

How do you feel about getting your child a smartphone?

Feel like you're stuck between a rock and a hard place? Don't want them to be left out?

Or perhaps you already have one for them but you're keen to understand more about how to protect them online?

We all want to do the best for our children, but smartphones are a minefield for every parent.

Because we all know as adults how hard it is to keep away from something so addictive that sits in our pockets. Let alone teaching our children how to have a healthy relationship with them!

But childhood is being rewired.

97% of 12-year-olds in Britain now have a smartphone.

And when children first started getting them, there was no research about their impact.

But now there is, and it's overwhelming.

Evidence now shows that smartphones expose children to harmful content, raise the likelihood of developing a mental illness, change the way children's brains develop and are highly addictive.

But as parents, we've been put in an impossible position.

We either hand our children a product that evidence now tells us will do them harm both short and long-term.

Or we put our foot down and risk alienating them from their friends – at a crucial period in their social development.

However, a recent poll of parents of primary school pupils across the UK suggests that 77% of parents would back a ban on smartphones for under 16s*.

Unfortunately, the tech companies and governments who are ultimately responsible for this – aren't doing anything about it. So, it's up to us as parents to change the norm to give our children the Smartphone Free Childhood they deserve.

So, what can you do?...

Join the campaign

Over the last couple of months, a tidal wave of over 60,000 parents across the UK have joined a national campaign calling for a Smartphone Free Childhood.

As you may have seen or heard in the press (or ironically on social media), the campaign's mission is **to empower parents to take collective action by agreeing to delay giving their children smartphones until age 14, or social media before the age of 16.**

And, by acting in numbers, removing the peer pressure at a local level to help change the social norm.

We'd urge all parents to visit www.smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk for more information.

Get involved

Based on all of the above we're putting together a new parent-led Broke Hall action group to discuss the topic and help initiate change.

So whether you've already chosen to give your child a smartphone, you're navigating constant demands for a phone from your Year 5 or 6 child, you're looking ahead as a Reception or Year 1 parent, or anything in between...

And you'd like to be part of a small group to discuss how we can make positive changes on a local level then we'd love to hear from you.

Please reply to frontoffice@brokehall.co.uk with your name and contact number if you'd like to be involved by Friday 10th May.

And we'll be in contact to confirm the next steps.

Let's get together and change the norm.

The Broke Hall Smartphone Free Childhood Group