

Change Management Kids & Technology



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How to Use This Resource

This resource will lead you through Kotter's 8-step Change Management Process interpreted to support parents as they:

Decrease the amount of time your child
spends on a device.

Take what pieces work for your family and goals.

Successful change takes TIME.

Plan, be patient, and check out the tips for
successful Change Management on the next pages.



What is Change Management?

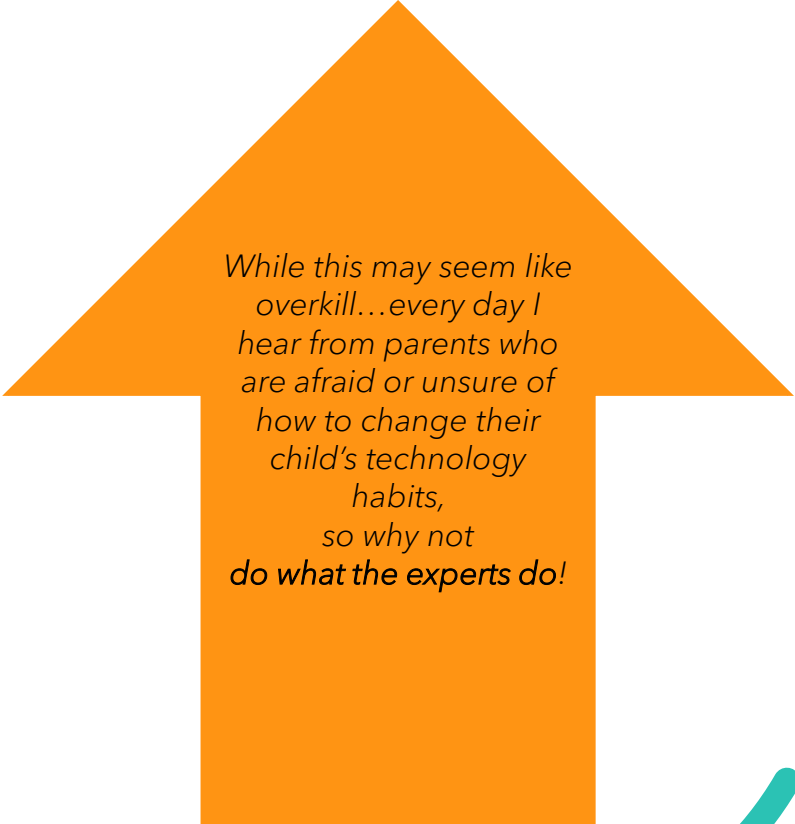


Change is possible!

Change Management is a multi-million dollar industry. Yes, it's used primarily in business, but since business is mad up of people, it's strategy and lessons can be applied to other aspects of our lives as well.

It is what it sounds like:

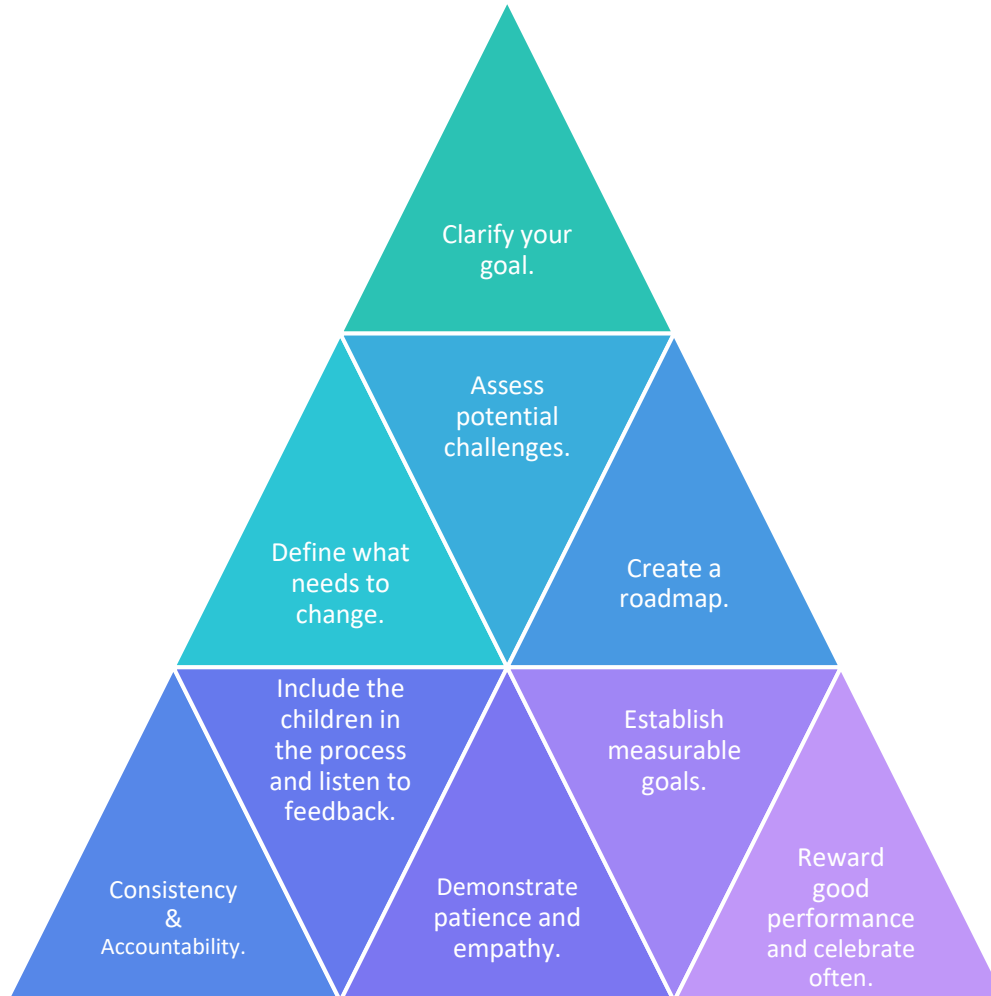
- Setting Goals
- Finding stakeholders
- Determining a strategy
- Making a plan forward
- Having accountability
- Adjusting as needed



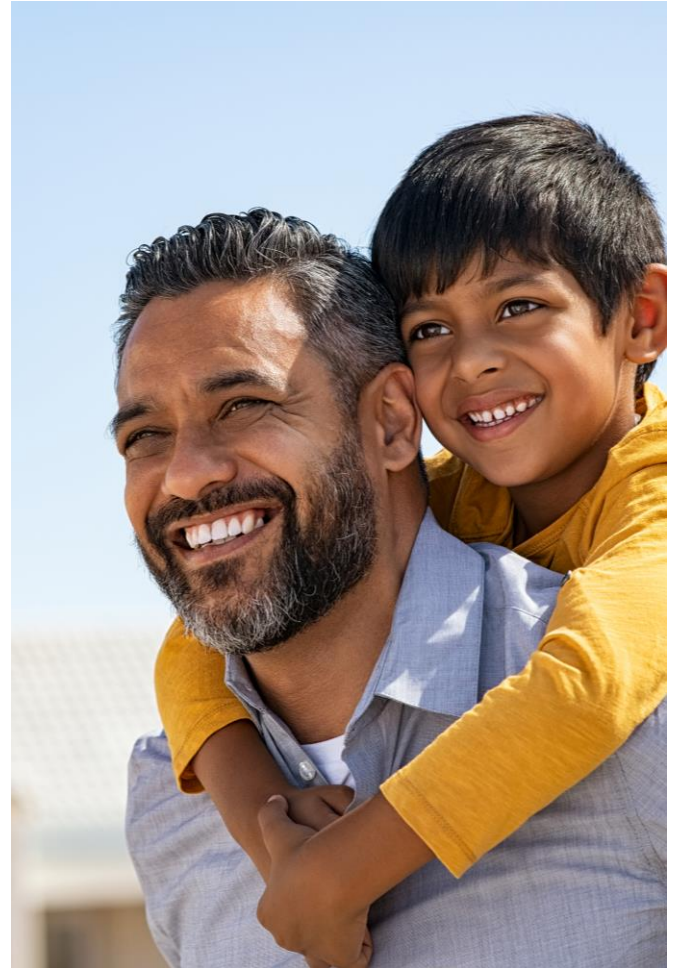
While this may seem like overkill...every day I hear from parents who are afraid or unsure of how to change their child's technology habits, so why not do what the experts do!



Change Management Best Practices



Get ready...



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We're here because we care.



From my perspective:

- Parenting is a different challenge every day.
- You are not alone.
- This is a judgement free zone. Different things will be right for different families.
- More information is being released daily that may influence the decisions in your life, including how your family uses technology.
- It's OK to change your mind. We're all doing the best we can with the information we have.



Do some homework

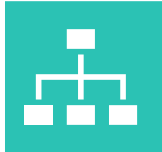
- Observe your child and how/when they use their device.
- Observe some things your child missed out on because they were focused on their device.
- Observe some things your family missed out on because your child was focused on their device.
- Observe their behavior if they can't find/access their device when they want. Is that healthy?
- Decide what your WHY is. Why are you going to make this change. What new information do you have or what personal or family value is not aligned right now.

Check out resources such as:

- Wait for 8th
- Anxious Generation
- Good Inside with Dr. Becky podcast



Set Expectations



Be clear that you want your child's input and partnership but also be clear about who is making the final decision on these things...that's YOU...the parent.



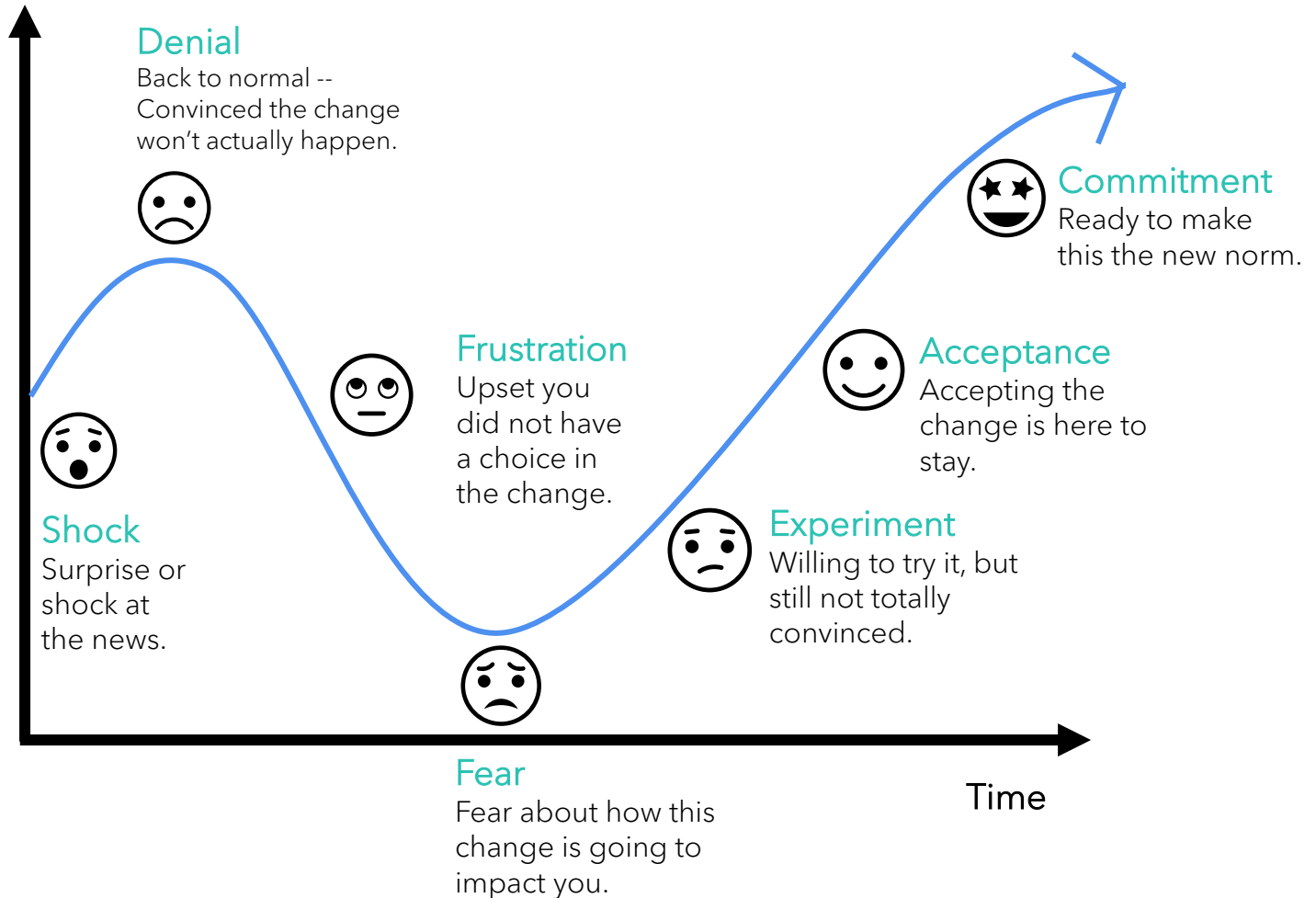
Acknowledge that life changes and so does technology, and what we know about it, so tell your child that you will work together to adjust as we grow. Plan a time to check in again in 3-6 months (so you're not getting nagged every day. 😊)



Help your children understand that it seems like games, but technology is a huge part of our lives, and it has a really big impact on how we interact with each other and see the world.



The Roller Coaster of Change



Kotter's 8 Principles of Change Management



Learn more about Kotter at <https://www.kotterinc.com>



1. Create a Sense of Urgency

Objective: Make the parent and the child recognize the need for change.

Getting started:

- Introduce the idea of change.
- Lead by example with your phone/device habits and speak about the choices you're making and why you're making them.
 - Ex. I'm just texting Ruth to let her know I'll meet her tomorrow, then I'll put down my phone because I want to hear about school/play a game with you and not be distracted.
 - Ex. Don't jump up every time your phone bings. It was eye opening for me when my child was more upset that I wasn't running to my phone than I was. I had also trained them to the bing by accident. I assured them that whatever it was could wait, because we were talking/playing.
- Speak to all of the cool things you could be doing outside of the device.



Create a Sense of Urgency

Objective: Make the parent and the child recognize the need for change.

Actions:

- Figure out which parent (or both) is the right one to broach the subject.
Pick a time when the child is rested and able to consider different opinions.
- Pick a place where you won't be interrupted.
- Depending on the age of your child, include the following in conversations in small pieces as is appropriate. Don't intimidate or overwhelm them with information. In fact, if there's a way for them to find some of these statistics or findings on the counter and read them themselves, etc. that will help give them credibility. Children often want to hear things from other sources besides their parents.
 - **Identify negative impacts:** Highlight the issues that excessive phone use causes, such as decreased academic performance, sleep disruption, reduced physical activity, or social isolation.
 - **Provide evidence:** Share statistics, studies, or expert opinions on the consequences of excessive screen time (e.g., impacts on brain development, attention span, or health).
 - **Involve the child:** Engage the child in discussions about how phone use affects their mood, energy, and relationships, making them realize the importance of reducing phone time.
 - **Frame it positively:** Position the reduction of screen time as a way to enhance other activities they enjoy, like sports, reading, or spending time with friends and family.



2. Build a Guiding Coalition

Objective: Form a group of people who support the change and can influence others.



Getting started:

- Don't be afraid to speak about the struggles you're facing regarding kids and technology with other parents and resources. You'll be surprised how many are struggling with managing usage and safety.
- If you're struggling to find resources in your friend circles, look online, or to community groups.
- Parents can sometimes get caught up in looking cool and valuing themselves based on how fancy of things they can buy their child. **You** have to decide if that is what you want, or how to blend that with the value you place on your child's play, in-person interactions with others, and life in this present physical world.



Build a Guiding Coalition

Objective: Form a group of people who support the change and can influence others.

Actions:

- **Collaborate with the family:** Ensure that both parents (if applicable) are aligned and unified in the approach. Share your journey with others who care for or spend time with your child, including grandparents.
- **Involve experts:** If necessary, consult a pediatrician or counselor to back up the reasoning behind the change, reinforcing it with professional opinions.
- **Engage the child in the process:** Involve the child in the discussions about limiting phone time. By empowering them to participate in the decision-making process, they're more likely to feel invested in the outcome.



3. Create a Vision for Change

Objective: Develop a clear, compelling vision for the desired change.

- Make sure your child is engaged in this partnership.
- Stay curious by asking leading questions.
- Let your child have input and feel ownership to make choices.
- Write everything down since memories change quickly and post it somewhere everyone can see it daily.
 - How many hours a week do you think is reasonable for you to be on your tablet/phone?
 - Looking at our schedule (maybe have it in front of them), what days do you think are best to schedule some tablet/phone playing time?
 - It's really important to me that you are rested for all the awesome activities you're doing, so if lights out time is _____, when do you think you should bring your device down and put it in the kitchen/my room?
- Parent and adult write out the vision together and both sign it / decorate it and hang it someplace easily visible on a daily basis.



3. Create a Vision for Change

Objective: Develop a clear, compelling vision for the desired change.

Define new phone habits: Create a vision that involves healthy phone use, such as limiting screen time to a specific amount per day, and prioritizing activities like homework, socializing, and outdoor play.

Establish goals: Set achievable milestones, such as reducing phone usage by 30 minutes each week until a desired limit is reached.

Incorporate balance: Ensure the vision includes a balance of phone use and other activities, like reading, sports, hobbies, or family time, to show that the change is not about complete deprivation but about balance.



4. Communicate the Vision

Objective: Share the vision of the change with other stakeholders.

Actions:

Family meetings: Hold regular family meetings to discuss the new rules and expectations. In these meetings, explain the benefits of the change and ask for feedback.

Explain the “why”: Continuously reinforce why the change is important for overall well-being—mental, physical, and emotional health.

Use reminders: Create visual cues in the home, such as posters or charts, that remind everyone of the new vision for phone use. The child could also help create these reminders to make them feel more involved.

Positive reinforcement: Regularly recognize small achievements. For instance, praise your child for following the phone-time limits or for choosing to engage in other activities.



5. Remove Obstacles

Objective: Identify and remove barriers that may hinder the change.

Actions:

Tech solutions: Use parental control apps or features on the phone to limit screen time, set app time limits, or even create a digital detox plan.

Rearrange the environment: Remove phones from common areas like the dinner table or bedroom to prevent distractions.

Model behavior: Ensure that the parents or guardians are also practicing what they preach by limiting their own screen time and engaging in offline activities.



6. Generate Short Term Wins

Objective: Create quick, visible successes to maintain momentum and build confidence.

Actions

Track progress: Set up a daily or weekly log to track the child's screen time. Celebrate when the child meets their goals, whether it's reducing phone usage by a certain amount or completing non-phone activities.

Reward progress: Use positive reinforcement, such as rewards or privileges, when the child successfully reduces their phone time. For example, they could earn extra time for their favorite non-phone activity.

Highlight small successes: Share stories with the child of how cutting back on phone use has led to improved focus or more fun with friends or family.



7. Consolidate Gains and Produce More Change

Objective: Expand on early wins and deepen the commitment to change.

Actions:



Increase engagement: As the child gets used to reduced phone time, encourage them to find other enjoyable activities. Introduce new hobbies or interests to fill the time that was previously spent on the phone.



Continue tracking: Set new, more challenging goals as the child's ability to manage their phone use improves, like adding 30 minutes of physical activity each day or completing creative tasks without screen distractions.



Incorporate learning: Discuss with the child what they've learned about their own phone habits and how they feel about the changes. This can help adjust the strategy if needed and reinforce the behavior change.



8. Anchor New Approaches in the Culture

Objective: Make the new phone-use habits part of the family culture.

Actions:

- **Make it routine:** Integrate the new phone-use rules into the daily family schedule. Create a consistent routine where family time, outdoor activities, or hobbies are prioritized, and phone use is limited to certain times of day.
- **Model consistency:** Parents and guardians should model the behaviors they want to see. If the family keeps a consistent routine, the child is more likely to follow suit.
- **Ongoing conversations:** Keep the dialogue open and check in regularly with the child. Ask about their experiences, what's working, and what's challenging. Reinforce the idea that managing screen time is an ongoing process, not a one-time fix.



Bonus Tips

Two last reminders...

- **Empathy and Flexibility:** Be empathetic to the child's emotional attachment to their phone. Recognize that the transition might not be easy and be flexible with how the change is implemented.
- **Incentivize and Offer Choices:** Allow the child some choice in the matter. For example, let them choose what other activities to engage in during the time they're not on their phone.





Best wishes on your journey!

Remember your Why



Some days will be better than others, but any progress towards your goal is AMAZING! 😊

