

Updated December 4, 2023

Youth Technology Style Guide

This style guide is intended to ensure consistency across all campaign materials.

Target Audiences

Youth Audience

The youth audience includes young people ages 11 to 18 from diverse European, Asian, and US backgrounds. Recognize that today's youth are digital natives, savvy with technology but potentially unaware of its impact on their well-being and development.

Parents and Leaders Audience

The parents and leaders audience includes parents, guardians, teachers, and caregivers of these youth. While parents and guardians may be aware of technology, they are not as up-to-date as their youth. Adults and leaders may require more detailed information about technology use.

Personas

The product manager has access to the most recent personas for children and youth. These personas can be used to help create messages that resonate with your audience. The Correlation Research Division (CRD) can help you find recent studies about the people you want to reach or help you develop studies for different information.

Editorial Guidance

Content Structure

Logical Flow: Present ideas in a sequence that is easy to follow, with a clear beginning, middle, and end.

Clarity: Ensure language is understandable for a sixth grade reading level.

Concise: Focus messaging to avoid overwhelming or confusing the intended audience.

Focused: Keep the message on point, avoiding unnecessary information that can distract or confuse.

Grammar, Language, Vocabulary

First Person "I": Use the first person "I" when composing text that is intended to reflect personal experiences or viewpoints, as if narrated by a youth or an adult.

Second Person "You": Engage the audience directly by using the second person "You" when referring to actions, thoughts, or feelings that might apply to them. This approach is more personal and effective than using phrases like "youth and their parents."

Use "You" Over "We": To maintain a direct and engaging tone, use "you" rather than "we." This helps create a one-to-one connection with the reader and makes the content more relatable and actionable.

Language

Cross-check content with actual youth to ensure the language doesn't feel patronizing or alienating to them.

Simple and Clear: Use language appropriate for a 6th grade reading level. This ensures clarity and accessibility.

Relatable Language: Use language and expressions that resonate with youth without talking down to them.

Non-judgmental language: Avoid terms that could evoke feelings of shame or judgment. For example, phrases like "mindless scrolling" or "waste of time" should be avoided.

Vocabulary

Empowering: When addressing youth, choose words that motivate, engage, and empower, helping the reader to feel capable of making positive choices regarding technology use.

Technology Terminology: In the first instance, use the full term "technology." In following references, the abbreviation "tech" is acceptable.

Words to avoid: Any words that imply a need for perfection or create a boxed-in rigidity that can foster fear and shame, such as the word *control*. For example,

Don't: "I control my mobile technology; it doesn't control me."

Do: "I can set limits when using technology."

Define difficult words: A word like *boundaries* may need to be defined. For example,

You can set boundaries, or rules, for how to use technology.

Tone and Voice

Use active voice. Tone should be optimistic and supportive. Avoid negative statements about technology.

Welcoming: Craft messages that are friendly and inviting. Use familiar examples and language to explain tech-related concepts.

Compassionate: Show understanding for the diverse experiences of youth and their families. Acknowledge the challenges of managing technology use.

Global: Include stories and visuals that reflect various cultural backgrounds, ensuring global relatability.

Straightforward: Be direct and clear. Avoid jargon and simplify complex ideas.

Hopeful: Address the difficulties associated with technology in a way that provides hope and encouragement for better usage habits.

Humble: Communicate with respect and recognition for the contributions of others. Be open about the learning process that comes with technology use.

Inspiring: Motivate youth to engage with technology in a healthy, growth-oriented manner.

Content Objectives

Learn

Educate audiences about technology's benefits and challenges. Encourage them to learn and grow by reflecting on their experiences using technology.

Feel

Help audiences feel seen, heard, understood, and empowered.

Do

Help audiences learn to set boundaries when they feel technology controls their lives or when they feel technology negatively impacts their relationships.

Key Message: Set Boundaries to Harness the Power of Technology

Technology is a double-edged sword. For example, technology gives us access to the world's collective knowledge, yet, if left unchecked, it can control our time and attention. The key message is that we can set boundaries to harness technology's power. Setting boundaries shows that we respect ourselves and our well-being. During His mortal ministry, Jesus Christ showed us how to set boundaries.

Key Phrase: Take Charge!

This call to action encourages proactive and empowered technology use. It's a statement of autonomy and a commitment to use technology responsibly. The phrase should be used across all campaign materials. The exclamation point is always present.

Incorrect: Take Charge

Correct: Take Charge!

Key Sub-Phrases: "Know Your Purpose," "Make a Plan," and "Time to Pause"

These three sub-phrases may be used on their own as actionable steps to teach how to use technology in healthy ways.

Variations on Key Phrase Take Charge!

The key phrase "Take Charge!" can be paired with the sub-phrases to show the youth how to take charge. For example:

- Take Charge! Know Your Purpose
- Take Charge! Have a Plan
- Take Charge! Time to Pause

The key phrase "Take Charge!" can be paired with specific action-oriented taglines. Examples include:

- Take Charge! Set Tech Limits
Tagline usage: Content focused on wellness and setting healthy limits.
- Take Charge! Rule Your Screen Time
Tagline usage: Content focused on initiatives aimed at reducing excessive screen exposure.
- Take Charge! Direct Your Digital Path
Tagline usage: Content focused on being intentional about using technology.
- Take Charge! Connect IRL
Tagline usage: Content encouraging face-to-face interactions over virtual ones.
- Take Charge! Power Up Your Privacy Settings
Tagline usage: Content focused on how to protect personal information and safety online.
- Take Charge! _____
(left blank to have the youth write in how they choose to take charge of tech use).
- I'm Taking Charge
- I Can Take Charge
- Take Charge of My Digital Habits
- Take Charge of My Device Use
- How I Take Charge: _____ (left blank to have the youth write how they take charge of tech).

Variations on Sub-Phrases "Know Your Purpose," "Make a Plan," and "Time to Pause"

Sub-phrases may have taglines to focus on different aspects of the key message. For example:

- Purpose: Define Your Why
- Plan: Create Your Path
- Pause: Honor the Moment

Variations of "Know Your Purpose":

- Know My Purpose
- Remember My Purpose
- What's My Purpose?
- What's My Digital Way?
- My Purpose: Use Tech with Intent
- My Purpose: Know My Screen Goals
- My Purpose: _____ (left blank to have the youth write in their own purpose).

Variations of "Have a Plan":

- I Have a Plan
- I'm Making a Plan
- Make a Plan
- Have a Plan: Be Tech Smart
- Plan My Media Journey

- Plan My Device Time
- Remember My Plan
- What's My Plan?
- My Plan: _____ (left blank to have the youth write in their own plan)

Variations of "Time to Pause":

- I Have a Plan
- I Can Pause
- Take Time to Pause
- Pause My Screen Routine
- I Can Pause
- Pause to Recharge
- Pause to Relax
- Pause to Unwind
- Pause to Connect
- Pause to Connect IRL
- Pause: Take Tech Breaks
- Pause: I'm Taking a Tech Break
- Pause and Connect with: _____ (left blank to have the youth write in how they want to pause and connect with people, nature, self, God and so on)
- Pause When I: _____ (left blank to have the youth write in when they want to pause)

Usage for the key phrase and sub-phrases: These variations could be on stickers placed on laptops, tablets, the backs of phones, water bottles, mirrors, or inside book covers, planners, or homework folders. They can also be used as images youth can use as screen savers, reminders, social media posts, or text replies to notify others when taking a tech break.

Key Content: Purpose, Plan, Pause

Create messages that offer practical examples of clear, actionable steps one might take to manage technology. Avoid being descriptive; instead, leave room for youth and parents to develop their own ideas and strategies.

1. **Purpose:** Ask reflective questions about technology use and provide strategies for positive and intentional practices.

Example: Before you log on, ask yourself, "What is my purpose here?" Let purpose guide your technology journey.

2. **Plan:** Use planning as a tool to help manage technology use. Offer strategies like limited screen time and device-free zones to foster healthier technology habits. Boundaries create balanced technology use.

Example: Design a plan for your technology use. Choose what you want to do and set time limits to keep your life balanced.

3. **Pause:** Highlight the value of taking regular technology breaks for mental health, well-being, and connection to the world and people around them.

Example: Taking breaks from technology can be powerful. Regularly disconnect, reflect, and engage with the world around you. Jesus took time to pause and connect with His Heavenly Father. "And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone" (Matthew 14:23). Pausing allowed Jesus to renew His strength, helping Him to serve others better.

Content Strategy

Educational: Overusing technology is not a sign of personal weakness—technology is designed to keep your attention. The dopamine-driven feedback loop, a concept derived from neuroscience and psychology, stimulates the release of dopamine, a neurotransmitter in the brain associated with pleasure, reward, and motivation. Share the techniques technology giants use to keep us on our devices. Articles, infographics, and videos about setting healthy technology boundaries and stories or examples from scripture where boundaries led to positive outcomes should be shared.

Examples:

- **Purpose:** Step-by-step guides on how to define one's purpose in using technology.
- **Plan:** Templates and tools for planning and tracking technology use.
- **Pause:** Challenges and prompts to encourage reflection and taking breaks from technology.

Nurture Growth: Provide examples using personal narratives that showcase individuals managing technology effectively.

Open Conversations: Offer tips for youth and parents to create a balanced technology plan and encourage open dialogue about tech's risks and benefits.

Impact: Educate on how excessive screen time can affect mental health, body image, brain development, and sleep patterns.

Connection: Suggest alternatives to screen time that promote personal connections.

Encourage Feedback and Interaction: Encourage youth to share their stories and strategies for managing technology use.

Real-life Examples: Use relatable scenarios that reflect the diverse experiences of families and diverse ways of managing technology.

Action Plans: Provide templates and ideas for family technology plans that consider everyone's habits and needs.

Content for Parents/Guardians

- **Education:** Help parents learn about the tech platforms youth use to better understand and guide their technology use. Provide parents with the knowledge and tools to feel empowered to discuss with youth healthy technology boundaries.
- **Model Healthy Technology Habits:** Acknowledge that youth will notice and challenge any inconsistencies in what parents say versus what parents do. Helps parents embrace these moments by openly acknowledging their tech-related mistakes and modeling how to correct them.

- **Connect and Reflect:** Encourage parents to use their own mistakes or misuse of technology as opportunities for reflection—discuss shared experiences and recognize that mistakes are part of life. Highlight that by turning mistakes into teachable moments; both parents and youth can grow and make wiser choices with technology in the future.
- **Family Connection vs. Digital Distance:** Make it a priority to connect with youth and strengthen your relationship with them.
- **Family Technology Plan:** Help parents come up with a plan on technology use together with youth that serves the family's values and time together.
- **Collaboration:** Encourage an approach of collaboration with youth to understand their technology use, rather than dictating rules. Collaborate with youth in a way that allows them to make decisions with technology and learn from mistakes.

Content for Youth

- **Personal Reflection:** Create content that helps youth reflect on their relationship with technology and the emotional impact it has on them.
- **Constructive Use:** Highlight technology as a tool for learning, creativity, entertainment, positive communication, and other creative uses.
- **Peer Support:** Foster a culture of support among peers to encourage responsible tech use.
- **Authentic Personal Narratives:** Share stories of youth who have positively navigated technology. “If I can do it, you can too.”
- **Understand Technology:** Provide content that educates on the design of technology and its potential effects on behavior. Encourage youth to become aware of how technology can influence their actions and decisions.
- **Online Bullying:** Offer guidance on effective strategies to address and stop online bullying. Empower youth with the knowledge to protect themselves and others.
- **Seek Help:** Urge individuals to seek support if they experience negative effects from technology use. Suggest reaching out to trustworthy persons and provide resources. Provide links to additional resources, guides, and educational materials to support ongoing learning.
- **Crisis Intervention:** In urgent situations, such as a mental health crisis, provide clear instructions to contact the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline for immediate assistance.

Collaborative Content Strategy for Parents and Youth

Create content that speaks to both youth and their parents without alienating either group. For example, when discussing screen time, frame the topic around family activities and collective decision-making rather than individual behaviors. Provide case studies of successful parent-youth collaborations on technology use and include template conversation starters or activity ideas to inspire similar collaboration. Provide specific examples of what collaboration looks like in practice.

- **Modeling and Mentoring:** Stress the importance of parents modeling balanced technology use and youth mentoring parents on the latest technology trends and safety practices.
- **Celebrating Efforts:** Create content that celebrates the efforts of both parents and youth in managing technology.

Actionable Content

- **Purpose:** Encourage families to define the purpose of technology in their lives, whether for education, connection, or entertainment.
- **Plan:** Help parents and youth work together to set limits, such as screen time schedules and tech-free zones.
- **Pause:** Promote the idea that it's healthy to take breaks with activities like family game nights or outdoor activities.

For Illustrators

Narrative Visuals

Illustrate positive tech engagement and meaningful offline interactions.



Educational Visuals

Design infographics that distill the "Purpose, Plan, Pause" method and parent tips.



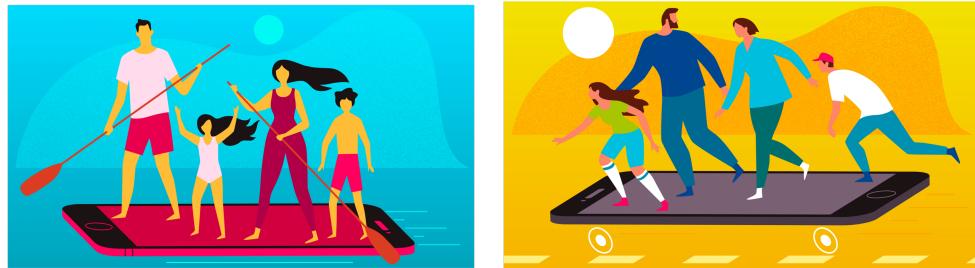
Visual Guidelines

- **Inclusive Imagery:** Use visuals that represent diverse family structures and experiences. Use visuals that represent all abilities.
- **Real-life Scenarios:** Illustrate common situations teens face regarding technology, such as the pressure to be always connected.
- **Motivational Visuals:** Create content that visually motivates and inspires teens to take charge of their tech use.

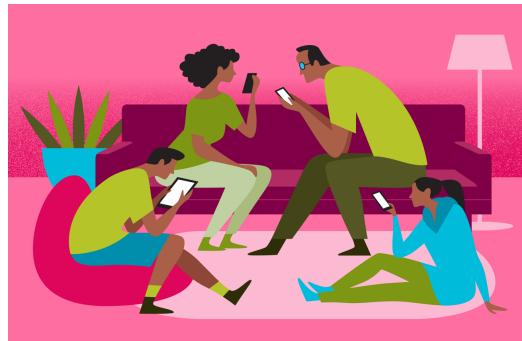


Visual and Interaction

- **Imagery:** Use visuals of youths engaging in a variety of fulfilling offline activities, reflecting diversity and genuine connection.



- **Contrast:** Show before-and-after scenarios: the isolated, screen-focused posture versus the engaged, vibrant interactions.



Visual Accessibility

For every image or infographic:

- Provide alt text describing the image.
- Use high-contrast colors for text and background.
- Ensure text overlays on images are legible and not too small.

