

**Recommendations for Parents about  
Use of Cell Phones and Other Devices**

As we move to a 1-to-1 environment and based on what we know about brain development and middle schoolers, the Altamont Middle School strongly recommends and encourages the following guidelines to parents:

- A child should not have regular access to a cell phone until 6th grade at the earliest. Discussing expectations for appropriate use and consequences, and having a signed agreement in place, should precede any child having her/his own phone.
- Parents should monitor their child's digital footprint by maintaining their own accounts on the same platforms their children use, frequently checking texts, e-mails and social media posts, and having consistent conversations about appropriate use. Consider this: would you drop your child off in downtown Chicago without supervision? Think of the internet and social media platforms as virtual versions of downtown Chicago.
- ALL digital devices should be charged in a common area. They should not be in a child's room at night.
- Screen time should be limited and not take place within 30 minutes before bedtime.
- When inappropriate content has been sent among students, we encourage parents to address the incident in a constructive and collaborative way. If an incident affects a student's ability to perform at school or if we find out about it, even if it occurred off campus, we will have to become involved.
- Children may feel pressured to be in constant contact with each other 24/7, however they do not have the social and emotional skills to moderate their participation in balance with the rest of their lives. Their perception is that they need to communicate with peers constantly and doing so is unhealthy and adds additional stress.

For more information about any of these topics, please contact:  
Ally Leonard, Head of Middle School at [aleonard@altamontschool.org](mailto:aleonard@altamontschool.org)

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