

We empower parents to say yes to waiting for the smartphone.

Top 5 Reasons To Delay Getting a Smartphone

- 1 Smartphones are changing childhood.
- 2 They are distracting and addicting.
- 3 Smartphones expose your child to...
- 4 They increase risk for anxiety and depression.
- 5 Cyberbullying is an important concern.

The Wait Until 8th pledge empowers parents to rally together to delay giving children a smartphone until at least the end of 8th grade. By banding together, this will decrease the pressure felt by kids and parents alike over the kids having a smartphone.

Smartphones are distracting and potentially dangerous for children yet are widespread in elementary and middle school because of unrealistic social pressure and expectations to have one.

These devices are quickly changing childhood for children. Playing outdoors, spending time with friends, reading books and hanging out with family is happening a lot less to make room for hours of snap chatting, instagramming, and catching up on YouTube.

Parents feel powerless in this uphill battle and need community support to help delay the ever-evolving presence of the smartphone in the classroom, social arena and family dinner table. Let's band together to wait until at least the end of 8th grade eighth grade before children are allowed to have a smartphone.

The Wait Until 8th pledge is encouraging parents to delay the smartphone. If you need to get in touch before the end of 8th grade, we have some **great basic phones and watches** featured on our website. If you would like your child to have a basic phone that just calls and texts or a two-way calling watch, you still can sign the pledge! These basic options avoid many of the distractions and dangers of the smartphone.

Childhood is too short to waste on a smartphone.
Take the pledge today!

HOW WILL THE WAIT UNTIL 8TH PLEDGE WORK?

The pledge will empower parents to rally together to delay the smartphone at least until the end of 8th grade. By banding together, this will decrease the pressure within the child's grade to have a smartphone.

By signing the online pledge, you promise not to give your child a smartphone until at least the end of 8th grade as long as at least 10 families total from your child's grade and school pledge. Once 10 families have pledged to delay the smartphone, you will be notified that the pledge is in effect!

We will not share your information with any third party outside of our organization. We may contact you in the future to update you on the pledge and when it is in effect for your grade. You will receive an email along with the other parents from your grade and school that sign the pledge when the pledge goes into effect. Your information will not be made public on this site.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER I SIGN THE PLEDGE?

After you sign the pledge, you will receive an email from Wait Until 8th in one to two business days with tips and suggestions on how to rally other parents from your child's school to sign the pledge. If you do not receive an email after a couple of days, please notify us via email at info@waituntil8th.org.

IS MY PLEDGE ANONYMOUS?

The pledge is anonymous until the pledge becomes active. Once 10 or more families from the same grade and school sign, then the

pledge becomes "active," and you will be notified along with the other parents who have signed from the grade in a group email. At this point, the pledge is not anonymous and you know the other families on board. It helps to know the other families you are waiting with on this big issue. Your pledge is not posted anywhere or made known publicly. The only other people who know you have signed the pledge are the parents from your child's grade and school, and ONLY IF you have an active pledge.

HOW WILL I KNOW WHEN THE PLEDGE IS ACTIVE?

Once 10 parents from your child's grade and school sign the pledge, Wait Until 8th will send a group email to the families who have signed. This will help you support one another on waiting until at least the end of 8th grade.

HOW DO I BRING THE PLEDGE TO MY SCHOOL?

To start **the pledge** at your school, simply take the pledge and encourage other parents to sign as well. Once you take the pledge you will receive an email in one to two business days with suggestions on how to rally your community around the Wait a Until 8th pledge.

DO YOU HAVE ANY MATERIALS I COULD USE TO SHARE AT MY SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY?

Yes! Please go to our **How To Start page** on our website for many materials you may share in your community.

WHY THE END OF 8TH?

Many experts from child psychologists to internet safety leaders to even technology executives agree that it is best to wait until at least 14 before exposing children to smartphones. Delaying until the end of 8th grade ensures children are at least 14 and helps keep smartphones out of elementary school and middle school.

DOES THIS MEAN I WILL ALLOW MY CHILD TO HAVE A SMARTPHONE AT THE END OF 8TH GRADE?

No! By signing the pledge, you are agreeing to wait until AT LEAST the end of 8th grade before you permit your child to have a smartphone. This does not mean that you agree to give them a smartphone at the end of 8th grade. You are delaying this technology until at least the end of 8th grade, and then as a family you can reassess the situation at the time. Some families may think their child is ready for a smartphone and others may determine a basic phone is better still until their child is older.

WHAT IF I NEED TO GET IN TOUCH WITH MY CHILD BEFORE THE END OF 8TH GRADE?

Consider buying your child a basic phone or a two-way calling watch. The pledge is for smartphones only. If you would like your child to have a basic phone that just calls and texts, you still can sign the pledge. The basic phone avoids many of the distractions and dangers of the smartphone. We have a list of **basic phone options** available on our website.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A SMARTPHONE AND A BASIC PHONE?

A smartphone is a mobile phone that has access to an internet browser and an App



for receiving calls. It also allows users to send and receive text messages. The Wait Until 8th pledge is encouraging parents to delay the smartphone until at least the end of 8th grade. If you would like your child to have a basic phone that just calls and texts, you still can sign the pledge! The basic phone avoids many of the distractions and dangers of the smartphone. Check out our **list of basic phones** online.

WHERE DO I FIND A BASIC PHONE?

Please visit the **Wait Until 8th Smartphone Alternatives list** available on our website. We have listed several basic phones and two-way calling watches. A basic phone or two-way calling watch avoids many of the distractions and dangers of the smartphone.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A SMARTPHONE AND AN IPAD?

Some parents have questioned if there is really a difference in allowing their child to have a smartphone and permitting them to have an iPad. There is a huge difference. No one walks around with an iPad in their pocket like a smartphone. The smartphone is essentially a mini-computer in your child's hands throughout the day. Typically an iPad is used within the home or for travel.

MY CHILD'S SIBLING GOT A SMARTPHONE BEFORE THE END OF 8TH. HOW DO I SWITCH GEARS WITH THIS CHILD?

If your child has siblings that have received a phone earlier than the end of 8th grade, then you can explain to the child that each child and grade is special. Circumstances and community shape how parents make decisions for each child. You can articulate that after much thought, you have concluded that it would be best to wait until the end of 8th grade. You can ensure them that other children in their grade are following the same path and they will not be the only person without a smartphone.

MY CHILD ALREADY HAS A SMARTPHONE. IS IT TOO LATE TO BE PART OF THIS MOVEMENT?

No! It is never too late to change your mind as a parent. Please share with your child that many families in their grade have decided that it is better to wait to have a smartphone until the end of 8th grade. You can discuss with your child the many reasons families in their community are waiting until children are older for the smartphone. If your family is used to communicating with the phone and cannot go back to no phone for the child, another option would be to replace the child's smartphone with a **basic phone** that just calls and texts. Switching from a smartphone to a basic phone will help protect your child from the many dangers of the smartphone.

WHAT ABOUT WHEN MY CHILD GETS TO MIDDLE SCHOOL? IT IS SO BIG THERE!

One reason many parents give their child a smartphone is to be able to reach them once they enter middle school. They fear the size of the school will make it difficult to reach their child when needed.

The truth is that many families have navigated middle school phone free for decades. The school office phone is available for children when they need to reach you or for you when you need to reach them. Coaches and teachers have phones the child can use in emergencies. Also, in some districts, students have regular access to school issued email. Yes, your children are reachable.

More often than not though, children do not need parents to hold their hand through each decision in middle school. Part of growing up is learning how to make decisions without the constant direction and input of parents. It's part of the equipping process that prepares your child for adulthood and navigating the real world. If a child is not feeling well, instead of texting mom, the child determines she needs to go to the nurse. If a student forgot his shorts for gym, instead of texting dad

to bring them, he asks around to borrow an extra pair from someone else. If your daughter is notified her after-school activity is cancelled that afternoon, she sends you a quick email asking you to pick her up earlier or goes to the office to call you.

Each situation the child handles without a direct line to mom or dad builds confidence and paves the way from childhood to adulthood.

Still, some parents may think that at a certain point before the end of 8th grade, they will need to get their child a phone to reach them. If this is the case, there are phones that strictly make calls and text. **Check out the list** on our website.

More information + resources available at
WAITUNTIL8TH.ORG

