

# Smart Phones, Social Media and Mental Health



# Does your child need a smart phone?

<https://www.familylives.org.uk/advice/primary/health-and-development/does-your-child-need-a-mobile-phone>

# What's the up-side?

- ▶ Being able to check on their safety.
- ▶ Your children aren't left out from what their peers are doing.
- ▶ Useful for separated parents.
- ▶ What else?

# What's the down-side?

- ▶ It's hard to know what they're looking at.
  - ▶ It's hard to know what they're inadvertently seeing.
  - ▶ Online bullying.
  - ▶ Online grooming.
  - ▶ Access to social media.
- 
- ▶ What else?

# What's the worry about social media?

- ▶ Other people.
- ▶ Your personal mental health.

# When do we remove the child's freedom from peer pressure and peer scrutiny?

Until quite recently in history, children had times during the day when they were not having these demands on them.

Time during the day when they could not:

- ▶ Conform with their peers.
- ▶ Be available for their peers.
- ▶ Be a target for other children's unkindness.
- ▶ Be aware of what other people were saying about them.
- ▶ Find out what the most extreme/unhealthy/unkind people in the world were thinking and saying.
- ▶ Find out the most upsetting things happening in the world.



# When do we remove the child's freedom from peer pressure and peer scrutiny?

Between tea-time and breakfast, children had time to not worry about any of these things.

The outside world has always been full of horrible stuff but for the vast majority of people, home and childhood were safe from it all.

If they are on social media, on a phone they do not have this time. They live knowing that at any moment the outside world can come straight in to the home, straight past their parents and say something nasty or show them something nasty or at the very least put a demand on them.

Children and most adults don't have the skills to resist the pull.

# Demands, peer pressure and peer scrutiny?

“Do you like Claire?”

“What are you wearing to school tomorrow?”

“I hate my dad, he’s so mean...”

“I hate my life”

“I hate Claire”





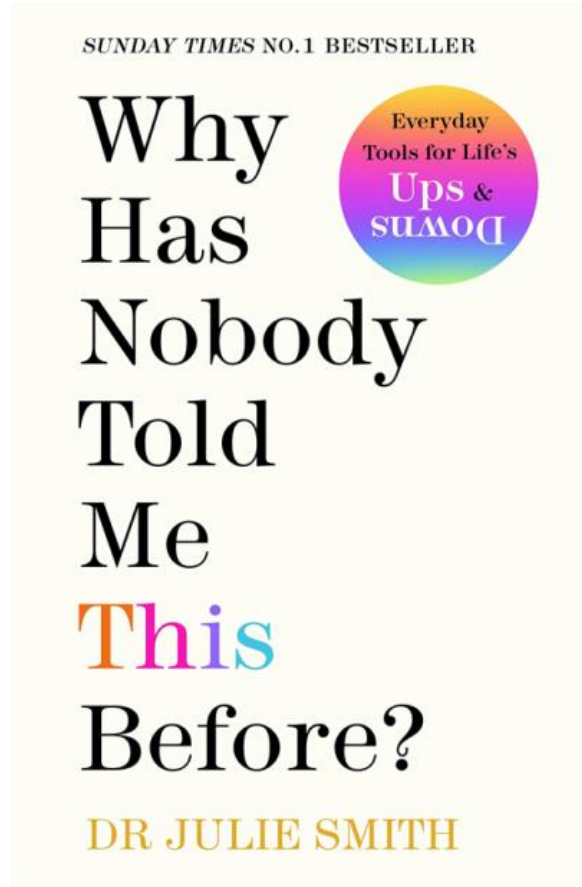
# When do we remove the child's freedom from peer pressure and peer scrutiny?

“Claire was so mean about you just now on Tik Tok”

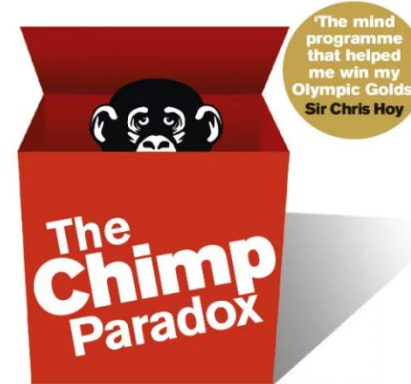
Liking and not liking and...silence.



# How does this link to mental health?



**Prof Steve Peters**  
CREATOR OF THE **GROUNDBREAKING** MIND MODEL



The  
**MIND  
MANAGEMENT**  
Programme for  
Confidence, Success and Happiness

The background of the image features abstract, overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of green, ranging from light lime to dark forest green. These shapes are primarily located on the right side and bottom of the frame, creating a modern, layered effect.

Rumination

Mind reading

Blaming

Insomnia

Overgeneralisation

Stress

Self-doubt

Being around angry and sad people

Perfectionism

Not practicing gratitude

Emotional reasoning

Catastrophising

Comparing yourself to others

Egocentric thinking

All or nothing thinking

Holding yourself up to impossible standards

# Why is it so hard to say no?

- ▶ From about the age of 8 children begin to care more and more about what their peers think and less and less about what their parents think.
- ▶ By the end of primary school it can seem like not being in the class WhatsApp group is the end of the world.
- ▶ We don't understand what it's like to grow up in this world.

# Why is it so important to say no?

Perfectionism

Blaming

Stress

Rumination

Insomnia

Being around angry and sad people

Self-doubt

Not practicing gratitude

Comparing yourself to others

Holding yourself up to impossible standards

Catastrophising



Children do not understand what they are losing when they beg to be part of this.

# When are they ready for?

The worst things in the world

...and the most mentally unhealthy influences?

Blaming

Perfectionism

Insomnia

Self-doubt

Comparing yourself to others

Catastrophising

Stress

Rumination

Being around angry and sad people

Not practicing gratitude

Holding yourself up to impossible standards

**Children do not understand what they are losing when they beg to be part of this.**