



Sample Information Sheet



Childhood is Precious

#ChangeTheNorm



Delay Social Media



Delay the Smartphone

What is the NAME School Parent Pact?

The NAME School Parent Pact is a grouping of families from our school who are concerned about the harmful effects of smartphones on our children. We have made mutual commitments to each other to delay giving our children smartphones until at least the end of Grade 8.

The NAME School Parent Pact is part of a network of similar school alliances across South Africa known as the Smartphone Free Childhood (SFC-SA).

Why delay smartphones?

There are numerous important reasons to delay smartphones for children. Smartphones:

- Are designed to hook children in and be used habitually
- Give children dopamine hits that have them return again and again
- Make children less social
- Shorten their capacity to focus and learn
- Change the physical architecture of their brains
- Distract children from deep reading and comprehension
- Make it harder for children to rest and sleep
- Get in the way of younger children's playtime and older children's sports/exercise activities (and contribute to childhood obesity)
- Shrink quality family time
- Inhibit the formation and nurturing of real-world connections and friendships
- Lower children's self-esteem (by forcing them to compare themselves to fake/unrealistic beauty and lifestyle standards)
- Increase stress in children by pressuring them to maintain a curated online image
- Escalate their risk of anxiety and depression
- Facilitate bullying
- Expose children to sexualised content
- Expose them to sextortion
- Increase the risk of child predation



email: info@sfc-sa.co.za | website: www.sfc-sa.co.za | NPC: 2025/270234/08 | PBO: 930086696

Board of Directors: K.L. Farina (BSc LLB LLM); L. Ntwampe (BCom Law, LLB); C.C. Thompson (BA Psych)
Head: Finance & Admin J.H. Stockill (ND Speech & Drama) Head: EdTech B. Desjardins (BA Honours, H.D.E)





I agree - but why form a group?

The peer pressure on our children to have a smartphone, and their fear of missing out on online social interactions with friends, is enormous.

Even though many parents feel uneasy about smartphones in young hands, our children's incessant pleading can cause us to doubt our decisions. Which parent hasn't been subjected to the "but-everybody-else-in-my-grade-has-an-iPhone" spiel? We begin to wonder if we are unfairly isolating our children from their friends and some of us end up giving in to our children's demands.

However, is it actually true that "everybody" in your child's class has a smartphone? No - but it is difficult for us to actually know this and respond to our children accordingly.

By rallying like-minded parents and forming the NAME School Parent Pact, we (and our children) are finally able to see in a very focused way that there are in fact many families just like ours who have decided to delay smartphone use. As parents, when we see that other families have taken the same decisions, we can feel reassured that we are not the only "mean parents" but rather that we have made sound decisions for the wellbeing of our own families. We are also finally able to say with confidence to our children: "You are not alone, we know of at least ten other children in your grade who also don't have an iPhone, for example your friend Jack". Hopefully that can also help reduce our children's fears of missing out.

Finally, forming a community with like-minded parents gives us strength in numbers and provides a place where we can continue to support and encourage each other to stay the course over the coming years.

What if my child already has a smartphone?

If you previously permitted your child to have their own smartphone, it is okay as a parent (motivated by your love and concern for their wellbeing) to change your mind!

Of course the conversation will need to be sensitive to your own child's situation, but in a parent pact, it helps to be able to share with your child that you know of other families in their own class/grade/school who have considered this issue and have concluded similarly that it is better to wait until (at least) the end of Grade 8.

If you think your child may be *clinically addicted* to their smartphone, then the NAME School Parent Pact might be appropriate for your family down the track. But as a first step, you should seek professional medical help and follow the advice of your medical professional about the best way to reverse course and break your child's addiction.

I would like to give my child a basic start phone. Can my family still be in the NAME School Parent Pact?

Absolutely! If your child's phone is a "start phone" used for calling and texting only (i.e. the phone is a tool and not a pocket-sized poker machine), you can most definitely still be part of the parent pact network.

What If my child needs a phone for safety reasons?

We acknowledge that for some families a phone is an important safety tool. A *smartphone* opens up a whole new world of danger, however. For this reason, we urge parents to consider a start phone instead.





Connecting, empowering and uniting parents, educators and regulators to delay smartphones and social media, establish phone-free schools, and safeguard the use of technology in education.

If GPS tracking functionality is important to your family, there are also voice/text/GPS smartwatches on the market that meet the needs of safety-conscious parents. On the SFC-SA website, find a good suggestion in the [“Community Corner”](#).

What will I be required to do if I join the NAME School Parent Pact?

By joining the NAME School Parent Pact, you are mutually committing to other parents in the group (and to parents in similar alliances across South Africa) that you will delay giving your child a smartphone until at least the end of Grade 8.

You are not actively required to do anything more than that (although partaking in community events is encouraged)!

Every three months you will receive one group email to support and help you maintain your commitment (this will be an open email and will include the details of other families in the group as it is important that we can identify each other).

Why does the commitment end at Grade 8?

The commitment is only a minimum commitment. Families can individually reassess their situation at the end of Grade 8 and determine whether or not they wish to give their children access to smartphones at that time.

How do I join the NAME School Parent Pact?

If you would like to join the NAME School Parent Pact, please visit www.sfc-sa.co.za and Sign the [Parent Pact](#). You will search your region, then primary school name, then fill in your child's grade, name and first letter of their surname.

AND

If you would like to join NAME School Parent Pact, please scan the QR code below to access the NAME School Parent Pact WhatsApp group.

More Information and Resources

<https://linktr.ee/SmartphonefreechildhoodSA>



email: info@sfc-sa.co.za | website: www.sfc-sa.co.za | NPC: 2025/270234/08 | PBO: 930086696

Board of Directors: K.L. Farina (BSc LLB LLM); L. Ntwampe (BCom Law, LLB); C.C. Thompson (BA Psych)
Head: Finance & Admin J.H. Stockill (ND Speech & Drama) Head: EdTech B. Desjardins (BA Honours, H.D.E)

