

Healthy Digital Habits in Parents of Infants

ABOUT

Parent smartphone use (SPU) has been negatively associated with parent-child interactions and responsiveness. Heavy SPU and social media use among adults has also been linked with poor sleep, mood, and stress, while poor parent mental health and stress are linked to more negative parent-child interactions. Thus, parent SPU during infancy and early childhood may be an important opportunity to intervene to establish healthy SPU habits, and potentially improve parent sensitivity, parent-child attachment, and more.

Our aim is to examine real-time parent phone use and linkages with parent mental health. Currently, we are conducting a pilot study where parent complete 5 days of nightly online surveys/time diaries (indicating times physically with their child, mealtimes, etc.) as well as install an app on their phone (which tracks their phone use continuously across the 5 days). This pilot work and these methods have been directly applied to the methods proposed in two grant applications submitted to the National Institutes of Health. If awarded, these methods will be used in this NIH grant work and in other future work. Preliminary pilot results suggest a connection between real-time parent phone use around their children and daily parent depressive symptoms. For example, the Figure 1 presents some preliminary model results for how depressive symptoms would change from day-to-day at various levels of parent phone use while around their child.

ABOUT CONT...

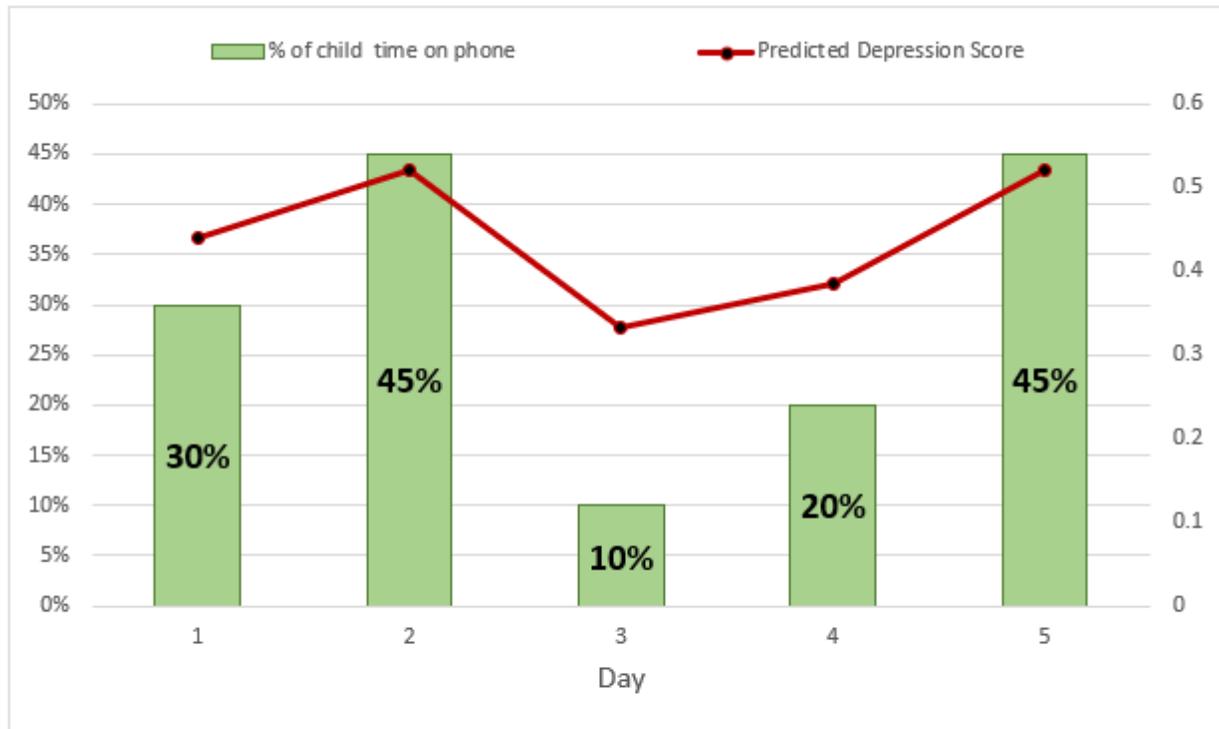


Figure 1. Predicted values of depression across each day (red line), according to our model results, for a simulated participant with these proportions of their parent-child time each day on their phone (green bars).

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PUBLICATIONS/ PRESENTATIONS

McDaniel, B. T. (April 2021). *Parent depression and phone use around their children: A phone tracking and daily survey study*. Paper presentation: Society for Research on Child Development.

(Grant under review) National Institutes of Health (NINR), R21, 04/2021 – 03/2023, *Healthy digital habits in parents of infants*, Role: PI (25% FTE), Co-Is: Jenny Radesky, Jessica Pater, Connie Kerrigan, & Michelle Drouin.

(Grant under review) National Institutes of Health (NICHD), R01, 04/2021 – 03/2026, *Maternal technology use during feeding and infant self-regulation and growth*, Role: Co-I (20% FTE), PI: Alison Ventura; Co-Is: Alison Miller, Suzanne Phelan, Julie Lumeng, & Jeff Sklar.