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How The Digital World Potentially Reinforces Insecure Attachment In Relationships

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Statement of the Problem: Millennial technology proffers previously unimaginable opportunities which have forever changed our relationships, workspaces, culture, and world-and attachments. On the darker side, technology (especially in the form of devices and the platforms/applications they deliver) has become the newest-and most potentially dangerous-"drug of choice" for many individuals, negatively impacting their biological, psychological, sociological, and career/academic health. Those struggling with anxiety, depression, loneliness, stress, relationship issues, and/or substance abuse seem to be at an even greater risk. Complaints of feeling "disconnected," disenfranchised, lonely, FOMO (Fear Of Missing Out), emotionally/socially dysregulated, or lacking an authentic community have increased across almost all demographics. Concurrently, device utilization, reliance, and in some cases even dependence has increased in a prolific swell. To this point, the potential negative impact of a parent/ caregiver's device engagement on attachment bonding with their children is a behavior of emerging concern and discussion.

Biography

Don Grant, Ph.D., MA, MFA, SUDCC IV, DAC is an internationally recognized and award-winning media psychologist, author, published researcher, Doctoral Addictions Counselor, educator with specific expertise in technology's impact on mental health, and National Advisor of Healthy Device Management for Newport Healthcare. He is a Fellow of the American Psychological Association (APA), served as the 2022 President of the APA Division 46 (The Society for Media Psychology & Technology), currently serves as a Division 46 Executive Board Member At Large, Chair of the APA (D46) "Device Management & Intelligence" committee, Co-Chair of the APA (D46) "Strategic Planning" committee, is an APA Advocacy Division Partner Liaison, APA Science Partner, and also Treasurer of the California Psychological Association Division VI (Media Technology and Communication). Dr. Grant's current research includes a large-scale study in partnership with the Newport Healthcare Center for Research and Innovation the potential impact of a caregiver's device use behaviors on attachment bonds.

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