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About three years after the release of ChatGPT, the world has had time to experience the excitement and potential of popular AI models. At first, many people treated these generative AI tools as a novelty—using them to create poems, stories, and assist with brainstorming. Today, however, AI is rapidly becoming an essential workplace tool, one that managers and executives are eager to leverage in order to increase productivity and achieve business goals.

Alongside this excitement, serious concerns have emerged. Beyond the obvious risks of harmful or inappropriate content, there are deeper and more lasting effects.

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UNPLUG & UPLIFT

Elevate Your Shabbos During Sefira!

שבע שבתות תמימות - בא שבת בא מנוחה

This Sefira commit to put away all screen devices 20 minutes before and after Shabbos and win great raffle prizes!

SEE THE BACK PAGE FOR MORE INFO



As a woman blessed with many great-grandchildren, grandchildren, and children, I feel lucky to spend personal time with each family. Something that has occurred to me over these past few years is that the families who have less screen time in their homes have more patience to spend time with me. Their children like to sit and read books with me or play games of Rummikub or Monopoly with me.

The families who allow their children their own devices have very little patience to spend any quality time with me. I sense a feeling of disinterest and lack of curiosity from those kids. We read about the downsides of screen exposure, but it's sad to see the glaring differences in my family. I know I look forward to spending time with the children who want to spend time with me. I hope to have nachas from all of them!



Getting rid of my smartphone was one of the hardest things I ever did. I used it for everything and was truly addicted. After many attempts, I succeeded in getting rid of it and felt a great sense of freedom after I got over the first few months. It's been several years now, and I know I made the right decision. I've never been good at resisting the urge to constantly check my phone, and it had been a permanent extension of my hand.

A few months ago, I was traveling to Israel, and someone offered me a smartphone with an Israeli number to bring on my trip. Honestly, I was sorely tempted. Traveling without a smartphone out of the country was worrying me, and I decided to agree to the offer.

Arriving at the airport, I looked in my bag, and I realized that I had left the smartphone at home and never brought it along. Silently, I sent up a prayer of thanks. I had already felt that strong tug the phone had offered and I was quite relieved to have avoided the temptation the phone would have brought me. My forgetfulness saved the day with help from Above and my trip worked out just fine without the smartphone.



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When an expert in nearly every subject is constantly available, people may lose the ability to think independently and to grow through the process of overcoming challenges.

There is also growing concern that real human expertise—built through experience, judgment, and intuition—will gradually weaken or be replaced. Over time, this could lead to fewer skilled professionals and less respect for genuine knowledge. For these reasons, there is a strong argument that individuals should limit their reliance on AI, and where possible, avoid it altogether except when truly necessary.

At the same time, platforms such as Google now prioritize AI-generated summaries in search results. Even when sources are cited, most users do not verify or fully understand them; instead, they rely on chatbots to interpret complex information. While this may seem harmless for simple tasks, the risks are far greater when people depend on AI for medical advice, business decisions, mental health guidance, and other important life choices.

The long-term consequences of widespread AI use remain uncertain, and new risks will likely continue to emerge. It is therefore important to stay aware and act cautiously. For children in particular, there is a strong case for preventing reliance on AI for communication, decision-making, and entertainment during their formative years, rather than merely limiting exposure. All users, too, would be wise to be intentional, restrained, and selective in their own use. ◆



Your AI Influencer

It's easy to mistake artificial intelligence for a neutral tool — a search engine that talks to you. Because of this, people use it without hesitation, assuming they're simply accessing knowledge.

AI draws from enormous amounts of online content. That material doesn't just contain facts; it reflects the assumptions, values, and cultural norms of the online world — one often very different from our own. When AI draws from that material, those perspectives shape how questions are answered. A recent Yale University article puts it plainly:

"Querying an AI chatbot to obtain historical facts can influence people's opinions even when the information provided is accurate." The risk is greater than it appears because AI feels trustworthy. Over time, that voice can quietly shape how we think.

Just as we'd be cautious about letting someone who doesn't share our values mentor our children, we should bring that same care to AI. That risk is even greater for children and teenagers. Young people may form emotional reliance on systems that possess knowledge but lack values and accountability. Parents have become increasingly concerned about misinformation and unfamiliar values children may absorb without the maturity to evaluate them.

AI can be a powerful tool, and it will likely become an even more common part of daily life. But we should not mistake it for a neutral voice guiding our thinking. The responsibility for shaping our thinking—and the thinking of our children—must remain firmly in human hands. ♦

Exciting New Solutions in Technology Safety



A new centralized database now tracks AI chatbot phone numbers, updating automatically to block known numbers in real time across cellphones, office phone systems, and carriers.

Building on this, TAG Protect — protect.tag.org — integrates with compatible office phone systems to provide centralized call-blocking for a nominal fee — especially useful for schools, Yeshivos, and other institutions managing many phone lines.

New SIM cards are also available that block AI chatbot numbers at the network level, requiring no phone settings or apps. A reporting feature allows newly discovered numbers to be submitted, keeping the database current. Certain kosher cellphone models already incorporate this protection, and more devices and systems are expected to follow. For current information visit protect.tag.org

After many years of effort, a solution has been found for the challenge of unfiltered internet access in Tesla vehicles. Until now, blocking or filtering this access has been very difficult — a real concern for those who value Tesla's features while wanting to be mindful of accessible content.

CSO Radio in Lakewood developed a solution reviewed and approved by TAG. With it, both WiFi and cellular internet are blocked while the vehicle operates normally, with systems and updates unaffected. Offered for a one-time fee of \$275, the installation can also be easily reversed if needed. Contact CSO Radio directly at cs@csoradio.com or 732-942-1101 to learn more.



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Put away your cellphone and any device with a screen at least 20 minutes before & after Shabbos

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PLATINUM EVENTS

