool 1.2 Attendance and Photo Release Form**

FULL NAME	EMAIL	PHONE NUMBER	DO YOU CONSENT TO HAVE YOUR PHOTO TAKEN?	SIGNATURE REQUIRED
1.			<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
2.			<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
3.			<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
4.			<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
5.			<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
6.			<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
7.			<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
8.			<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
9.			<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
10.			<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
11.			<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
12.			<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
13.			<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
14.			<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
15.			<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
16.			<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
17.			<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
18.			<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
19.			<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
20.			<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	

### Tool 1.3 Facilitator's Check List

#### ***Materials and Supplies:***

- Markers
- Flip Chart (if needed)
- Flip Chart Paper
- Post-it Notes
- Pens
- Internet Access/Connection
- Projector
- Computer
- Speakers
- Learning Tools
- Attendance Form
- Evaluation Forms (Pre & Post)



## APPENDIX 1.4 - EVALUATION (PRE)

PARENT EVENT: \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / 20\_\_\_

Do at START  
of Event

Please answer the questions below.

### PART 1: About You

1. Your gender:  Female  Male  Trans  I describe my gender in a different way
2. Your children's age(s):  0-5  6-12  13+
3. Parenting status:  I'm a single parent  I'm **not** a single parent
4. What country were you born in: \_\_\_\_\_
5. What is your postal code: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Do you have any relatives living with you at home?  Yes  No  
If YES how many? \_\_\_\_\_

### PART 2: About the Event

7. How did you hear about this event?  Friend/Family  Another Organization  
 Internet  Flyers  Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_
8. Please rate your knowledge on: (Circle ONE answer per question)

		HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW	DON'T KNOW
a	Technology my child uses	H	M	L	DK
b	The benefits of changing technology	H	M	L	DK
c	The challenges of changing technology	H	M	L	DK
d	How to find safe apps for my child to use	H	M	L	DK
e	How to set rules with my child about using technology	H	M	L	DK
f	How to set rules with my child about using technology	H	M	L	DK
g	The Canadian Paediatric Society recommends that children avoid screens at least one (1) hour before bedtime.	YES		NO	

### PART 3: About your Learning

9. What do you hope to learn today?
- 

THANK YOU!

## APPENDIX 1.5 - EVALUATION (POST)

PARENT EVENT: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / 20\_\_\_\_

Do at END  
of Event**Please answer the questions below.**

PART 1: About the Event

**1. Please rate your knowledge on: (Circle ONE answer per question)**

		HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW	DON'T KNOW
a	Technology my child uses	H	M	L	DK
b	The benefits of changing technology	H	M	L	DK
c	The challenges of changing technology	H	M	L	DK
d	How to find safe apps for my child to use	H	M	L	DK
e	How to set rules with my child about using technology	H	M	L	DK
f	Please rate your level of comfort with: technology my child uses	H	M	L	DK

The Canadian Paediatric Society recommends that children avoid screens at least one (1) hour before bedtime.	YES	NO
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PART 2: About your Learning

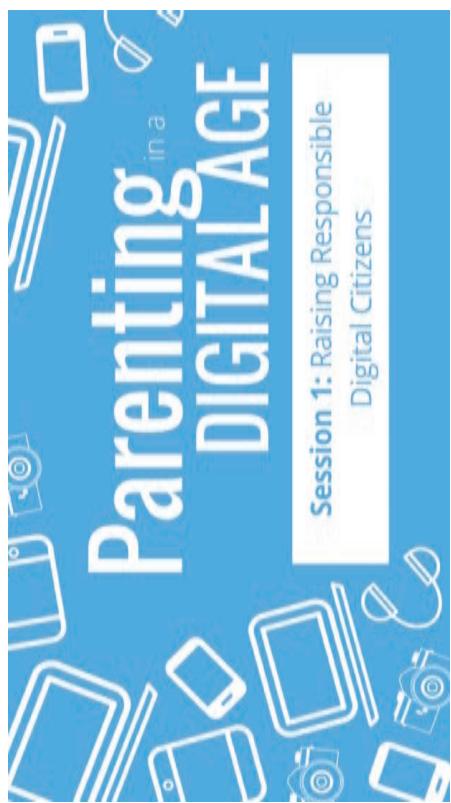
**2. What did you learn today?**

PART 3: About your Satisfaction

1	How often will you use what you learned today with your child(ren)? (Circle ONE answer)	Never	Sometimes	Always
If never, please tell us why not?				
2	How informative was the facilitator? (Circle ONE answer)	Not Informative	A little Informative	Very Informative
3	How satisfied are you with this event overall? (Circle ONE answer)	Not Satisfied	A little Satisfied	Very Satisfied
4	If we could improve ONE THING – what would it be?			

## APPENDIX 2

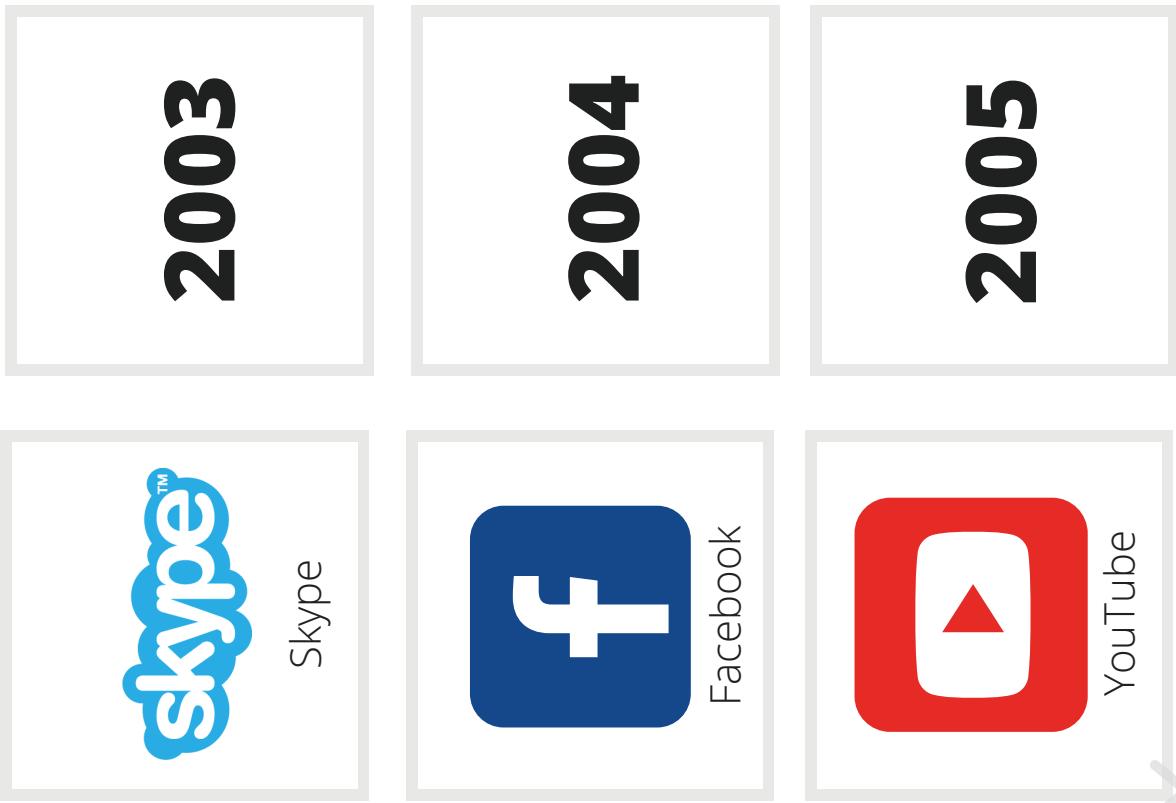
### Learning Tool 2.1 Timeline Task



## TIMELINE TASK

Print a set of cards for each table group.

Groups will try to put the cards in order from oldest to newest innovation. A blank set has been included for a tool you would like to add.



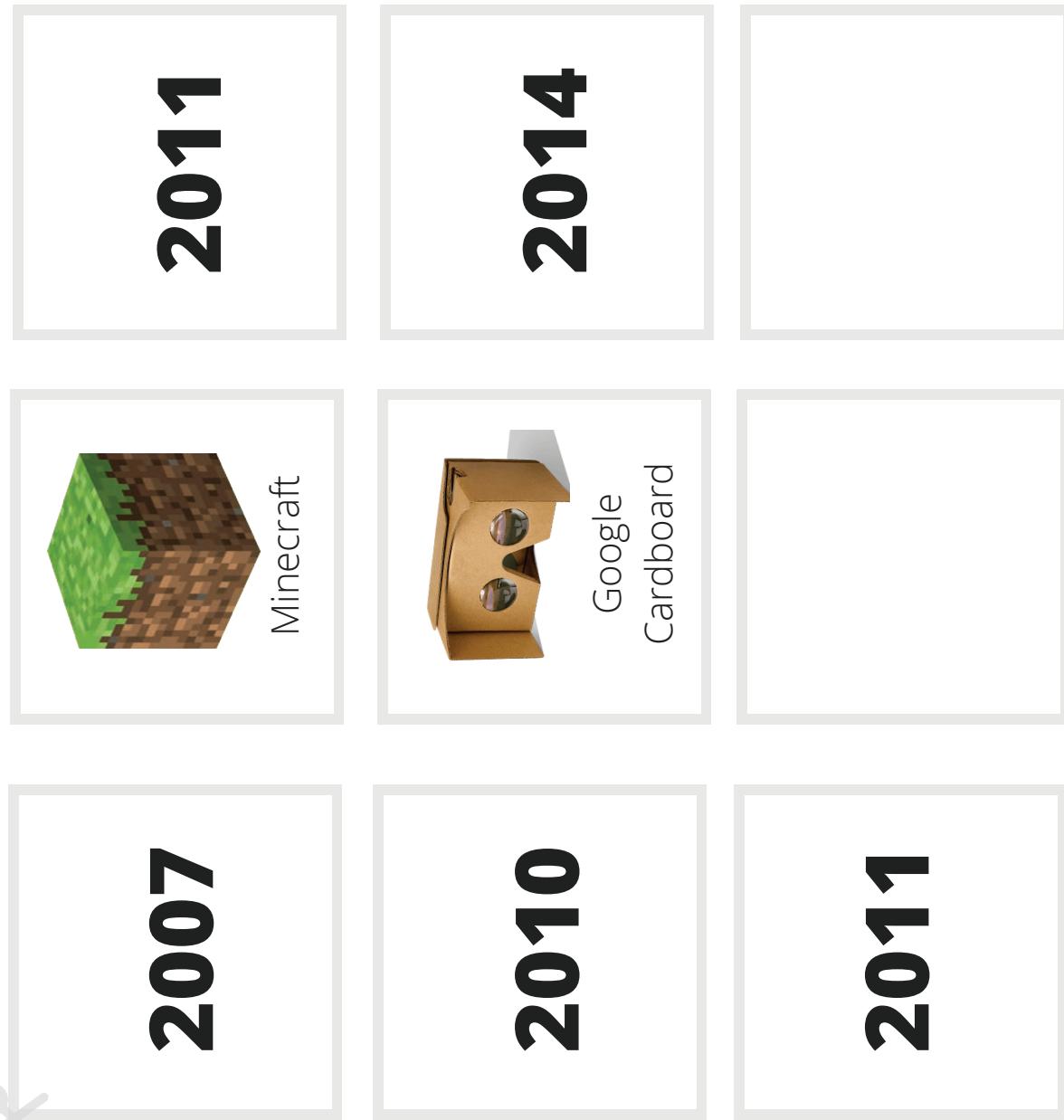


## APPENDIX 2

### Learning Tool 2.1 Timeline Task



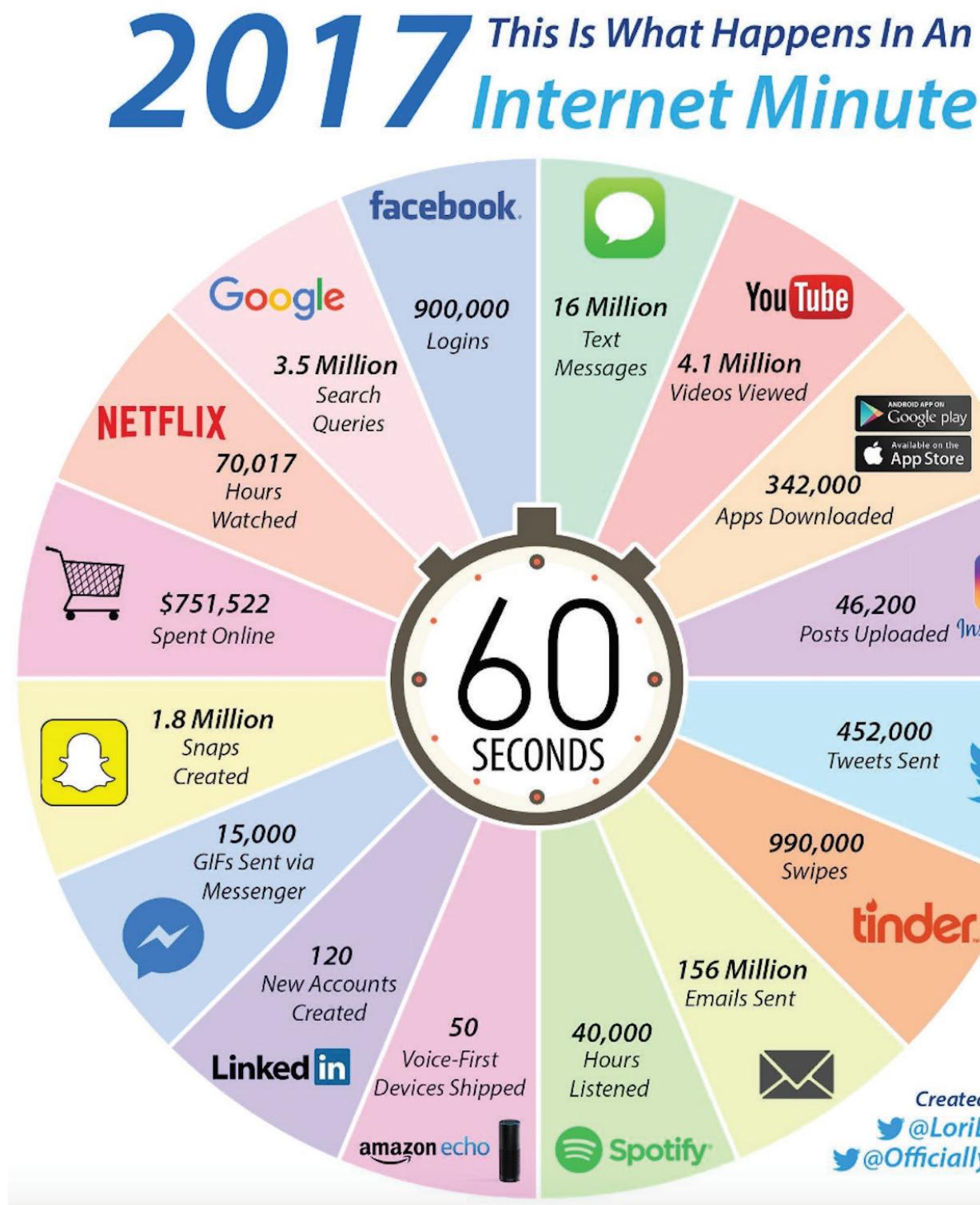
**2007**





## APPENDIX 2

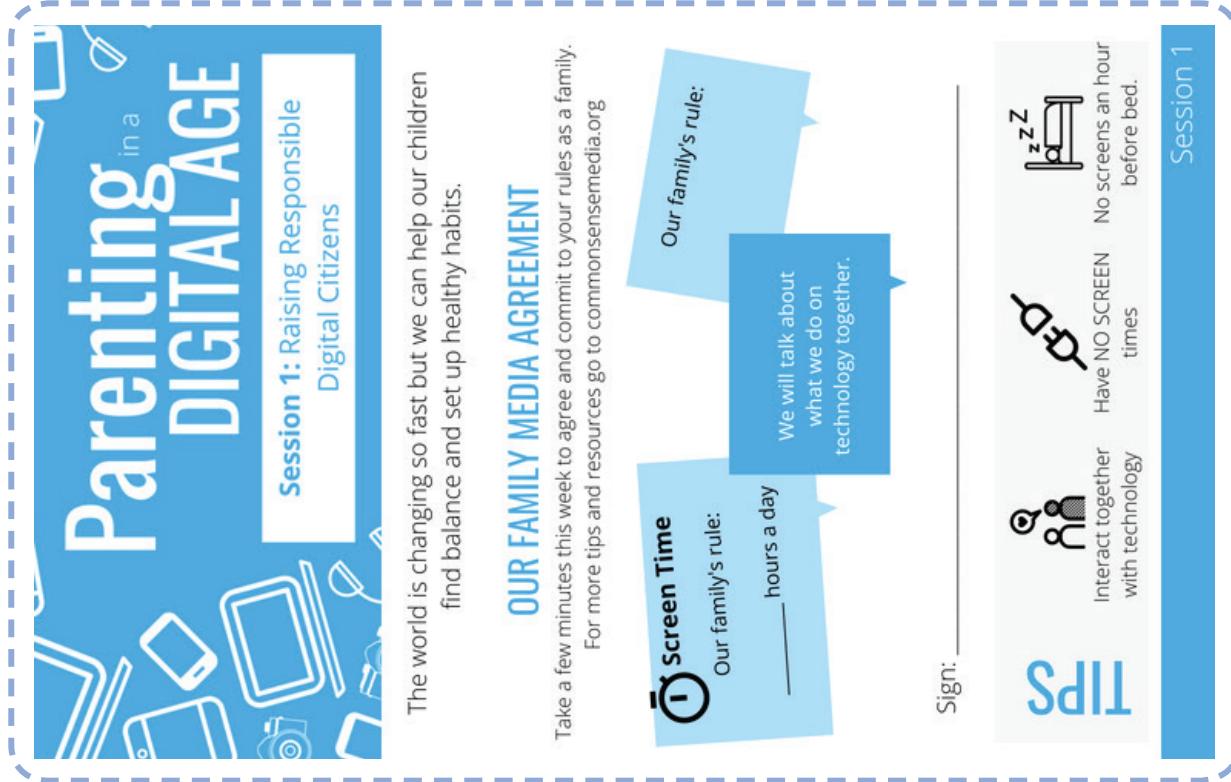
### Learning Tool 2.2 Every Minute on the Internet





## APPENDIX 3

### Learning Tool 3.1 Take Home Postcard





## APPENDIX 3

### References

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## NOTES

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