

PHONES & THE TEENAGE BRAIN

Your phone is **awesome**—it keeps you connected, entertained, and informed. But did you know the way you use it can affect your brain, mood, and energy levels? Instead of worrying about how much time you spend on your phone, let's talk about how you're using it—so you get all the perks without the downsides.

Why We LOVE Our Phones And That's Okay!

- Instant connection with friends
- Sense of independence and autonomy
- Endless entertainment—music, videos, memes, and more
- Access to anything you want to know or want to create

Phones are powerful tools, and they work best when you're using them *on purpose* instead of on autopilot.

Your Brain on Screens ???

Dopamine & Motivation

- Phones give quick hits of dopamine (the feel-good chemical).
- Too much instant gratification can make harder tasks, like homework, feel even harder.

Prefrontal Cortex (Self-Control & Focus)

- This part of your brain helps with decision-making and focus.
- Constant screen time can make it harder to resist distractions. Training your brain to take breaks helps you focus better when you need to.

Sleep & Energy

- Blue light tricks your brain into thinking it's still daytime.
- Less sleep means more stress, lower mood, and harder mornings.
- Try putting your phone away 30 minutes before bed and see if you feel more rested.



The Pick-Up Trick:

Try this: Instead of endless scrolling, make your phone use more intentional. It might sound backwards, but actually aim for more pick-ups.

Why? Short bursts of phone use keeps you from getting lost in scrolling, so you can enjoy your phone without it taking over your day!

SETTING SOME CHILL GUIDELINES (THAT'LL ACTUALLY HELP)

Set Times to Put Your Phone Down

- Meals (your food deserves your attention)
- Watching TV (multitasking actually makes it harder to enjoy)
- In the bathroom or before bed (having time to be alone with your thoughts is a good thing)

Why Boredom is Underrated

- Your brain can *breathe* without constant input.
- Boredom sparks creativity. Some of your best ideas happen when you're bored!

Take Control of Your Screen Time

- Feeling overwhelmed? Use Do Not Disturb.
- Too much bad news? Unfollow accounts that stress you out.
- Not in the mood to socialize? You don't have to reply right away.
- Comparing yourself to others? Take a break from social media for the day.

IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT TIME—IT'S ABOUT HOW YOU USE IT

Phone Use That Feels Good:

- FaceTiming friends
- Texting to stay connected
- Watching things that make you laugh
- Creating—videos, photos, writing



Phone Use That Drains You:

- Mindless scrolling out of boredom
- Getting sucked into negative news/drama
- Watching videos without enjoying them
- Comparing yourself to influencers



Your phone should work *for you*, not the other way around. Small tweaks in how you use it can make a huge difference in how you feel. No need to quit screens—just use them in a way that helps you live your best life, both online and offline.



Questions? Scan to contact or learn more about Jennifer Allison, Masters Level Intern

<https://flow.page/jenniferallisonfcc>

www.familyconnectionsounseling.com



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