

# "THE EXPLOSION HAPPENED; PEOPLE JUST DON'T REALIZE IT YET."

(Quoted from the Mashgiach R' Matisyahu Salomon shlit" a, 7 years ago)

**L**akewood today is Boruch Hashem a vibrant Torah community. Thousands of *tinokos shel bais raban* and *yeshiva bochurim* fill our Yeshivos. The quality of many of these *bochurim* is unbelievable, with *talmidim* learning with great *iyun* and finishing and knowing *mesechtos*. The dream of "My son the doctor, my son the lawyer," of yesteryear has been replaced by "My son the *talmid chochom*, my son the *lamdan*, my son the *masmid*." Many are moving to Lakewood to take advantage of the numerous wonderful *chinuch* opportunities.

However, more and more *mechanchim* are beginning to realize the effects of the explosion that the Mashgiach saw seven years ago. We do not wish to discuss in public the devastating tragedies that have befallen to all too many of our youth; however, we must discuss the challenges of regular *talmidim* and even *metzuyanim*. **Digital technology has invaded our homes and our lives. People don't just go online, they live online.** From laptops to tablets to smart phones... Technology is where people are spending a good portion of their time. And our children are watching...

People say, "But what could be wrong? I have filters!"

We must look at the effect this excessive technology use is having on our children, the future of Klal Yisroel, **even when the filters are in place.** Are we providing our children with an emotional bulwark against the allures of technology? Do our actions portray to our children our own ambivalence towards our reliance on the minefield of digital technology? A home where the attitude portrayed to children is that technology is convenient, technology is great, and technology is enjoyable... "Just look at this *geshmake* clip..." and, "You have to see this amazing video..." A home where the day Tatty gets a new phone is a Yom Tov in the family... **The children of such a home will face overwhelming temptations!**

Too many people naively believe, "My child is a Tzaddik; he would never do anything wrong." That may be true in a normal situation; however, faced with overwhelming temptation, who can be so confident? A recent Oxford University study states that **filters are overwhelmingly ineffective in safeguarding children**, and our experience at TAG bears this out. A fifth grade Rabbi in one of the mainstream Lakewood *chadorim* found that 80% of his *talmidim* whose parents have smart phones had figured out the password. Many more kids than we would like to admit are spending their evenings playing online games with their friends Moishy and Mendy, as well as Shawn and Sharon, or watching music videos and clips... **The neshamos of these children are, unfortunately, far far different then the neshamos of those children who are not online.**

*Let's do it for our children!*

**"It has become quite obvious that no filter is foolproof.  
This is particularly true in regard to our precious youth."**

(quoted from the Mashgiach R' Matisyahu Salomon shlit" a)



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PART 2

Our children are the most important focus of our lives. We spend a tremendous amount of time, thought, energy and finances to ensure that our children will be *ehrlische Yidden* and *talmidei chachomim*. This goal informs our choice of schools, Yeshivos, neighborhoods and playmates for our children. We bring our children to *cheder* wrapped in a *tallis* to ensure that the eyes that will read the Alef Bais will not be contaminated by the sights of the world around us. And of course none of us would allow our children to watch television or be friends with *goyim*.

The explosion of digital technology has brought tremendous challenges to our ability to protect our children's environment - both from a Yiddishkeit standpoint, as well as in terms of the effect that it's having on their basic humanity. **Exposure to digital technology is detrimental to a child's well-being - physically, emotionally and spiritually.**

Of the numerous areas which are damaged by digital exposure, these are some of those which come readily to mind:

- **Kedusha** - Even when filtered, the internet exposes one to an abundance of non-*tzniusdik* images. Repeated exposure may cause one to entirely lose his/her sensitivity to *kedushas ha'einayim*.
- **Time Wasting** - Children love spending time on the computer, tablet, phone, etc. Games, videos, and clips rob our children of time which would be better spent with their family, learning, or playing with friends.
- **Cognitive Damage** - There is wealth of research into the negative effects that digital technology is having on our cognitive abilities. Horav Aharon Feldman *shlita* has said that it is possible that the greatest danger that the internet poses to the future of Klal Yisroel is its negative impact on Bochorim's ability to learn Torah.
- **Separation between Yidden and Goyim** - Continuous exposure to *goyishe* culture facilitated through the internet is breeding a dangerous tolerance amongst *frum* Yidden to *goyishe* culture and values.

*Let's do it for our children!*

"It's a מצוה לפרסם: Children should never be on the internet!"

(HaGaon Rav Shmuel Kamenetzky Shlit" a)



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PART 3

(Quoted from the Mashgiach R' Matisyahu Salomon shlit"א, 7 years ago)



"A child going online is like ingesting a poison that can harm even the most healthy of children."  
- R' Elya Ber Wachtfogel shlit"א



"A youngster on the internet is 'Lapesach Chatas Rovetz' - an opening to Gehinnom."  
- R' Malkiel Kotler shlit"א



"It has become quite obvious that no filter is foolproof. This is particularly true in regard to our precious youth."  
- R' Matisyahu Salomon shlit"א

"It's a מצוה לפרסם: Children should never be on the internet!"  
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PART 4

(Quoted from the Mashgiach R' Matisyahu Salomon shlit"א, 7 years ago)

Gedolei Yisroel have spoken, "Children should not be on the internet."  
Rabbonim have spoken, "Children should not be on the internet."  
Mechanchim have spoken, "Children should not be on the internet."  
And, overwhelmingly, parents own common sense tells them,  
"My children do not belong on the internet."

And yet...

Somehow...

Too many of our precious kids *ARE* on the internet!

## MANY HAVE BEGUN TO TAKE STEPS:

Some won't allow internet into their home at all.

Some have the computer under lock and key.

Some have traded in their smart phones for a tablet which is kept far from children.

Some have just told their children 'NO'.

# LET'S DO IT FOR OUR CHILDREN!

"All technology decisions must be made based on Torah considerations." (Harav Elya Brudny)

