

Argument Analysis: Appeals to family values

Appeals to family values centre on the importance of family relationships, traditions, and responsibilities. In persuasive writing, this technique emphasizes how certain actions, policies, or beliefs support or threaten the wellbeing of families. By aligning an argument with cherished family ideals, the writer evokes a sense of protectiveness and nostalgia in the reader, who may feel a personal connection to the issue through their own family experiences.

Appeals to family values in action

Activity: Read the following opinion piece, identify persuasive techniques, including appeals to family values, and explain the effect they may have on the intended audience.

Opinion > National > Lifestyle

OPINION

Smart phones are eating into family time

July 20, 2024 - 5.00 am



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In our family, we've got strict rules about dinner time. When we eat, phones are set to silent and left out of reach in the living room. It's a tradition that comes from my own childhood, when the television was always turned off during dinner.

Last weekend, as we were eating, our conversation was interrupted by my daughter's phone, which received a barrage of notifications that sent it skittering across the coffee table. She spent the rest of the meal in **sullen silence**, stabbing listlessly at her broccoli and flicking her fringe in frustration. 1

She's a great kid but, like all of us, she's vulnerable to the platforms and devices **engineered for engagement** by Silicon Valley. 2

Despite my suspicions about screen time, I frequently find myself distracted by an unread email when I'm supposed to spending time with the family. It's one of the great ironies of the digital age that devices meant to connect lead to distraction and disconnection.

3 In our hyper-connected world, smartphones are **tearing at the fabric of family**. We need to **reclaim family time from these devices by setting firm boundaries around their use, protecting time with our loved ones**. 4

Excessive screen time has been linked to a myriad of issues, from reduced attention spans to increased anxiety and depression. **Studies have shown that children who spend more than two hours a day on screens are more likely to experience attention problems, lower academic performance, and disrupted sleep patterns**. Moreover, research from the American Psychological Association indicates that high screen usage is associated with higher levels of anxiety and depression in adolescents, largely due to the negative impacts of social media on self-esteem and the constant exposure to online bullying. 5

We owe it to our children to create an environment where they can grow up free from these digital distractions. This means developing rules that encourage meaningful offline interactions: cooking, eating, playing board games, or enjoying a movie. It's not just a matter of personal responsibility; it's a societal obligation to safeguard their mental health and wellbeing.

Being a good parent, however, is more than just setting rules. It's about role modelling appropriate behaviours. **How can we expect our children to disconnect if we don't lead by example?** 6

7 Families need to take immediate action to address smartphone addiction. **We need to come together as a community to set boundaries, promote healthy usage**, and prioritise family time. By doing so, we can ensure a brighter, more connected future for our children and ourselves.

Argument Analysis: Smart phones are eating into family time

Read the article 'Smart phones are eating into family time'. Identify the issue, contention, audience and tone of the piece. Identify the persuasive techniques in the piece and explain the effect they are intended to have on the audience.

Issue: _____

Contention: _____

Audience: _____

Tone: _____

#	Technique	Effect
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
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