



SCHOOL CHAMPIONS PLAYBOOK

**HOW TO CHAMPION THE
UNPLUGGED PLEDGE IN YOUR
COMMUNITY**



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Champion Goals

- Raise awareness about the risks associated with giving children smartphones before age 14 and social media before age 16
- Champion the Unplugged pledge at your child's local school
- Support your school community in understanding this partnership



Finding a Team



Finding a Team:

- Find 2–8 parents interested in joining you to bring the Unplugged pledge to your child's school
- Host a meet up or Zoom call to explain the pledge and the goals above
- Explain the pillars of change
 - Parent Driven – Grassroots
 - School/System Supported
- Aim to have representation across grades or divisions (this will increase your ability to get signatures)

Things to consider at that meeting:

- Make a list of ALL the parents you know collectively
- Provide the script to the parents onboard to get them started
- Set a goal! (How many pledges do you want to have? And by when?)

*For Scripts/Images/Posters for engaging families:
SEE APPENDIX A*

Running a Campaign at Your School



STEP #1:

- Join the Movement: Unplugged Canada empowers families to foster healthier digital habits and to unite in delaying smartphones until at least age 14. We recommend that all Champions sign our pledge so you can understand how it works. By signing this Pledge, you are committing to not providing your child(ren) with a smartphone until they reach at least 14 years of age. [SIGN THE PLEDGE](#)
- Review our Guiding Principles
- Build your team

STEP #2:

- Be present at school events (booths at movie nights, signs posted in the school with a QR code, stations at fun fair)
- Share resources to raise awareness about the potential risks or early smartphone and social media use

STEP #3:

- Have a yearly plan. Make sure that the NEW incoming Pre-K or Kindergarten class has a representative to get the newest ones information (this is how we keep it going).

Keeping your Unplugged School Community Connected

Once your school has an established base of Unplugged families, it's critical to find ways to connect them and keep the energy up. Often, parents have indicated that they feel excited but then nothing "follows" the initial step. Here are some ideas to keep your Unplugged School Community connected.

1. Throw informal gatherings for parents near your local school or in your community.

Invite parents to come together in the evening to meet other families who have signed the pledge, and to have conversations about keeping Unplugged momentum up! Encourage them each to bring a new parent who has not yet heard about Unplugged.

2. Create WhatsApp Communities!

Some schools have found it helpful to create WhatsApp communities which allow parents who have signed the pledge to remain connected. Below is a link to show you how to set these up.

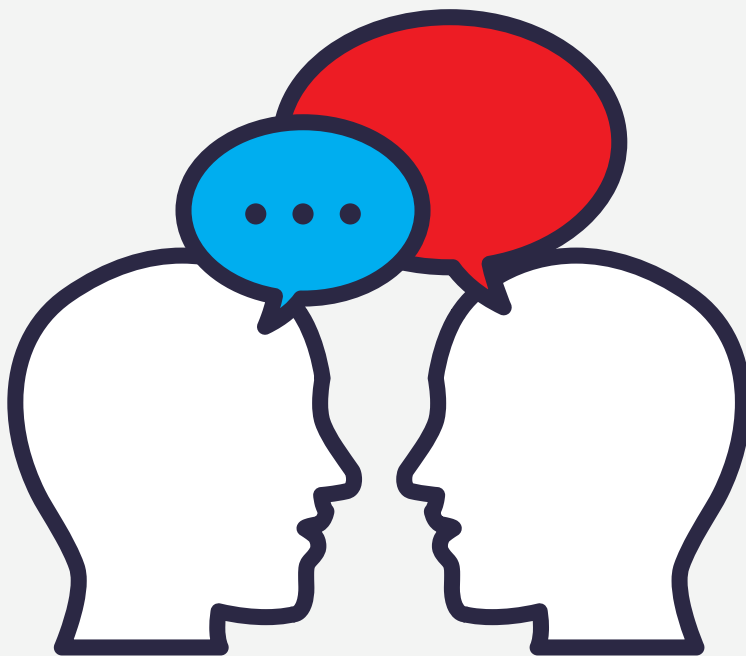
More info here:

https://faq.whatsapp.com/438859978317289/?cms_platform=iphone&helpref=platform_switcher

3. Continue meeting with your initial founding “parent group,” to find creative ways to keep connected.

Some ideas:

- Create pins/stickers that kids can put on back packs to indicate that their family is Unplugged.
- Create common “third spaces” to facilitate in real life play and engagement (for example, let parents know you will be at X park after school on X day, and make it a standard meet up so kids can learn the skills of being with friends in real life, without having to plan ahead all the time)



The St. Albert/Sturgeon County Chapter of Unplugged is here to support you!

Here is a folder of visual assets and resources that we've prepared.

We are working with educators, decision-makers and stakeholders to spread the word and make your job easier.

Please reach out if you have any ideas, concerns or questions.

Together we are stronger!

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Facebook: [Unplugged Canada: St. Alberta and Area](https://www.facebook.com/UnpluggedCanadaStAlberta)

APPENDIX A

Text Script to send to parents/friends:

"Hi Friend!

I'm reaching out to share with you and ask you to consider joining a parent led movement in the NAME OF SCHOOL community that NAME and I are a part of! Unplugged Canada (<https://unpluggedcanada.com/>) is an organization that seeks to support parents in delaying smart phone/social media exposure until at least age 14.

This is a hard time for our kids and we know that we can make more change if we band together. We have a great group of parent ambassadors ranging from [Grade _ to Grade_] at NAME OF SCHOOL.

I'm reaching out to see if you would consider being part of this! All that's required is to decide that you want to sign the pledge above for your child specifically (agreeing not to give a smart phone or social media until at least age 14).

Please take a look and feel free to circle back with any questions and concerns! I'm also happy to chat on the phone about this more if that would help!"

Scripts for Talking to other parents:

Often face to face conversations are the best. Here are some really good tips on how to handle this. <https://www.smartphonefreechildhood.org/resource/how-to-talk-other-parents-about-delaying-smartphones-without-sounding-judgemental>

Here is a flyer we created on Canva so you can easily edit it to suit your school.

(*Request access and please copy and paste your own before editing.)

https://www.canva.com/design/DAGtYRsmYec/mTO5OOPuO2aw73IYVNUQlw/edit?utm_content=DAGtYRsmYec&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=sharebutton

Here is a slide deck:

For mental health awareness week our Unplugged champions and mental health committee prepared this slide deck for the admin and teachers with daily announcements and activities. Feel free to take any of the messaging:

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1-hebVsywP5sEgde9fOY0IWUP9SoQFA53K-oymLBXITc/edit?usp=sharing>

APPENDIX B

Ideas to raise awareness and promote pledges at the school level:

- Have a Booth at an event (eg. Welcome Back Party)
- With posters and visuals: Information/educational handouts (eg. statistics/evidence of harms, the worse/better/best for different screen options, "best practices" for screens, etc)
- Have a paper-based pledge signup form (parents enter the info, we enter their pledges on the website afterward)
- Ideas for smartphone alternatives (eg. the unplugged resource page that suggests smartwatches, pinwheel phone, etc) also: ideas like forming a landline "pod" with other families (fongo phone \$5.99/mo)
- Ideas to get kids on board (eg. banking the money saved from delaying and giving it as a lump sum at 16 years old)
- Fliers with pledge website going home in backpacks
- Host movie screening nights. eg. Jonathan Haidt's "school presentation" talk (essentially a 40-min summary of the book)
- If one doesn't already exist, start a book club at your school. Try and include *The Anxious Generation* in your reading. Invite your principal and/or school health professionals to join. We have a Book Club Guide for you to use: [Book Club Guide](#)
- Start a biweekly or monthly play group at a park near the school (from 4-7pm). Ideally include materials and a pledge signup sheet. (Bonus points if the group continues thru the summer and sparks more connections!)
- Start a Whatsapp group for parents who have signed the pledge to connect (add a "want to be added to our WhatsApp group for pledgees?" question to the pledge form maybe) [maybe start with a school-wide one and then make smaller ones by birth year whenever a critical mass is reached in a given peer group.]

**Feel free to share further ideas with our chapter
alberta@unpluggedcanada.com!**

Unplugged Champion Checklist

1. Learn & Share the Mission

- Learn about Unplugged Canada's mission.
- Review the research and evidence behind delaying smartphones until at least age 14.
- Start conversations with friends, family, and colleagues to spread the word.
- Build a supportive circle of like-minded parents, caregivers, and educators.

2. Engage Your School or Community

- Talk to your school, council, or community group about supporting the pledge.
- Host an Unplugged info session or parent night.
- Share the "Wait Until 14" message in class newsletters, on social media, or at events.
- Print and display posters or infographics from the digital toolkit at school or community gatherings.
- Encourage other families to take the pledge together.
- Start an Unplugged group chat or WhatsApp chat.

3. Support Kids with Smart Alternatives

- Provide access to non-smartphones (flip phones, basic watches, etc.).
- Encourage offline fun: clubs, sports, books, crafts, and nature activities.
- Teach digital literacy and media safety in age-appropriate ways.

4. Champion School or Community Action

- Offer Unplugged presentations for students, staff, and families.
- Partner with school councils, youth leaders, and community centres to promote the pledge.

5. Use the Playbook

- Share the conversation starters for parents and kids.
- Utilize the posters and infographics to share.

6. Track Progress & Celebrate

- Collect pledges or school-wide commitments.
- Share impact stories and testimonials.
- Celebrate wins and share with other schools!