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2021 Virtual Conference (March 8-10, 2021)

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Mar 10th, 11:25 AM - 12:25 PM

## The POWER of Connection: A Therapeutic Approach to Utilizing Technology and Social Media to Build Attachment

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### Recommended Citation

Monk, Tiffany and Whaley, Shalandra, "The POWER of Connection: A Therapeutic Approach to Utilizing Technology and Social Media to Build Attachment" (2021). *National Youth-At-Risk Conference*. 56.  
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# The POWER of Connection

A Therapeutic Approach to Utilizing Technology  
and Social Media to Build Attachment

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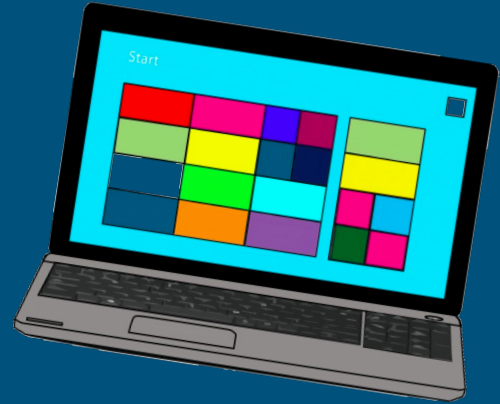
# Objectives

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- Participants will learn the prevalence of social media and technology use among school aged children and teachers.
- Participants will understand the impact of social media and technology from a therapeutic framework.
- Participants will discover ways to use social media and technology to foster connection during virtual and remote learning.
- Participants will explore both advantages and disadvantages of social media and technology on education and social and emotional development.
- Participants will acquire knowledge about safety considerations for increased use of technology.
- Participants will learn, discuss, and engage in self care exercises to establish a work/life/technology balance.

# Statistics

- **45%** of children ages 3-4 years old use Youtube.
- **5%** of 5-7 year olds have their own smartphone; **42%** have their own tablet.
- **82%** of 5-7 year olds go online for around 9 ½ hours per week.
- **85%** of children 13-17 in the US use Youtube/have Youtube accounts, **72%** have an Instagram account, and **67%** have Snapchat.
- **Nine out of 10** students age 13-17 use at least one social media account and **71%** use more than one
- **69%** of adults have a Facebook account; **74%** of those with a Facebook account access it daily
- **73%** of adults in the US access Youtube or have an account



# Your Brain on Tech

- Technology use rewires our brains.
- Cortex changes:
  - Memory
  - Cognitive control
  - Reward processing
  - Motivation
  - Decision making

## Brain Matters

The brains of Millennials and their Baby Boomer parents already differ as age leads to neurological changes.



### Baby Boomers

Aging brains:

Like repetition and interpret familiar information as truth

Have a harder time suppressing distractions

Are open to more information and have longer attention spans

*Source: Nielsen NeuroFocus research; brain icon by Anisha Varghese from the Noun Project*



### Millennials

Younger brains:

Engage and remember information presented with rich media or lighting

Have an easier time with multifaceted communication, like banner ads integrated with online stories

Seek multi-sensory communications such as interactive sites

*Graphic by Alexandra Kanik / PublicSource*

# The Effects of Technology on SEL

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- Technology affects a person's social emotional skills.
- Examples include:
  - Level of self-regulation
  - Sense of connection or belonging
  - Self-esteem
  - Recognition of facial and/or social cues
  - Method of communication
  - Development of relationships



# Attachment Theory: The Basics

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- Attachment is defined as “a deep and enduring emotional bond that connects one person to another across time and space”.
- First developed by John Bowlby in the 1930s and later adapted by Mary Ainsworth.
- 4 primary attachment styles:
  - Secure
  - Anxious-resistant
  - Avoidant
  - Disorganized-disoriented (fearful)
- Attachment doesn't have to be reciprocal.
- Lasting impact

**Low Emotional Avoidance**

**SECURE**

**ANXIOUS**

**Low Anxiety**

**High Anxiety**

**AVOIDANT**

**FEARFUL**

**High Emotional Avoidance**





# Social Media Attachment: Positive or Negative?

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- People share a natural desire for attachment.
- Healthy vs. Unhealthy Means
- Is social media or other forms of technology supplementing or replacing human relationships and attachments?
- Our electronics have become a member of the family, per se.
- A person's attachment style predicts his or her relationship with technology.



# Digi-Attachment Styles

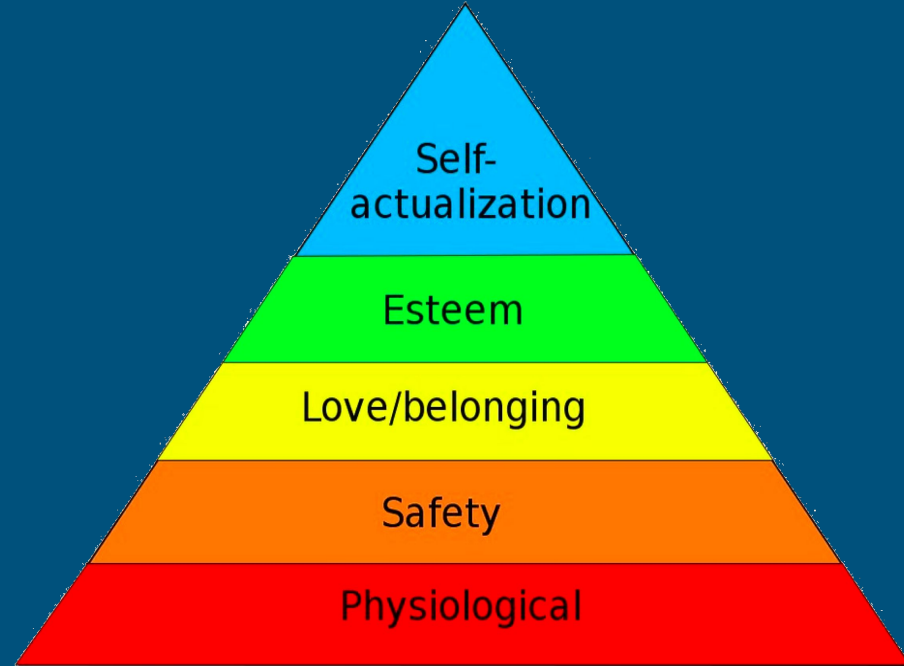
- Digi-attachment (digital attachment) is defined as an attachment to technology or an attachment relationship with technology itself.
- Digi-attachment styles reflect a person's attachment style.
- Four styles:
  - Secure
  - Dismissive
  - Preoccupied
  - Unresolved-disorganized



# Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

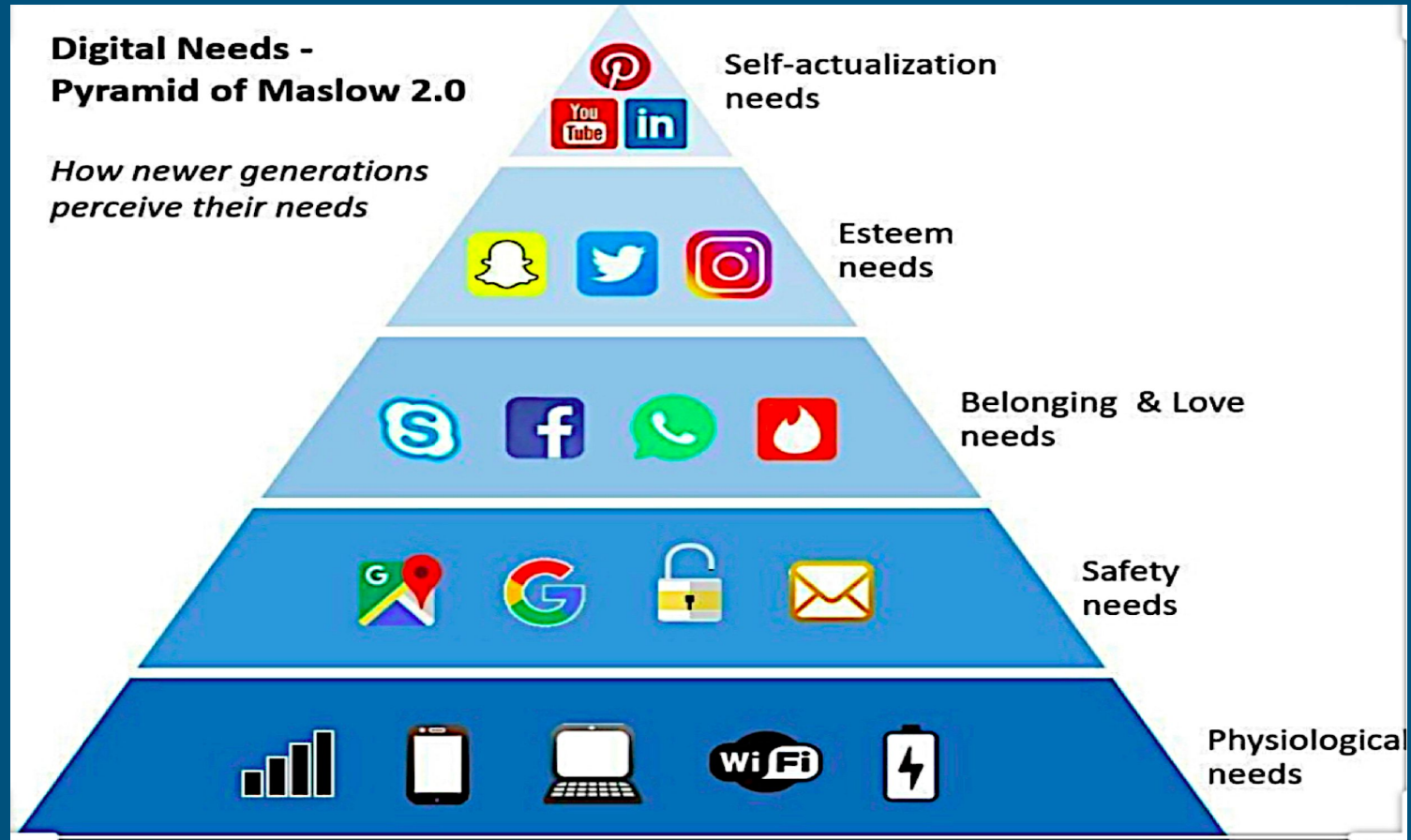
- A motivational psychology theory introduced in 1943 by Abraham Maslow
- Primary function is to illustrate how drive and motivation impact human behavior
- The motivating factors are classified into 5 categories: psychological, safety, belonging/love, social needs/esteem, and self actualization
- Deficiency needs vs growth needs

## Maslow's hierarchy of needs



[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maslow%27s\\_hierarchy\\_of\\_needs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maslow%27s_hierarchy_of_needs)

# Maslow's Hierarchy of Social Media?



# Fostering Connection

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Successful technology integration is achieved when technology is:

- 1) routine and transparent;
- 2) accessible and readily available for the task at hand; and
- 3) supportive of academic or personal goals and helps to effectively achieve said goals.



# Technology Integration

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# Advantages and Disadvantages of Internet Use

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- People are more informed than ever before
- Unlimited opportunities to feel connected
- Means for global communication
- Opportunities to make new friends
- Fosters one's individual identity and self confidence



- More anxious, distrustful of others, and cynical
- More personally disconnected than ever
- Risk of “catfishing” and dangerous online behaviors
- Cyberbullying and online harassment
- Increased risk of depression, anxiety, and low self esteem

# Safety Implications

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- **The Jamari T. Williams Student Harassment Act**: places certain responsibilities on the Board of education to make sure cyberbullying and bullying will not be tolerated on or off campus or online. It expands the current statute to prevent student against student harassment, intimidation, violence, and threats of violence to students off campus as well. It also specifically includes cyberbullying in the definition of harassment.
- **The Jason Flatt Act**: enacted on May 10, 2016 and requires all K-12 public schools to establish a policy, staff training program, student curriculum, and list of resources for suicide prevention services.



# Safety Implications cont.

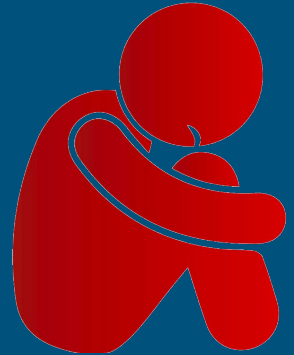
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- **Erin's Law**: All K-12 public schools, and Pre-K when available, establish a child sexual abuse prevention instructional program.
- **Sexting/Pornography**: Alabama's child pornography laws make it a felony to produce (create), distribute, or possess obscene images, videos, and other materials that depict a minor younger than 17 engaged in an act of sexual conduct or lewd exhibition of nudity of the breasts or genitals.

# Mandatory Reporting

## Visible Signs of Suspected Abuse/Neglect

- Lack of power during interactions
- Bare refrigerators/cabinets
- Changes in interaction when parent is present
- Repeated absence of a responsible or age appropriate caregiver
- Changes in appearance not due to physical play or relaxed appearance standards
- Aggressive or repeated shouting
- Hearing hitting or things being broken
- Children crying for long periods of time
- Safety hazards such as unsecured weapons within children's reach, drugs, unsanitary conditions
- Caregiver appears intoxicated and unable to provide care
- Child looks or behaves very differently than what is typical for them or would be reasonably expected
- Child appear withdrawn or depressed



# Self Regulation & Boundaries

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- Overuse of technology and/or social media can be problematic.
- What is self-regulation?
- We can foster self-regulation by :
  - Practicing mindfulness
  - Role playing situations
  - Conducting daily check-ins with self
  - Establishing routines
  - Incorporating Brain breaks
  - Developing coping skills
- Practicing self-regulation leads to decreased exposure to the negative effects of technology.

# Self Care for Students

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- 1) Have a digital free weekend with a friend.
- 2) Set boundaries for using electronics.
- 3) Spend time outside.
- 4) Develop a hobby.
- 5) Try something new.
- 6) Create a self care ritual.



# Self Care for Teachers

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- 1) Uninstall apps from your personal cell phone.
- 2) Remind yourself of the positives.
- 3) Take a mental health day.
- 4) Get outside.
- 5) Find a hobby.
- 6) Be selective when granting friend requests.



# Promoting Positive Mental Health via Social Media

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- 1) Join groups that educate and inspire.
- 2) Spread positivity online.
- 3) Be a vocal positive support system for peers.
- 4) Use social media to organize in person events.



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