

Project Summary Page:

Project Purpose:

Our Digital Stories for Change project's **purpose** is to show how the way we use technology can either **strengthen human connection** or quietly **pull us away** from it. Our video utilizes **storytelling** as a key tool to raise awareness about the importance of striking a balance in the use of technology. This video compares William and Tyler together to show the correct uses and the incorrect uses of technology. This shows the effect of technology on relationships, well-being, and daily activities.

The viewer is able to understand the good and the bad just by watching the two characters in comparison. Then they are shown two ways to use technology more healthily, creating **boundaries** of use of technology and **rules** of use for technology, while indirectly communicating that they have the power to change others just by reaching out. Our goal was not to reject technology, but to promote use that supports healthy lifestyles and positive social connections, creating a better quality of life.

Relationship to Family and Consumer Sciences:

This project directly focuses on the Family and Consumer Sciences through **12.0 human development**. Our project has many correlations to the standards, one of those include **12.1**, the analysis of principles of human growth and development across the life span. This was done by looking at the effects of **habits** and demonstrating the **consequences/benefits** of them. In our stories, we outlined the consequences of bad habits through William, whose phone use was an addiction that negatively impacted his life, and the good habits through Tyler, who used his phone to help him with the tasks he was doing. An important factor that helped convey this was the environment William and Tyler were in. We then created a catalyst of William Changing

through a vision he had, where it showed how much of his life he is wasting. William then went on learning he doesn't need to move away from his phone but **move with his phone** while using it more beneficially, demonstrating **character growth**.

Another specific standard our project shows is 12.3.2, the analysis of the role of communication on **human growth** and development. We did our best to show this through frequent messages from Tyley to William. These were meant to not only show Tyler helping a friend, but also how technology was able to be used to make it happen. Though William initially ignored Tyler's messages, they eventually ended up being the guidelines that helped bring William to **overcoming** his problem. Then, once William was able to move past the bulk of his problems, it was shown that Tyler was there with him to help him grow, which really shows the value of **social interaction**.

Relevant Research:

According to the National Library of Medicine, research shows that "Kids who use cell phones often experience more depression and anxiety, while students who don't use them tend to be calmer and relaxed." Studies also show that "Using phones at night can lead to poor health and weaker memory." We showed this in our video by having William fall asleep while using technology, which causes him to struggle waking up the next day.

Another study we used was from the Department of Cognition at the University of Barcelona. They explained that "Music creates a more emotional and anticipatory dopamine reward, while short-form videos give an instant, intense, and addictive dopamine response." We included this idea in our video by showing both Tyler and William being affected by both types of media.

However, we didn't want to make technology seem all bad. Research from the University of Arkansas shows that "Technology has both positive and negative effects. It helps people stay connected, but it can also make it hard to unplug and relax." Our video shows both sides of technology and the different outcomes of each.

Background and Point of View:

Today, **95% of teenagers own a phone**, and while we all love it for many different reasons, we have all used it in ways that can be better spent. Right now is a very important time in our lives where we learn to **socialize** and **prepare for** what we will do after high school, but it's also the time in our lives where we can be the most impulsive and seek amusement. In classrooms today, it is very common to see students on their phones, avoiding schoolwork, who often are the same students who complain about the work.

It's not just during school; even at home, there are more beneficial things that time can be used for, rather than being spent doing nothing productive. This is because of **procrastination** and its relation to **hedonism**. And with the growth of technology, these problems are becoming more and more common. We believe that everybody has felt the experience of not understanding the use of time, especially how what feels like a few **minutes** can quickly escalate to **hours**, and our project was made to highlight that.

Change and Awareness Goal:

The goal for our project is to inspire viewers to reflect on their own technology habits, recognize the impact of technology on relationships and well-being, and make informed choices that support balance and healthy living. This project aims to promote awareness and encourage small, meaningful steps that lead to healthier interactions with technology at home, school, and in the community.