

# Happy Parent

NOVEMBER EDITION

## Play is Essential

Playing is an essential part of being able to keep up with the ever-expanding flow of interaction, activity and knowledge in today's networked world — and not just for children, according to author Seely Brown, a former scientist and senior fellow at the Annenberg Center for Communication at the University of Southern California.

This is one area in which kids can actually help out grown-ups too. Brown says that watching children participate in the constantly changing and unpredictable flow of play in online virtual worlds and multiplayer games,

plus gaming communities such as Xbox Live, can actually help adults understand and adapt better.

In a world where the half-life of any skill we may

pick up is about five years, being able to reinvent

and augment our skills is not only desirable,

but also absolutely essential in the 21<sup>st</sup>



**"A three year old child is a being who gets almost as much fun out of a fifty-six dollar set of swings as it does out of finding a small green worm." ~ Bill Vaughan. .**

## Don't Let Technology Rule Your Household

In the good old days, all parents had to worry about was TV. In the 21st century, you've got to worry about texting, cell phones, Skype, the Internet, and other kinds of technology that kids are using.

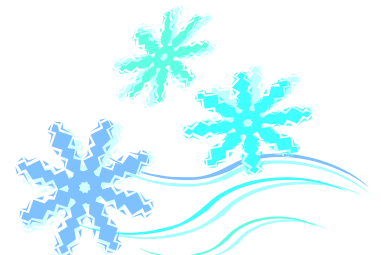
Don't freak out. Here's some basic advice for managing technology and your children:

**Create a contract.** Work with your children on an agreement spelling out some good rules for Internet use (including all other forms of communication, like cell phones). "No bullying on Facebook" might be a good place to start. Let kids know you'll be monitoring them.

**Establish a curfew.** Make a rule about shutting down computers and other electronics for the night at 8:30 or 9:15 so they don't keep your kids up late.

**Discourage texting in the passenger seat.** You can have some good conversations with your children while you're driving, as long as they're not holding another chat with their friends via cell phone.

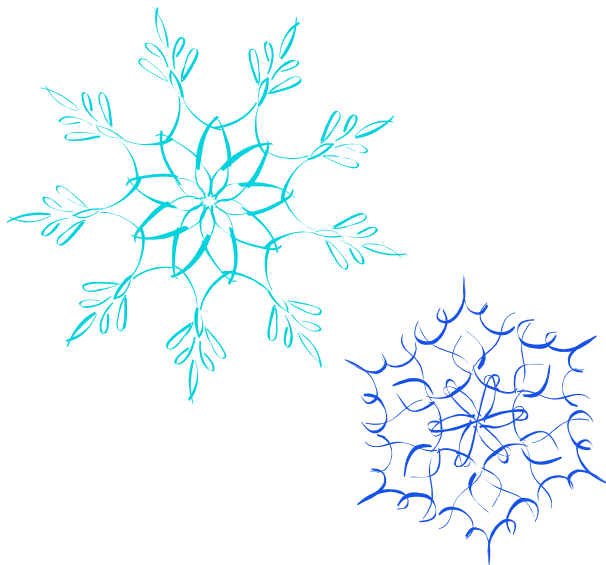
**Have a tech-free day.** Make Friday night a family night where no technology is allowed. This will remind your kids that they can relax and have fun without a computer.



# The Young Mind: A Wonderful Thing to Grow

One of the best things you can do for your children is to help them expand their minds. Here is a list of ideas for helping kids of any age sharpen their thinking and grow intellectually:

- \* **Read a newspaper every day**
- \* **Read magazines like National Geographic**
- \* **Observe wildlife in parks, zoos, and your own back yard**
- \* **Go to the library**
- \* **Research your family history**
- \* **Work on a crossword puzzle**
- \* **Write a story, poem, or song**
- \* **Learn how to play chess or other challenging board games**
- \* **Go to a museum**
- \* **Attend a play**



## November 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
28 <i>Billing Period begins</i>	29	30	31	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12 – <i>Programs Open</i>	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20 – <i>National Childs Day</i>	21	22	23	24 – <i>Billing Period ends</i>
25	26	27	28	29	30 <i>Billing</i>	