further reading

Comprehensive Overviews

If you wish to learn more about the complex issues surrounding the digital transformation of K-12 education, the following comprehensive overviews are a good place to begin.

Personalized Learning and the Digital Privatization of Curriculum and Teaching
National Education Policy Center
Faith Boninger, Alex Molnar, and Christopher Saldana
April 30, 2019
From the introduction: "Personalized learning programs are proliferating in schools across the United States, fueled by philanthropic dollars, tech industry lobbying, marketing by third-party vendors, and a policy environment that provides little guidance and few constraints. In this research brief, the authors consider how we got to this point. Beginning with an examination of the history of personalized learning and the key assumptions made by its proponents, they review the research evidence and reflect on the roles and possible impacts of the digital technologies deployed by many programs."

Online Learning: What Every Parent Should Know
Network for Public Education
March 2018
From the introduction: "The 18-page guide is a parent-friendly review of the research on virtual schools, online courses, blended learning and behavior management apps. It also includes a discussion of the student privacy issues that arise when highly sensitive personal student data is collected by online programs and then distributed to third-party vendors without parent knowledge or consent."

Asleep at the Switch: Schoolhouse Commercialism, Student Privacy, and the Failure of Policymaking
National Education Policy Center
Faith Boninger, Alex Molnar, and Kevin Murray.
August 15, 2017
From the introduction: "Digital technologies used in schools are increasingly being harnessed to amplify corporate marketing and profit-making and extend the reach of commercializing activities into every aspect of students' school lives. In addition to the long-standing goal of providing brand exposure, marketing through education technology now routinely engages students in activities that facilitate the collection of valuable personal data and that socialize students to accept relentless monitoring and surveillance as normal. This...report on schoolhouse commercialism trends examines how technological advances, the lure of "personalization," and lax regulation foster the collection of personal data and have overwhelmed efforts to protect children's privacy."

What is Summit Learning and why should parents and students be concerned about its use?

Parent Coalition for Student Privacy

Updated October 2019

Overview: Summit Learning represents the most comprehensive, well-financed effort to introduce computer based "personalized learning" into America's public schools. Sponsored by the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative and the Gates Foundation, among other Silicon Valley philanthropies, Summit has faced strong parent and student opposition as it attempts to spread its model across the country.

Recommended Reading

Books: Screens, schools, and kids

Patricia A. Cantor and Mary M. Cornish, *Techwise Infant and Toddler Teachers: Making Sense of Screen Media for Children Under 3*

Infants and toddlers – the so-called "touchscreen generation" – are living in a screen media-saturated world. They are the target market for ever growing numbers of apps, TV shows, electronic toys, and e-books. Making sense of the complex issues associated with screen media in the lives of children under 3 can be challenging for the adults who care for them. There is a strong need among teachers (and parents) of infants and toddlers for guidance related to the appropriate role of screen media in early care and education. This book, by Action Network Advisory Board Member Patricia Cantor and co-author Mary Cornish, explores why and how infant and toddler teachers need to be techwise in order to understand the implications of screen media for children's learning and development.

Joe Clement and Matt Miles, *Screen Schooled: Two Veteran Teachers Expose How Technology Overuse Is Making Our Kids Dumber*

As two veteran teachers who have taught thousands of students, Joe Clement and Matt Miles have seen firsthand how damaging technology overuse and misuse have been to our students. Rather than becoming better problem solvers, kids look to Google to answer their questions for them. Rather than deepening students' intellectual curiosity, educational technology is too often cumbersome and distracting, causing needless frustration and greatly extending homework time. Rather than becoming the great equalizer, electronic devices are widening the achievement gap. On a mission to educate and empower parents, Clement and Miles provide many real-world examples and cite multiple studies showing how technology use has created a wide range of cognitive and social deficits in our young people. They lift the veil on what's really going on at school: teachers who are powerless to curb cell phone distractions; zoned-out kids who act helpless and are unfocused, unprepared, and antisocial; administrators who are too-easily swayed by the pro-tech "science" sponsored by corporate technology purveyors. They provide action steps parents can take to demand change and make a compelling case for simpler, smarter, more effective forms of teaching and learning.

Victoria L. Dunckley, MD, *Reset Your Child's Brain: A Four-Week Plan to End Meltdowns, Raise Grades, and Boost Social Skills by Reversing the Effects of Electronic Screen-Time*

Increasing numbers of parents grapple with children who are acting out without obvious reason. Revved up and irritable, many of these children are diagnosed with ADHD, bipolar illness, autism, or other disorders but don't respond well to treatment. They are then medicated, often with poor results and unwanted side effects. Based on emerging scientific research and extensive clinical experience, integrative child psychiatrist Dr. Victoria Dunckley has pioneered a four-week program to treat the frequent underlying cause, Electronic Screen Syndrome (ESS).

Richard Freed, *Wired Child: Reclaiming Childhood in a Digital Age*

Kids' obsessive use of video games, social media, and texting is eclipsing their connections with family and school – the two most important contributors to their wellbeing. The result: a generation of kids who suffer from soaring rates of emotional and academic problems, with many falling prey to an epidemic of video game and internet addictions. Child and adolescent psychologist Richard Freed offers a practical guide to building your child's bond with family and fostering school success amid the allure of digital screens.

Nicholas Kardaras, MD, *Glow Kids: How Screen Addiction Is Hijacking Our Kids – and How to Break the Trance*

We've all seen them: kids hypnotically staring at glowing screens in restaurants, in playgrounds and in friends' houses – and the numbers are growing. Like a virtual scourge, the illuminated glowing faces – the Glow Kids – are multiplying. But at what cost? Is this just a harmless indulgence or fad like some sort of digital hula-hoop? Some say that glowing screens might even be good for kids – a form of interactive educational tool. Don't believe it. In *Glow Kids*, Dr. Nicholas Kardaras examines how technology – more specifically, age-inappropriate screen tech, with all of its glowing ubiquity – has profoundly affected the brains of an entire generation.

Jean Rogers, *Kids Under Fire: Seven Simple Steps to Combat the Media Attack on Your Child*

When it comes to digital devices, kids want them. Their friends have them. And the ages get younger and younger every year. The more options, the more parents feel out of control. Through humorous, poignant stories of her own children and those of families she has coached, Fairplay's own Jean Rogers reveals an easy, step-by-step process that works for any shape family and any lifestyle. Learn the Kids Media Diet Litmus Test and other simple ways to raise healthy children in the digital age.

Naomi Schaefer Riley, *Be the Parent, Please: Stop Banning Seesaws and Start Banning Snapchat: Strategies for Solving the Real Parenting Problems*

In *Be the Parent, Please*, former *New York Post* and *Wall Street Journal* writer Naomi Schaefer Riley draws from her experience as a mother of three and delves into the latest research on the harmful effects that excessive technology usage has on a child's intellectual, social, and moral formation. Throughout each chapter, she backs up her discussion with "tough mommy tips" – realistic advice for parents who want to take back control from tech.

Tiffany Shlain, *24/6: The Power of Unplugging One Day A Week*

Internet pioneer and filmmaker Tiffany Shlain takes the reader through a journey she has forged with her family over a 10-year period of having a Tech Shabbat. One day a week has completely changed their lives. Shlain offers lessons they have learned and a blueprint for how to do it in your family, how to get a spouse or children on board, and how to enjoy the results – a more connected, less virtual, and meaningful practice in a complex and overwhelming world.

Catherine Steiner-Adair, *The Big Disconnect*

Clinical psychologist Catherine Steiner-Adair takes an in-depth look at how the internet and the digital revolution are profoundly changing childhood and family dynamics, and offers solutions parents can use to successfully shepherd their children through the technological wilderness.

Sherry Turkle, *Reclaiming Conversation: The Power of Talk in a Digital Age*

We live in a technological universe in which we are always communicating. And yet we have sacrificed conversation for mere connection. Renowned media scholar Sherry Turkle investigates how a flight from conversation undermines our relationships, creativity, and productivity – and why reclaiming face-to-face conversation can help us regain lost ground.

Jean Twenge, *iGen: Why Today's Super-Connected Kids Are Growing Up Less Rebellious, More Tolerant, Less Happy – and Completely Unprepared for Adulthood – and What That Means for the Rest of Us*

With generational divides wider than ever, parents, educators, and employers have an urgent need to understand today's rising generation of teens and young adults. Born in the mid-1990s to the mid-2000s and later, iGen is the first generation to spend their entire adolescence in the age of the smartphone. With social media and texting replacing other activities, iGen spends less time with their friends in person – perhaps why they are experiencing unprecedented levels of anxiety, depression, and loneliness. A highly readable first look at how today's members of iGen – the children, teens, and young adults born in the mid-1990s and later – are vastly different from their millennial predecessors, and from any other generation, from the renowned psychologist and author of *Generation Me*.

Selected Recent Articles

Selected Articles on Parent Activism

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"[Schools Wrestle With Privacy of Digital Data Collected on Students.](#)" By Betsy Morris, *The Wall Street Journal*, July 10, 2019.

"[Citizens File Suit Over Controversial Seattle Schools Science Curriculum.](#)" By Ann Dornfield, *KUOW,* July 9, 2019.

"[Parents Go Legal on Austin Schools over Student iPads](#)." By Jenifer Joy Madden, *Durable Human* (blog). June 23, 2019.

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"[Peter's Take: End APS 1:1 IPad Program In The Elementary Grades.](#)" By Peter Rousselot, *ARLnow*, April 10, 2019.

"[Why Parents and Students Are Protesting an Online Learning Program Backed by Mark Zuckerberg and Facebook.](#)" *The Washington Post*, December 20, 2018.

"[Brooklyn Students Hold Walkout in Protest of Facebook-designed Online Program](#)**.**" *New York Post,* November 10, 2018.

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"Give Us Personalized Learning without the Algorithms." *Renegade Teacher* (blog), June 19, 2019.

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