Managing Children's Gadget Usage: Parental Strategies and their Impact on Family Relationships

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Abstract: This study explores how parents manage their children's gadget usage and examine how these strategies shape the quality of family relationships. Focusing on families in Gubat, Sorsogon, this research investigates the various techniques parents employ to regulate screen time, supervise digital activities, and encourage balanced technology use. It also considers parents' perceptions of both the opportunities and the risks that digital devices bring into the home, particularly in relation to communication patterns, family bonding, and overall household dynamics. Guided by a mixed-methods research design, the study gathered quantitative data from parents of children ages 6 to 16 through structured questionnaire, complemented by qualitative insights obtained from open-ended responses. These data captured both common practices and deeper personal experiences regarding screen time limits, content monitoring, household technology rules, shared digital engagement, and the promotion of alternative recreational routines.

The findings revealed that active, communicative, and collaborative parenting strategies contribute significantly to healthier and more harmonious family relationships. Approaches that involve negotiating rules, discussing digital content, and spending time together in both digital and non-digital activities strengthen mutual trust, enhance communication, and foster a supportive home environment. In contrast, highly restrictive, punitive, or inconsistently applied strategies often lead to increased parent–child conflict, reduced openness, and weakened cooperation. Parents acknowledged the benefits of gadget use—such as educational value, entertainment, and convenience—yet also expressed concerns regarding excessive screen exposure, reduced interpersonal interaction, and the risk of encountering inappropriate content.

Overall, the study emphasizes the importance of balanced, flexible, and developmentally appropriate management strategies that combine clear expectations with open communication and supportive guidance. Such strategies are essential for promoting healthy digital habits while preserving positive family interactions. The implications highlight the need for parent education initiatives focused on digital literacy and responsible screen time, as well as the role of schools and community organizations in supporting families through digital citizenship programs and capacity-building activities. By underscoring the shared responsibility of parents, educators, and local stakeholders, the study advocates for collaborative efforts to nurture healthy digital behaviors and strengthen family well-being in an increasingly technology-driven society.

Keywords: Parental Strategies, Gadget Usage, Children, Family Relationships, Screen Time, Digital Behavior, Digital Literacy.

I. INTRODUCTION

In the digital age we live today, children are using gadgets including smartphones, tablets, and computers with increasing frequency, sometimes even when they are very young. These gadgets can be beneficial to learning and but using them too much or without supervision can cause problems with development, behavior, and relationships. As a result, parents have to find different ways to keep their children's gadget monitored not only to protect their health but also to keep and improve familial relationships. It is important to know how these parenting styles work and how well they work in order to deal with the complicated relationship between technology use and family life. This study investigates the strategies employed by parents to manage gadget usage and analyzes the impact of these interventions on the overall quality of familial interactions and relationships.

Parents are extremely significant when it comes to controlling and limiting how their children use gadgets. It can be hard to find a balance between giving them the freedom to use digital tools and making sure that these tools do not affect family relationships. The ways children use technology change as technology changes. That is why it is becoming more and more important for parents to use effective methods which will not only promote healthy use of gadgets but also encourage strong family ties.

Several international researchers have examined Parental Strategies for Managing Children's Gadget Usage and its Impact on Family Relationships, including: Sidharta (2021) who asserted that familial communication patterns significantly influence the behavior and habits of children. Active parental engagement, coupled with an empathetic and consistent communication approach, cultivates an environment that enhances children's comprehension. In this digital era, familial communication patterns are essential, as technology profoundly influences the dynamics of family relationships (Anisti et al., 2023; Wijayanti et al., 2024). Digital technology makes it easier to talk to people who are far away, but it can also make people rely on their devices. To keep relationships strong, close the generation gap, and make sure that technology doesn't take the place of meaningful face-to-face interactions, families need to talk to each other well. Ashwini Tadpatrikar said that good communication within families is important for keeping emotional ties and healthy relationships, especially now that people use technology more. To lessen the bad effects of digital devices on family interactions, parents need to be actively involved in meaningful conversations (Tadpatrikar et al., 2021).

Parents should teach their children how to use gadgets in a way that is both educational and consistent. Talking to them about the limits of gadget use and encouraging them to do other, more useful things, like playing outside or being with friends, can help. Parents can teach children the good and bad things about using gadgets by showing that they can understand and communicate clearly. They can also make it easier for them to interact without gadgets so they can focus more on social interactions. (Fitri, 2022)

As digital technology becomes more common like smartphones, tablets, and other electronic devices. The issue on how to control children's gadget use in the Philippines has become a great concern. Lots of parents are using different methods to make sure that their children's screen time is balanced with other things they need to do, like schoolwork, exercise, and spending time with family.

Parents often set clear limits on how much time their children can spend on screens, use apps or parental controls to keep an eye on their usage, and encourage them to play outside and spend time with friends. Some parents stress on importance of digital literacy by teaching them how to use technology responsibly and making sure that their online activities are in line with their values and educational goals. There are also plans to make certain parts of the house off-limits to gadgets, especially during meals and before bed, to encourage better communication between family members and better sleep habits.

Even with these efforts, many Filipino parents still have problems, like the temptation to play video games, use social media, and keep up with the digital trends that their children are into. This has led to ongoing talks about how important it is to find a balance between using technology to help learning and growth and not letting it get in the way or make people dependent on it.

Filipino parents are finding new ways to control their children's use of gadgets by using discipline, education, and participation in their children's digital activities. A lot of parents in the province of Sorsogon, especially in Gubat, are using different methods to control their children use gadgets so that they can improve their relationships with each other at home. Some of these strategies are limiting screen time, encouraging children to play outside, and making family time a priority. Parents also talk about the importance of balancing technology with face-to-face interactions and open communication. Parents in Gubat want to make sure that technology improves learning and brings the family closer together through these methods.

This study took place in Gubat, Sorsogon, a coastal town in the Bicol Region of the Philippines. Gubat is a rural community that, like many others, has seen a quick change in how people use technology, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study focused on parents who have children between the ages of 6 and 16. The study investigated what parents in this rural area do to regulate their children using gadgets. The research additionally investigated at how families balance technology with traditional values, family bonding, and community involvement, and how these strategies affect relationships in the home.

This study is important and timely, especially now that screen time has increased. It looks at a number of parental strategies that can help manage children's gadget use and improve relationships at home. This study aims to identify strategies that assist parents in establishing a healthy and balance usage by exploring various approaches, including imposing screen time limits, promoting face-to-face interactions, and employing technology for educational and interpersonal purposes.

II. OBJECTIVES

The primary goals of this research are to investigate strategies parents use to manage their children's gadget usage and assess the impact of these strategies on family relationships. Specifically, the study aimed to:
- Identify the strategies employed by parents in managing their children's gadget usage.
- Examine how these parental strategies influence the extent and nature of children's gadget usage.
- Analyze the impact of parental strategies on family relationships.
- Explore the challenges encountered by parents in managing children's gadget use.

- Propose enhanced strategies that can help parents effectively manage children's gadget usage and strengthen family relationships.
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III. METHODS

This study employed a mixed-methods design, combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The quantitative aspect gathered numerical data on parental control levels and their impact on family relationship strength. The qualitative aspect explored in-depth insights into parental strategies, challenges, and perceptions regarding children's gadget use.

The respondents of this study are parents or guardians of children ages 6 to 16 years old residing in Gubat, Sorsogon. A purposive sampling technique was used to select participants who have experienced in managing children's gadget usage at home.

There were 50 respondents surveyed by the researcher. They were the parents who responded in the tool. Meanwhile, the researcher deliberately selected 10 parent participants out of these 50 actual respondents. These selected 10 participants were subjected to in-depth interviews during the Focus-Group Discussion (FGD).

IV. RESULTS

The results of the data gathered and statistically analyzed in this section reveal various parental strategies for regulating children's home-based gadget use, along with the perceived impacts on family relationships and the challenges parents face in managing gadget use. The qualitative data are presented thematically, while quantitative data are organized in tables and examined statistically.

A. Parental Strategies for Regulating Children's Home-Based Gadget Use

In today's digital age, children's engagement with gadgets is an inevitable part of daily life, especially within the home environment. Even though gadgets can be entertaining and educational, excessive or unsupervised use can have negative effects on social development, expose users to inappropriate content, and reduce physical activity. Therefore, encouraging balanced and healthy development requires the implementation of effective parental strategies to control children's use of gadgets at home.

Parents must be clever enough in terms of employing techniques in regulating children's home-based gadget use. Doing such gives signal to their children on how to become responsible users of technology.

The following Table shows how parent respondents regulate the gadget use of their children at home. General strategies reflect in the Table.

Table 1 Parental Strategies for Regulating Children's Home-Based Gadget Use

Strategies	Frequency	Percentage
Limiting daily gadget use	41	82
Explaining to the child the reasons for limiting gadget use	39	78
Creating a balanced schedule for gadget use and other activities	37	74
Encouraging outdoor play or physical activities as alternatives	33	66
Allowing gadget use only after completing homework/household tasks	31	62
Reviewing the content (games, videos, apps) used by the child	30	60
Providing non-digital alternatives (books, arts, hobbies…)	29	58
Prohibiting or taking away gadgets as a form of discipline	28	56
Implementing gadget-free time (during meals, bedtime…)	26	52
Encouraging personal interaction with peers and family	26	52
Spending family time to reduce dependence on gadget	26	52

Table 1. presents data on various strategies that parents use to manage their children's use of gadgets. According to the table, the strategy most frequently employed by parents is setting limits on how long their children can use gadgets each day. Specifically, 82% of the parents surveyed—that is, 41 out of the total 50 respondents—reported that they use this approach.

Right after limiting daily gadget use, the next most common strategy among parents is explaining to their children why these limits are set. According to the data, 78% of the parents surveyed—that is, 39 out of 50 respondents—reported that they take the time to communicate the reasons behind the screen time restrictions to their children.

About 74% of the parents surveyed, which equals 37 out of the 50 respondents, reported that they create balanced schedules for their children. These schedules combine time spent using gadgets with participation in other activities, such as outdoor play, home.

Two-thirds of the parents surveyed—that is, 66% or 33 out of 50 respondents—encourage their children to engage in outdoor play or physical activities as alternatives to using gadgets. This strategy underscores the value parents place on physical health and the benefits of active play.

Additionally, 62% of the parents surveyed—that is, 31 out of 50 respondents—reported that they allow their children to use gadgets only after they have completed their homework

or household chores. This approach links the privilege of using gadgets to fulfilling responsibilities.

Other notable strategies reported by parents include content review, with 60% of respondents (30 out of 50) actively monitoring the digital content their children access to ensure it is appropriate and safe. Providing non-digital alternatives was also common, as 58% of parents (29 out of 50) encouraged activities such as reading books, solving puzzles, or engaging in creative hobbies to help reduce screen time. In terms of discipline, 56% of parents (28 out of 50) managed gadget use by temporarily taking away devices when rules were not followed. Additionally, 52% of parents (26 out of 50) implemented gadget-free times during specific parts of the day, such as during meals or before bedtime, and encouraged personal interactions with peers and family members to promote healthy social relationships beyond digital engagement. The same proportion of parents (52%, or 26 out of 50) also prioritized spending quality family time, using shared activities and meaningful interactions to reduce children's dependence on gadgets and strengthen family bonding without screens.

B. How Parental Strategies Influence Children's Gadget Use at Home

The data gathered from the participants reveal that parents employ a range of strategies to guide their children's gadget use at home. These strategies are not only designed to limit excessive screen exposure but also to instill discipline, promote understanding, and encourage responsible digital habits. Further analysis reveals how these strategies influence children's gadget use at home.

➢ *Developing Healthier Habits at Home Through Screen Time Reduction*

Parents commonly adopt strategies that restrict gadget use to help their children form healthier habits. By setting clear limitations, establishing gadget-free times, and encouraging participation in offline activities, parents promote balance and well-being within the household.

Participant 1, shared that she limits her children's gadget use to ensure they spend more time engaging in family and physical activities. She said, *"I limit my children's gadget use to make sure they spend time outdoors or join us in family activities. It keeps them active and helps us bond as a family."* Her strategy demonstrates that time restrictions can foster active lifestyles and strengthen family connections.

Participant 2, expressed that having fixed hours for gadget use helps her children manage their time effectively. She stated, *"We have specific hours for gadget use, and once that's done, they read books or help with chores. It prevents them from relying too much on their gadgets."* Her approach shows that consistent routines can help children develop self-control and avoid excessive screen dependence.

Participant 3, highlighted the importance of designating gadget-free periods, particularly during meals and bedtime. She explained, *"I make sure my children don't use gadgets during meals or before bed. It helps them sleep better and*

gives us more time to talk." Her statement emphasizes how setting boundaries encourages better sleep patterns and enhances family communication.

Participant 4, stated that she links gadget use to the completion of responsibilities. She shared, *"My children can only use their gadgets after finishing homework or helping with housework. It teaches them to prioritize their tasks."* This strategy reinforces discipline and accountability while ensuring a healthy balance between work and leisure.

Overall, these participants' experiences reveal that reducing screen time through clear boundaries, structured routines, and conditional privileges encourages children to develop healthier daily habits and engage more meaningfully with family and non-digital activities.

➢ *Promoting Understanding at Home by Explaining Benefits of Responsible Gadget Use*

Another emerging theme emphasizes the role of communication and explanation in managing children's gadget use. Parents who discuss the reasons behind restrictions help children understand the value of moderation and cooperation, which fosters responsible behavior and self-awareness. When parents take the time to explain the reasons behind limiting gadget use, children gain a better understanding of the importance of responsible technology use.

Participant 5, shared, *"I always explain to my children why we need to control gadget use—too much can affect their studies and health. When they understand, they follow the rules more willingly."* This statement highlights how open discussions create awareness and reduce resistance.

Participant 6, expressed that he educates his children about balanced gadget use rather than imposing strict prohibitions. He said, *"Instead of just setting rules, I explain how gadgets can be useful when used properly. I tell them it's about balance, not punishment."* His approach demonstrates that positive reinforcement fosters cooperation and understanding.

Participant 7, emphasized that teaching children about the dual nature of gadgets—educational and recreational—encourages self-regulation. She stated, *"We talk about how gadgets can help with learning but can also be harmful if overused. I want my kids to know the difference and make wise choices."* This strategy shows how awareness nurtures responsibility and decision-making skills.

➢ *Responsible Technology Use at Home Through Balanced Schedule for Gadget Use*

Creating a balanced schedule that integrates gadget use alongside other activities is a key strategy that promotes responsible technology use. This approach helps children learn time management and prioritization skills, ensuring that gadgets do not interfere with homework, chores, physical activity, or social interactions. A structured routine supports consistency and balance, enabling children to enjoy

technology while maintaining healthy habits and fulfilling responsibilities.

Participant 8 stated, *"We follow a schedule where gadget use is only after homework and dinner. This way, my children learn to finish their responsibilities first."* Her statement reflects how consistency and order promote accountability.

Participant 9 emphasized, *"I make sure gadget time is balanced with other activities like reading and helping at home. Too much screen time can make them lazy."* His strategy shows that balance prevents dependency and encourages productivity.

Participant 10 mentioned, *"On weekdays, gadgets are used mainly for schoolwork, and weekends are for entertainment. This helps them separate learning from leisure."* Her strategy demonstrates how establishing clear distinctions between work and play promotes both academic focus and relaxation in moderation.

C. Perceived Impact of Gadget Management on Family Relationship

The data presented in Table 2.0 illustrate the participants' perceptions of how gadget management influences family relationships. Findings reveal that regulating gadget use at home plays a significant role in improving family interaction, communication, and emotional connection. Most participants agreed that setting boundaries and modeling responsible gadget behavior strengthen family ties and promote a more harmonious home environment.

Table 2 Perceived Impact of Gadget Management on Family Relationship

Perceived Impact	Frequency	Rank
Family relationships improve with gadget control	39	1
Limiting gadget improves family time	28	2
The child imitates the parents' good example	26	3
Better listening and attention were noticed	25	4
Noticeable open communication between parent and child	24	5.5
Reduced gadget use encourages more meaningful conversation	24	5.5

As shown in the table, the highest-rated perception, with a frequency of 39 and ranked first**,** indicates that family relationships improve with proper gadget control**.** This finding suggests that when parents implement clear guidelines and limits on gadget use, family members spend more quality time together, leading to stronger emotional bonds and more harmonious relationships.

The second most identified perception, with a frequency of 28, shows that limiting gadget use improves family time**.** This implies that reducing gadget use allows families to engage more in shared activities, such as conversations, meals, or outdoor experiences, which foster closeness and understanding among family members.

Ranked third, with a frequency of 26, is the observation that children imitate their parents' good example**.** This highlights the importance of parental modeling in teaching responsible gadget habits—when parents demonstrate balanced and mindful use of technology, children are more likely to adopt similar behaviors.

The perception that better listening and attention were noticed ranks fourth, with a frequency of 25. This suggests that limiting gadget use enhances children's ability to focus and be more attentive to family interactions, reducing distractions and improving engagement during family time.

Finally, two perceptions shared the same frequency of 24 and ranked fifth**:** noticeable open communication between parent and child and reduced gadget use encourages more meaningful conversation**.** These findings imply that when screen time is managed effectively, parents and children are more likely to engage in open dialogue and deeper, face-to-face conversations. The reduction of gadget dependency creates more opportunities for genuine interaction and emotional expression within the family.

D. Challenges Encountered by the Parents in Managing Their Children's Gadget Use

Parents continue to encounter challenges in managing their children's gadget use because of several interconnected factors. Children today are growing up in a highly digital environment where gadgets are part of their daily routine for entertainment, learning, and social interaction. This constant exposure makes it difficult for parents to impose limits without facing resistance or arguments.

Table 3 Challenges Encountered by the Parents in Managing Their Children's Gadget Use

Challenges	Frequency	Rank
Some children manifest tantrum when gadget use is controlled	20	1
Difficulty in monitoring child's gadget use due to work/household duties	17	2
There were children who manifest resistance	16	3
Difficulty in enforcing consistent rules on gadget use	14	4
Peer influence increases child's gadget demands	13	5
Parents' own gadget use affects consistency	12	6.5

Some children are tech-savvy than parents	12	6.5

Table 3. presents the challenges encountered by parents in managing their children's gadget use at home. The data indicate that parents face several difficulties that hinder the consistent implementation of rules and the effective regulation of gadget use among children.

The top most challenge encountered by parents was the occurrence of tantrums when gadget use was restricted, as reported by 20 respondents, ranking first among the difficulties. This was followed by difficulty in monitoring children's gadget use due to work or household responsibilities, cited by 17 parents and ranked second. The third most common challenge was children's resistance to limits on gadget use, reported by 16 respondents. Difficulty in enforcing consistent rules on gadget use ranked fourth, with 14 parents experiencing this concern. Peer influence, which increases children's demands for gadget use, was identified by 13 respondents and ranked fifth. Lastly, parents' own gadget use and children being more technologically skilled than their parents were both reported by 12 respondents, sharing the sixth rank, as these factors also affected parents' consistency and ability to effectively manage their children's gadget use.

E. Proposed Parental Strategies for Regulating Children's Gadget Use and Enhancing Family Relationships

➤ *Rationale*
In today's digital age, children's exposure to gadgets is inevitable. However, unregulated use can lead to negative consequences on their physical, mental, and social well-being. Effective gadget management goes beyond restriction—it involves communication, positive modeling, and the establishment of routines that balance technology use with quality family time. By adopting intentional and balanced strategies, parents can guide their children toward responsible gadget use while fostering a nurturing, communicative, and harmonious home environment. Clear guidelines and parental involvement are critical to ensuring children reap the benefits of technology without suffering its drawbacks. Moreover, reducing gadget dependence can enhance family interactions and emotional bonds, which are vital for children's holistic development.

V. DISCUSSION

A. Parental Strategies for Regulating Children's Home-Based Gadget Use
The study on parental strategies for regulating children's home-based gadget use reveals a comprehensive and nuanced approach adopted by parents in the Municipality of Gubat. It highlights how parents combine multiple strategies—limiting screen time, explaining rules, balancing activities, encouraging physical play, monitoring content, and fostering family interaction—to promote healthy gadget habits among children aged 6 to 16. These findings resonate strongly with existing literature from 2015 to the present, underscoring common themes in digital parenting research worldwide and reflecting localized adaptations rooted in cultural values.

First, the predominant strategy of limiting daily gadget use aligns with authoritative recommendations, such as those from the American Academy of Pediatrics 2016), which emphasize the importance of balanced screen time to support sleep, physical health, and social development. Domoff et al. (2019) reinforced this by demonstrating that parental limits reduce problematic media use and improve children's self-regulation. The persistence of time limitation as a primary control method suggests it remains a cornerstone in managing digital exposure effectively. This high percentage indicates that a large majority of parents recognize the importance of regulating screen time. It suggests that these parents are aware of the potential effects of excessive gadget use and are actively taking steps to ensure their children do not spend too much time on electronic devices. Overall, this reflects a strong parental commitment to managing and controlling screen exposure for the well-being of their children.

Beyond its effectiveness in reducing excessive screen time, limiting daily gadget use also addresses concerns related to cognitive and emotional development in children. Research indicates that excessive screen exposure, especially unregulated use, can negatively impact attention span, academic performance, and emotional regulation (Twenge & Campbell, 2018). By setting clear boundaries on daily usage, parents help children develop healthier habits and encourage engagement in more diverse activities that contribute to their holistic growth.

Moreover, time restrictions facilitate the development of self-discipline and time management skills among children. When guided appropriately, children learn to prioritize tasks and manage leisure time, which are critical life skills extending beyond gadget use (Radesky et al., 2020). This structured approach also reduces conflicts between parents and children, as clear limits establish mutual expectations and reduce ambiguity regarding acceptable screen time.

It is important to note that while time limits are effective, their success largely depends on how they are implemented. Research suggests that arbitrary or excessively strict limits without explanation can lead to resistance or secretive behavior (Nikken & Schols, 2015). Therefore, coupling time restrictions with open communication—explaining why limits exist and involving children in setting mutually agreeable rules—enhances compliance and fosters trust.

Additionally, cultural and contextual factors influence the appropriateness and enforcement of time limits. In communities where digital devices are increasingly integrated into education and socialization, parents may face challenges balancing screen time restrictions with children's academic and social needs (Livingstone & Blum-Ross, 2020). This underscores the need for flexible, adaptive strategies that consider the purpose of gadget use rather than focusing solely on duration.

Finally, empirical evidence suggests that the quality of screen time matters alongside quantity. Parental regulation that encourages purposeful, educational, or creative use of gadgets within set time limits can mitigate some negative effects of screen exposure. Thus, limiting daily use should be complemented by guidance on content quality to maximize benefits and minimize risks.

Second, the emphasis on explaining the reasons behind gadget limits reflects the principles of authoritative parenting, characterized by warmth and clear communication, a concept rooted in Baumrind's (1991) framework. Recent large-scale studies, such as Milosevic et al. (2022), showed that enabling mediation—where parents guide children through dialogue rather than mere restriction—positively correlates with children's well-being across diverse European contexts. Similarly, a 2024 study in the Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication corroborates that digitally skilled, engaged parents who employ reasoning and joint decision-making foster better digital behaviors than those relying solely on restrictions. These findings collectively underscore that dialogic communication and reasoning enhance children's acceptance and internalization of parental rules.

Expanding on this, the practice of explaining the rationale behind limits serves multiple important functions. Firstly, it respects children as active participants in their own development, rather than passive recipients of rules. This approach nurtures children's critical thinking and moral reasoning by inviting them to understand the consequences of their actions, both online and offline. Secondly, clear communication fosters trust and emotional security within the parent-child relationship. When children perceive that their parents' rules are fair, reasonable, and aimed at protecting their well-being, they are more likely to feel supported and valued, which enhances cooperation and reduces power struggles (Smetana, 2017). This is especially relevant in the digital context, where children may feel a strong sense of autonomy and privacy; respectful dialogue helps bridge potential generational and technological gaps.

Furthermore, explaining limits equips children with digital literacy skills, enabling them to critically evaluate online content and interactions. Parental mediation that includes guidance and discussion empowers children to navigate digital environments safely and responsibly, reducing risks such as exposure to inappropriate content, cyberbullying, and privacy violations (Nikken & Jansz, 2014). This educational aspect of mediation is vital as children increasingly engage with complex and diverse digital platforms.

In addition, joint decision-making fosters a collaborative family environment where children learn negotiation, compromise, and respect for boundaries—skills essential for their social development. It also encourages parents to remain attuned to their children's evolving needs and digital habits, allowing for flexible adjustments to rules as children mature (Padilla-Walker & Coyne, 2011).

Importantly, these dialogic strategies align with contemporary views on digital parenting that emphasize relational and developmental approaches over authoritarian control. By prioritizing warmth, responsiveness, and reasoning, parents create a supportive framework that balances guidance with autonomy, mitigating potential adverse effects of excessive control such as rebellion or secretive behavior (Radesky et al., 2020).

In sum, explaining the reasons behind gadget limits is not merely about rule enforcement but about fostering understanding, mutual respect, and skills that empower children in their digital lives. This strategy strengthens both behavioral outcomes and the parent-child relationship, making it a critical component of effective digital mediation.

Third, the use of balanced daily schedules involving gadget and non-gadget activities reflects an intentional effort to create structured routines supporting holistic development. This is consistent with Chaudron et al. (2018), who found that European parents promote activity variety to prevent screen overuse. Locally, Valdez (2020) reported Filipino parents similarly integrate chores, study, and outdoor play, suggesting cultural continuity in valuing purposeful and time-bounded gadget use.

Expanding on this, structured daily routines serve multiple developmental and practical functions. By deliberately balancing screen time with other meaningful activities, parents help children develop time management skills and a sense of discipline, which are essential for academic success and personal growth. Such routines also encourage children to engage in diverse experiences—physical, social, and cognitive—that contribute to well-rounded development (Biddle & Asare, 2011).

Moreover, balanced schedules reduce the risk of excessive sedentary behavior associated with prolonged gadget use, which has been linked to adverse health outcomes such as obesity, poor sleep, and reduced physical fitness (Tremblay et al., 2011). Encouraging regular breaks from screens to participate in chores, homework, or outdoor play supports physical health while fostering a sense of responsibility and accomplishment.

Culturally, the integration of chores and outdoor activities within daily schedules reflects Filipino family values emphasizing collective responsibility, industriousness, and connection to community and environment. This localized approach to scheduling not only regulates gadget use but also reinforces social norms and skills important to Filipino identity and family cohesion (Medina, 2001).

Furthermore, balanced routines help mitigate potential conflicts arising from unstructured gadget use by setting clear expectations and predictable patterns. This predictability creates a stable home environment conducive to emotional security and reduces parental stress related to managing digital behaviors (McDaniel & Radesky, 2018).

In sum, the strategy of creating balanced daily schedules exemplifies how parents thoughtfully structure their children's time to promote healthy, purposeful gadget use alongside activities vital for comprehensive development. This approach underscores the importance of intentional time management and cultural values in shaping effective digital parenting practices.

Fourth, encouraging outdoor play aligns with research by Gray (2017) and Hiniker et al. (2019), which highlighted outdoor activities as crucial for creativity, social skills, and physical health—natural antidotes to sedentary screen time. The local study by Reyes and Castillo (2021) further confirmed that Filipino families prioritizing outdoor recreation experience fewer behavioral issues related to gadget overuse, reinforcing the global-local connection.

Expanding on this, outdoor play offers multifaceted benefits that extend beyond physical health. Engaging with nature stimulates imaginative play and problem-solving skills, fostering creativity and cognitive development in children (Burdette & Whitaker, 2005). It also provided rich social contexts where children learn cooperation, empathy, and conflict resolution through peer interaction, skills that are less readily developed during solitary screen time (Ginsburg, 2007).

From a psychological perspective, outdoor activities have been shown to reduce stress, anxiety, and symptoms of attention disorders by promoting mindfulness and exposure to natural environments (Kuo, 2015). These benefits are increasingly important given concerns over the mental health impacts of excessive screen exposure, such as increased risk of depression and social withdrawal (Twenge & Campbell, 2018).

In the Filipino context, outdoor play often occurs within community spaces that foster social connectedness and cultural continuity. Participation in traditional games and neighborhood activities helps reinforce a sense of belonging and shared identity among children, which complements family efforts to counterbalance screen time with meaningful real-world experiences (Medina, 2001).

Furthermore, encouraging outdoor play as an alternative to gadget use supports parents' broader goals of promoting balanced lifestyles and healthy habits. It serves as an engaging, enjoyable option that naturally limits screen exposure without relying solely on restrictive measures. This positive substitution approach can increase children's intrinsic motivation to be active and socially involved, reducing resistance or conflict associated with screen time limits (Hiniker et al., 2019).

Overall, the strategy of promoting outdoor play exemplifies an effective, holistic approach to digital mediation—one that nurtures children's physical, social, cognitive, and emotional development while mitigating the risks linked to excessive gadget use. The alignment of global research with local cultural practices underscores the

universal and context-specific value of outdoor activities in supporting healthy childhood development in the digital age.

Fifth, allowing gadget use contingent on completing homework or chores exemplifies the Premack principle (Premack, 1959) and echoed findings by Radesky et al. (2020) that linking screen time to task completion improves motivation and time management. This behavioral strategy is effective in reinforcing responsibility alongside digital engagement.

The Premack principle operates on the idea that a more preferred activity (in this case, gadget use) can be used as a reward to encourage the performance of a less preferred, but necessary, task such as homework or household chores. This approach not only promotes compliance but also helps children develop a structured routine where responsibilities are prioritized, fostering self-discipline and accountability (Kazdin, 2013).

By making screen time contingent upon task completion, parents create clear expectations and boundaries that help children internalize the connection between effort and reward. This can enhance intrinsic motivation over time, as children begin to associate the completion of obligations with positive outcomes, rather than viewing chores and homework as mere obstacles to leisure (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Moreover, this strategy supports the development of essential executive functioning skills, including planning, organization, and delayed gratification, all of which are critical for academic success and overall self-regulation (Best, Miller, & Naglieri, 2011). Regular practice of prioritizing tasks before leisure activities cultivates time management abilities that extend beyond digital contexts into broader life skills.

Additionally, linking gadget use to task completion can minimize conflicts between parents and children regarding screen time, as the rules are framed positively and tied to clear, achievable goals. This reduces power struggles and fosters a cooperative dynamic where children understand the rationale behind limits and feel empowered to meet expectations (McDaniel & Radesky, 2018).

However, it is important that parents apply this strategy consistently and fairly, ensuring that the tasks assigned are appropriate to the child's age and capacity. Overly punitive or unrealistic demands can lead to frustration and resistance, undermining the intended motivational effect (Grolnick & Pomerantz, 2009).

In sum, using gadget access as a contingent reward aligns behavioral psychology principles with practical parenting strategies. It effectively promotes responsibility, motivation, and time management while maintaining children's engagement with digital devices in a balanced and purposeful manner.

Sixth, active monitoring of digital content and provision of non-digital alternatives correspond to Nikken and Schols' (2015) well-established mediation categories—active and restrictive mediation—which play complementary roles in enhancing children's media literacy and safeguarding them from harmful online content. Active mediation involves parents engaging with children about their digital activities, discussing content critically, and guiding responsible use, while restrictive mediation includes setting boundaries on what content is accessible and when. Santos (2022) provided local context by confirming that Filipino parents who actively monitor their children's online behavior report fewer incidents of cyberbullying and inappropriate media exposure. This highlights the protective function of parental vigilance in navigating the complex digital landscape, where risks such as misinformation, online predators, and harmful interactions are prevalent.

Seventh, disciplinary measures such as gadget confiscation or prohibition are often employed to enforce compliance with family rules. However, Lauricella et al. (2015) cautioned that punitive approaches are most effective when combined with positive communication and reinforcement strategies. Sole reliance on punishment may achieve short-term compliance but can undermine the parent-child relationship and lead to covert resistance or increased screen time secrecy. A balanced disciplinary approach integrates clear consequences with ongoing dialogue, encouragement, and opportunities for children to learn self-regulation. This combination fosters a more constructive environment where discipline serves not only behavioral control but also emotional understanding and growth.

Finally, strategies that emphasize gadget-free periods, promote personal interactions, and prioritize quality family time align with research by Coyne et al. (2021) and Chiong and Shuler (2010), who demonstrated that such practices strengthen family bonds and reduce conflicts associated with screen use. Establishing screen-free times during meals, family activities, or before bedtime encourages meaningful communication and emotional connection, which are critical in mitigating the isolating effects of excessive device use. De Leon (2021) further reinforced these findings in the Filipino context, linking regular family togetherness with greater harmony and diminished gadget dependency among children. These approaches recognize the importance of nurturing social and emotional well-being alongside behavioral regulation.

In synthesis, the study confirms that parental regulation of children's gadget use is multifaceted, involving a dynamic interplay of direct control measures—such as time limits, monitoring, and discipline—and indirect supportive strategies like communication, explanation, and fostering alternative activities. This integrated approach creates a balanced and nurturing home environment that promotes healthy digital habits while supporting children's emotional and social development. The findings resonate with family systems theory (Bowen, 1978), which emphasized that family members' behaviors are interconnected, and positive parent-child interactions cultivate stability and well-being within the family unit.

Moreover, the hybrid approach observed in this study—melding global best practices in digital parenting with Filipino family values emphasizing close familial bonds and authoritative, nurturing styles—demonstrates culturally sensitive adaptation. Filipino parents effectively tailor international strategies to fit their cultural context, balancing behavioral control with emotional connection and social development. This culturally grounded mediation enriches the global discourse on digital parenting by illustrating how localized values and practices shape effective regulation of children's gadget use in the digital age.

This study thus contributes to a growing body of research emphasizing that effective parental mediation in the digital age requires not only limits and monitoring but also open communication, joint decision-making, and fostering meaningful offline interactions to support children's overall development.

B. How Parental Strategies Influence Children's Gadget Use at Home

The data gathered from the participants reveal that parents employ a variety of strategies to manage their children's gadget use at home. These strategies go beyond merely restricting screen time; they aim to develop discipline, responsibility, and understanding among children while fostering positive family relationships. The findings suggest that through consistent routines, open communication, and balanced schedules, parents effectively shape how children interact with technology and integrate it into their daily lives.

➤ Developing Healthier Habits at Home Through Screen Time Reduction

Parents commonly adopt strategies that reduce gadget use to help children form healthier habits. By setting clear limitations, designating gadget-free periods, and encouraging participation in offline or physical activities, they promote balance and overall well-being. As revealed in the interviews, parents' efforts to control gadget use are often tied to strengthening family bonds and ensuring that children lead active, balanced lives.

For instance, several participants shared that limiting gadget time encourages their children to engage more in family activities, outdoor play, or household responsibilities. These parental practices align with the findings of Rudi et al. (2023), who reported that parents who actively set screen-time boundaries help their children develop better self-regulation and reduce the likelihood of excessive device dependence. Similarly, Khurana et al. (2024) emphasized that family media plans incorporating consistent routines and device-free times—particularly during meals and before bedtime—improve children's sleep quality, attention spans, and family communication.

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These findings support the observation that establishing clear schedules and consistent rules allows children to experience structure and predictability. Moreover, such strategies cultivate discipline and foster healthier lifestyles by integrating technology use within well-defined boundaries. Parents' actions demonstrate that reducing screen time is not only about restriction but also about creating opportunities for meaningful engagement and family connection.

Expanding on these insights, the reduction of screen time at home functions as a foundational step toward fostering holistic health among children. Limiting gadget use not only curtails sedentary behavior but also encourages children to engage in activities that enhance physical fitness, creativity, and social interaction. This balance is essential given the growing evidence linking excessive screen exposure to risks such as obesity, sleep disturbances, and impaired social skills (Tremblay et al., 2011; Przybylski & Weinstein, 2019).

Moreover, the structured routines and clear expectations established through screen-time limits provide children with a sense of security and predictability. Research suggests that such predictability in daily schedules supports emotional regulation and reduces anxiety in children by creating a stable environment where expectations are transparent (Fiese et al., 2019). This is especially important in the digital era, where unregulated gadget use can contribute to overstimulation and stress.

Reducing screen time also opens space for meaningful family engagement, which parents in the study frequently identified as a motivating factor behind their regulation strategies. By designating gadget-free periods, families create opportunities for shared activities, conversation, and emotional connection, strengthening family cohesion and communication. Coyne et al. (2021) underscored the benefits of such practices, noting that families who implement regular screen-free times report stronger relationships and fewer conflicts related to media use.

Importantly, parents' approach to screen time reduction is not solely about restriction but about intentional integration of technology within a balanced lifestyle. This perspective shifts the focus from technology as an adversary to technology as a tool that can coexist with healthy habits when used mindfully and within defined boundaries. As such, parental mediation fosters children's ability to self-regulate and make responsible digital choices, skills that are increasingly vital in contemporary life (Livingstone & Helsper, 2008).

> *Promoting Understanding at Home by Explaining the Benefits of Responsible Gadget Use*

Another prominent theme in the findings highlights the importance of communication and explanation in managing gadget use. Parents who take time to explain the reasons behind restrictions promote understanding and cooperation, helping children recognize the value of moderation. Participants shared that when they explain the potential effects of excessive gadget use—such as distractions from study or negative health impacts—children tend to follow the rules more willingly.

This approach mirrors the authoritative parenting style described by Baumrind (1991), characterized by warmth, responsiveness, and reasoned rule-setting. Recent studies continue to affirm this framework's effectiveness in digital-age parenting. For example, Zhang et al. (2024) found that authoritative parents who engage in open discussions about online behaviors and risks are more successful in fostering responsible digital habits among adolescents. Likewise, Chen et al. (2024) demonstrated that active parental mediation—where parents communicate guidance and explain the rationale behind rules—enhances children's digital literacy and reduces their exposure to online risks.

These findings are consistent with participants' experiences, as parents who emphasize reasoning and inclusion report greater cooperation and compliance from their children. When children are involved in rule-making or are given clear explanations for limits, they internalize the principles of responsibility and self-discipline. This communicative approach transforms parental authority into a learning process, fostering trust, understanding, and shared accountability.

> *Responsible Technology Use at Home Through Balanced Schedules*

Establishing a balanced schedule that integrates gadget use with other daily activities emerged as another influential strategy. Participants emphasized that having structured routines—such as allowing gadget use only after completing homework or chores—helps children develop time management and prioritization skills. By linking privileges to responsibility, parents encourage discipline and accountability while ensuring that gadgets remain a supplement to, rather than a replacement for, productive activities.

This strategy aligns with the Premack principle (1959), which suggested that access to a preferred activity can motivate the completion of less-preferred tasks. In support, Radesky et al. (2020) found that conditioning gadget use on the completion of responsibilities improves children's work habits and reduces excessive screen exposure. More recently, Bright Horizons (2025) reported that over half of parents use screen time as a conditional reward to reinforce responsibility, though the study cautions against over-reliance on this strategy to prevent dependency on external motivation.

Furthermore, a 2024 study in *Frontiers in Public Health* demonstrated that children whose parents maintained consistent structures and time-based routines exhibited lower overall screen use and better self-regulation. These findings suggest that balanced schedules serve as effective tools for promoting responsible gadget use by helping children internalize discipline and learn to balance leisure with obligations.

C. Perceived Impact of Gadget Management on Family Relationship

The data presented in Table 2. illustrate that managing gadget use within the household significantly enhances family relationships. The findings reveal that when parents regulate screen time, model responsible gadget behavior, and encourage non-digital interactions, family communication and emotional connection are strengthened. Participants widely agreed that structured gadget management fosters quality time, cooperation, and mutual understanding, resulting in a more harmonious family environment.

➤ *Strengthening Family Bonds Through Controlled Gadget Use*

The highest-rated perception, indicates that family relationships improve with proper gadget control. This finding underscores how establishing clear digital boundaries promotes greater togetherness and interpersonal connection among family members. When parents limit screen distractions and encourage shared activities, they create opportunities for family engagement and emotional bonding.

Recent studies reinforce this observation. Helsper and Smahel (2024) found that families who actively manage digital use at home report higher satisfaction in family communication and overall relational closeness. Similarly, Chaudhry et al. (2025) concluded that intentional "digital detox" routines—where families collectively minimize gadget use—lead to improved emotional intimacy and cooperative behaviors, particularly in families with young children. The study emphasized that consistent regulation of gadgets fosters a sense of unity and shared responsibility, as family members become more attuned to each other's presence rather than their screens.

Moreover, Lee and Kim (2025) observed that digital boundary-setting within households not only reduces conflict over screen use but also increases parental awareness of children's emotional needs. Their findings suggest that controlling gadget use functions as an avenue for reconnecting family members and rebuilding emotional warmth often diminished by excessive digital engagement.

➤ *Enhancing Family Time and Shared Experiences*

The second-ranked perception highlights that limiting gadget use improves family time. Families that impose specific gadget-free hours—such as during meals or evenings—tend to engage more in shared activities and meaningful interactions. These moments promote understanding, empathy, and collective enjoyment, all of which strengthen family ties.

In a 2025 study by Ramirez et al., families who practiced scheduled "screen-free nights" reported enhanced satisfaction with family relationships and more frequent participation in cooperative activities such as cooking, storytelling, or board games. Similarly, Tang and Zhou (2024) found that screen limitation interventions in family contexts led to measurable increases in perceived closeness, particularly among children aged 8–14. This supports the notion that reduced gadget use not only recovers time for shared experiences but also rebuilds relational depth within the household.

➤ *Parental Modeling as a Foundation of Digital Discipline*

The third most identified perception, noted that children imitate their parents' good example, highlights the powerful role of parental modeling in shaping digital behavior. Parents who demonstrate moderation and mindful gadget use set an example that children naturally follow.

This aligns with the social learning theory proposed by Bandura (1977), which emphasize that children learn behaviors by observing and imitating others, especially parental figures. Recent evidence continues to support this mechanism in digital parenting. Nguyen and Santos (2025) found that parents who practiced "co-use" (engaging with children in shared digital activities) and demonstrated balanced screen habits saw greater compliance and reduced device-related conflicts. Additionally, Yeo et al. (2024) reported that children whose parents modelled limited gadget use displayed higher emotional regulation and greater respect for screen-time rules.

Thus, parental behavior serves as a mirror through which children learn responsible technology habits, reinforcing discipline through observation rather than enforcement alone.

➤ *Improved Listening, Attention, and Communication*

The perception that better listening and attention were noticed, suggests that reduced gadget use enhances family members' ability to focus and engage meaningfully. When screens are set aside, children become more attentive to conversations and more responsive to family interactions.

Supporting this, Park et al. (2025) found that decreased multitasking with digital devices at home improved family members' listening quality and emotional attunement. Likewise, Coyne et al. (2024) reported that families who practiced "tech-free dinners" experienced more eye contact and reciprocal dialogue between parents and children. These findings indicate that regulating gadget use facilitates cognitive and emotional presence, fostering a deeper sense of connection during interactions.

Furthermore, the shared perceptions ranked fifth— noticeable open communication and meaningful conversation highlight that effective gadget management directly supports dialogue and understanding. When distractions are minimized, families engage in longer, more genuine discussions, which strengthens mutual empathy and trust.

Recent studies substantiate this connection. Moreno et al. (2024) discovered that families who reduced daily screen exposure by even one hour experienced a significant improvement in perceived communication openness. Likewise, Bright Horizons (2025) found that intentional device-free periods led to a 40% increase in parents' reported satisfaction with family communication. These findings demonstrate that managing gadget use can be a catalyst for restoring meaningful interactions and emotional closeness within the family unit.

D. Challenges Encountered by the Parents in Managing Their Children's Gadget Use

The findings presented in Table 3. reveal that despite parents' best efforts to regulate their children's gadget use, they face several significant challenges. These challenges stem from the pervasive integration of technology into children's daily lives, competing parental responsibilities, and the evolving nature of digital behavior among the youth. The responses of the participants underscore that while parental strategies are effective in theory, their consistent application is often complicated by emotional, environmental, and technological factors.

➤ Managing Emotional Reactions and Tantrums

The most frequently mentioned challenge, highlights that many children exhibit tantrums or emotional distress when gadget use is controlled. This finding reflects a growing dependence on digital devices for entertainment and comfort, making it difficult for children to accept restrictions. Parents often find themselves in emotionally charged situations where setting limits results in conflict, frustration, or noncompliance.

Recent studies support these observations. Radesky and Christakis (2023) found that children who rely heavily on gadgets for emotional regulation are more likely to display irritability and mood swings when screen access is restricted. Similarly, Domoff et al. (2024) reported that excessive screen exposure can create behavioral dependencies similar to reward-seeking patterns, leading to withdrawal-like reactions such as tantrums when limits are enforced. These findings indicate that emotional reactivity is not merely a behavioral issue but a psychological response shaped by habitual digital stimulation.

Moreover, Sari and Prasetyo (2025) discovered that parents who use gadgets as a pacifier or distraction tool during early childhood inadvertently reinforce dependency, making later restrictions more challenging. This underscores the importance of introducing digital boundaries early, before gadget use becomes a primary source of comfort or reward.

The second most cited challenge, is the difficulty in monitoring children's gadget use due to work and household duties. Many parents struggle to maintain constant supervision because of their multiple responsibilities, which often leads to unsupervised screen time. This limited oversight increases the likelihood of children engaging in prolonged or inappropriate gadget use.

According to Yildiz and Kara (2024), working parents face significant barriers in implementing consistent digital supervision, especially when work-from-home arrangements blur the boundaries between professional and family time. Lim et al. (2025) further found that parental workload and fatigue correlate negatively with screen-time monitoring, often resulting in leniency or reliance on gadgets as a convenient babysitting tool. The study emphasized that parental burnout and time scarcity diminish the consistency of digital regulation, particularly in dual-income households.

Ranked third, is the challenge of children resisting parental rules regarding gadget use. This resistance often manifests in arguments, negotiations, or covert usage, particularly among older children and adolescents who view gadgets as essential for social connection.

Livingstone et al. (2024) highlighted that children often perceive parental restrictions as control measures that threaten their autonomy, leading to conflict and covert device use. Similarly, Moreno and Cho (2025) found that adolescents frequently justify extended gadget use as "social necessity," especially in peer-driven digital spaces. These findings suggest that resistance arises not merely from defiance but from a developmental need for independence and belonging, which parents must address through balanced negotiation and trust-based mediation.

The fourth-ranked challenge involves parents' difficulty in maintaining consistency when enforcing gadget rules. Factors such as fatigue, negotiation pressure from children, and lack of unified parental approaches contribute to inconsistent enforcement.

Park and Lee (2024) found that inconsistency in digital discipline reduces parental authority and increases children's likelihood of testing boundaries. Similarly, Bright Horizons (2025) reported that inconsistent enforcement of screen rules leads to confusion and weakened behavioral compliance among children. This emphasizes the importance of steady routines and unified parental messaging to sustain effective gadget management over time.

The fifth-ranked challenge, pertains to peer influence, which heightens children's demands for gadget use. In a socially connected world, many children compare their screen privileges to those of their friends, prompting feelings of exclusion or disadvantage when restrictions are imposed.

Ramos and Chen (2025) stated that peer comparison significantly drives children's technology engagement, with 68% of children aged 9–14 reporting that they feel "left out" if they cannot access online games or group chats. Similarly, Kaur and Menon (2024) found that peer-based digital interactions increase pressure on parents to loosen restrictions, often resulting in leniency to avoid social isolation for their children. This highlights that gadget management cannot be viewed in isolation but must consider the social context influencing children's digital experiences.

The final two challenges, include parents' own gadget use affecting consistency and children being more technologically adept than their parents. These factors present deeper relational and generational complexities.

Parents who frequently use gadgets for work or leisure inadvertently model the same behavior they seek to control. Coyne et al. (2024) found that high parental screen use correlates with increased child screen time and weaker enforcement of rules. The concept of "technoference"—the interruption of family interactions by digital devices—was identified by McDaniel and Radesky (2023) as a key disruptor of parent-child relationships.

Furthermore, the growing technological expertise of children poses another challenge. Nguyen and Santos (2025) noted that tech-savvy children often find ways to bypass parental controls or conceal usage, creating a digital power imbalance within the household. This dynamic can make parents feel dis-empowered, reducing their confidence in enforcing screen management effectively.

E. Proposed Parental Strategies for Regulating Children's Gadget Use and Enhancing Family Relationships

The aforementioned findings propelled the researcher to propose a set of practical parental strategies aimed at addressing the growing concern over children's excessive gadget use while strengthening family relationships. The findings of the present study reveal that children who experience consistent parental guidance and open communication about technology use demonstrate more responsible behavior and better family relationships.

In line with these findings, Lim and Chua (2025) emphasized that consistent parental involvement—through communication, clear rules, and active modeling—significantly reduces gadget dependence and fosters stronger family bonds. Similarly, Radesky et al. (2024) found that children whose parents combine structured digital boundaries with warm and engaging communication display improved self-regulation and emotional balance. These studies support the idea that effective gadget management must go beyond restriction, emphasizing instead a balance of structure, empathy, and collaboration between parents and children.

The proposed strategies therefore aim to provide parents with a framework for fostering responsible gadget use while cultivating emotional connection and mutual respect within the family.

VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings the researcher drew the following conclusions: Parents implement varied strategies to manage gadget use aiming to instill discipline and balance.; Parents use warmth and consistency promotes responsible digital behavior and self-regulation.; Monitor effectiveness of the strategy in managing gadgets and to adjust strategies as needed.; Challenges such as resistance, time constraints, and peer influence require adoptive   empathetic approaches.; Enhance strategies like integrating rules, dialogue,

engagement and emotional support foster digital discipline and family well-being.

Several recommendations are proposed to guide parents, educators, community leaders, and future researchers in promoting responsible gadget use among children and strengthening family relationships. (1) Adopt consistent age-appropriate use and reinforce them to positive discipline and routines. (2) Encourage offline activities like *laro ng lahi*, such as patintero, tumbang preso, luksong baka, piko, taguan, and sipa, as well as sports activities like basketball, volleyball, badminton, and bike riding and **o**ther offline activities may include reading books, storytelling, arts and crafts, drawing, gardening, board games, and family bonding activities to reduce gadget dependence. *(3)* Monitor the effectiveness of strategies used to manage children's gadget use. (4) Integrate device-free bonding moments and maintain open communication to build trust and connection. (5) Use balance approach combining supervision, education, and collaboration supported by tools like family media agreements and parental controls.

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