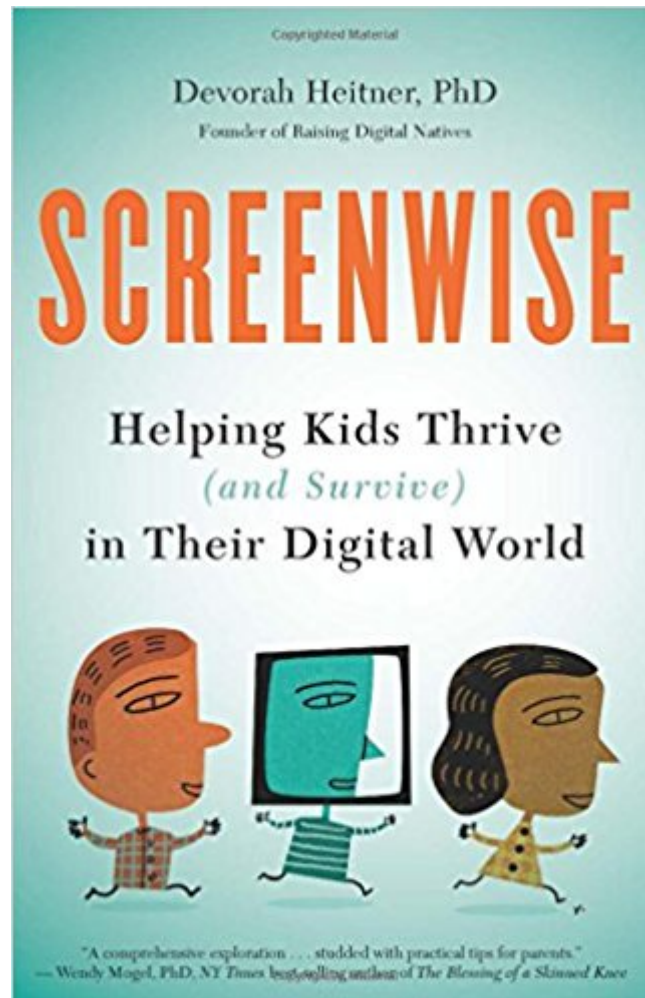




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# Screenwise: Helping Kids Thrive (and Survive) In Their Digital World



## Synopsis

Screenwise offers an encouraging perspective on how to thoughtfully guide kids in the digital age. Many parents and educators worry that kids are addicted, detached, or distracted because of their digital devices. Digital Citizenship expert Devorah Heitner, however, believes that technology offers huge potential to our children--if parents help them.Â Screenwise helps parents recognize that the social wisdom they have gained throughout their lives is a relevant and urgently needed supplement to their kid&apos;s digital savvy. These skills can help set kids up for a lifetime of success in a world fueled by technology. The core message of the book is that kids need mentoring, not (just) monitoring, and that kids deserve more empathy from adults about growing up in the digital age. Texting, gaming and social media are social spaces requiring social skills. The book offers advice on helping kids navigate friendship and identity issues that are common among new texters, gamers and social media users. Screenwise is a guide to understanding what it is like for children to grow up with technology, and to recognizing the special challenges--and advantages--that contemporary kids and teens experience thanks to this level of connection. Children&apos;s school experiences, family life and friendships are all shaped by digital connection. Educators and school leaders looking to engage parents around educational technology and wishing to create a culture of digital citizenship will benefit from this volume.Â Screenwise helps parents and educators move beyond discussions of "screentime" to evaluate different kinds of engagement with technology. Screenwise presents practical parenting "hacks": quick ideas that you can implement today that will help you understand and relate to your digital native. The book empowers parents to recognize ways that wisdom that they have gained throughout their lives is a relevant and urgently needed supplement to their kid&apos;s digital savvy. Based on real-life stories from families, the latest research, and Dr. Heitner&apos;s experience working with schools, Screenwise teaches parents what they need to know in order to raise responsible and empathetic kids in the digital age.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Acknowledging the impossibility of fully sheltering children from the world of digital media, Heitner provides guidance for parents navigating this ever-changing landscape. She covers common concerns about children of different ages, from preschool to young adult, and even looks at how the digital world influences adults. She pairs examples from what she has found working with families in her consulting firm with research in the field, such as into the ways kids use social media. This book provides useful advice for the parents of children of all ages and will serve well as a guide to help the different generations communicate, in person or online. (Publisher's Weekly) When you hand your child their first phone, you also need to support them with guidance about apps, games, group texts, sexting, porn, predators, geotagging and more. If that sounds overwhelming, get your hands on Devorah Heitner's *Screenwise: Helping Kids Thrive (and Survive) in their Digital World.* It's a reassuring, tech-positive book full of practical advice for parents to help kids manage their digital lives. (Dr. Laura Markham, AHA Parenting, Bestselling Author of *Peaceful Parent, Happy Kid*) "Heitner has done something significant and brave in taking on this wave of technology that so many of us assume we have no control over. We do have control, and we all have a lot to learn in this realm." (Mayim Bialik, Actor, Neuroscientist, Founder of GrokNation) "For all parents who feel like they can't keep up with today's technology, Devorah Heitner has come to the rescue. *Screenwise* doesn't judge or preach. It is full of empathy and insight, providing gems of guidance based on years of deep research and real talk with real kids. A pleasure to read." --Lisa Guernsey, director, Learning Technologies Project New America and; author of *Tap, Click, Read* and *Screen Time* "Find your way from 'screenworried' to 'screenwise.' It's time to get over your techno-guilt and become a more competent and confident media mentor--an enthusiastic tour guide and mindful role model--for your child in the digital age." --Chip Donohue, PhD, director, Technology in Early Childhood (TEC) Center at Erikson Institute "A must-read for twenty-first century parents! Empowered by Dr. Heitner's timely book, I feel infinitely more prepared to guide my son and daughter through the advantages and perils of modern-day connectedness. Issues like trust, relationships,

security, and balance are handled deftly by an expert who clearly knows the territory and shares her knowledge in a relatable way.Â Every modern-day parent should read this book. Highly recommended."--Mary O'Donohue, author of *When You Say "Thank You," Mean It: And 11 Other Lessons for Instilling Lifelong Values In Your Children*

Devorah has tackled the challenging, modern issue of raising kids in today's digital world head-on.Â Screenwise gives practical ideas and advice for parents struggling with this issue and really enables them to turn what could be a problem into an opportunity.Â Screenwise will help not only the parents in our district, but also the teachers when it comes to ideas and strategies for truly helping kids thrive in their digital world."--Carl Hooker,Â Director of Innovation, Eanes ISD, Author of the *Mobile Learning Mindset* book series

Â "Grounded in the latest research, it will help parents develop their resourcefulness in navigating what can seem like a worrying new world."---Sonia Livingstone, author of *The Class: Living and Learning in the Digital Age*)

"Screenwise is a comprehensive exploration of a timely and important topic studded with practical tips for parents."--Wendy Mogel, PhD, clinical psychologist, Â New York Times best-selling author of *The Blessing of a Skinned Knee*

This book is so much more than I expected (and I expected a lot)! It's easy to read, it covers all that concerns us parents when it comes to our children and media & tech, it offers tips and advice... But most of all, it eradicates judgment and encourages a positive perception of all things digital, which I guess is the only way for parents to really understand the world our kids live in. 'Screenwise' is a very useful tool and a reference book with a bit of reflection, a lot of ideas and loads of understanding. I live in Spain and there are not many books about this topic and this perspective, so I'll definitely recommend it!

Devorah's book is the much-needed parenting support that my husband and I were looking for as we seek to remain fully engaged in --and thrive sanely within-- our kids' active and ever-expanding tech lives (our kids are 10 and 12). The encouragement, research and thoughtful reasoning in this book made us feel that we are indeed on the right track as we continue to mentor, learn about and grow with our kids as we navigate the ever-changing digital space(s) they (and we) inhabit.

SCREENWISE isn't what you'd expect from a typical media literacy book. Its advice on how to help children learn to ask relevant questions about the content of games, movies, music,

or TV programs is brief and arguably too general to be all that useful. If I was judging it based on that criteria, the book would probably get a 3-4 star rating. I give it 5 stars because SCREENWISE is a very, very good parenting text about how to help children negotiate life with cell phones and social networks. It would be a great gift for parents of children/teens who carry their own phones or tablets or ever log on to a social network or multiplayer gaming site (like Minecraft). This highly accessible book is written as a conversation between the author and the reader, but is clearly research based with a sound understanding of child development and developmentally appropriate expectations. She skillfully distinguishes between old issues in new wrapping and new issues introduced by the constant connectivity, immediacy, and permanency unique to the digital world. To help parents see things through their children's eyes, Heitner includes the voices of kids (culled through her own research). She gives parents a heads up about the things they need to look out for and then provides practical advice about how to engage children in conversations that will build the skills they need to productively and ethically manage life with devices on their own. Her mantra is "monitoring cannot substitute for mentoring," which is why I think this counts as a valuable addition to a media literacy library. This is not a perfect book. As Heitner recognizes, it is entirely focused on middle and upper-middle class families. It will have limited value for those who aren't part of that demographic. For example, it doesn't address cultural conflicts unique to new immigrants and their American children or the challenges faced by families in homes that have sub-standard or no Internet or cloud connectivity. It assumes a parenting style that relies on negotiating with children and engaging them in conversation about sensitive issues "a practice that is not universally accepted, either because it doesn't mesh with parents' values or doesn't match their skill set. Despite the gaps, there are millions of families that are grappling with the exact issues that Heitner addresses. For them, this book is gold.

A thoughtful and insightful resource for all parents of "Digital Natives" I learned of this book through Mayim Bialik's Kveller article and immediately wanted to know more. After watching Devorah's TED Talk as well, I ordered the book and then read it cover to cover in just a few days. It gives parents useful and wise ways to guide their children through a new world of digital citizenship and social dynamics. I love the approach of giving the kids "training wheels" and the ideas about creating family accounts to mentor children in how to select who to follow on different social media sites. It helped to quell many of my concerns about how to approach this area of parenting with my children and is a resource to which I will certainly return (and reread). I have recommended this book to

many friends and look forward to creating a common approach within our community. Thank you, Devorah, for this important contribution to the body of parenting literature.

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