

loud moms » **loud life**

Connected: THE NEED FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

Has anyone taken the time to try to figure out why we and our children are connected to our smart phones as if they were the most potent drug in the universe?



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There is actually a reason. Social media acts to fill a deep psychological need in our society.

We are a culture starved for real community. For hundreds of thousands of years, human beings resided in tribes of about 30-70 people.

But during the Industrial Revolution, the extended family was torn apart as workers moved into cities.

Humans still have very strong need for community. We get a sense of community from our families, our workplace, our place of worship and even favorite sports teams.

And now, we can get a sense of community from the Twitterverse.

This is why we feel so compelled to Tweet, to Facebook, to text and check our emails all of the time. We crave connection.

In 1943, Abraham Maslow wrote a paper that is still important today – “A Theory of Human Motivation.”

Maslow’s hierarchy of needs is a pyramid. At the bottom of the pyramid are the needs for food, water, sleep and warmth.

Once the lower-level needs have been met, people can move on to higher levels of needs, which become increasingly psychological and social.

Soon the need for love, friendship and intimacy become important. Further up the pyramid, the need for personal

esteem and feelings of accomplishment become important.

Finally, Maslow emphasized the importance of self-actualization, the process of growing and developing as a person to achieve individual potential.

The folks of “Psychology Today” tell us that Twitter aims primarily at social needs, like those for belonging, love and affection.

Relationships such as friendships, romantic attachments and families help fulfill this need for companionship and acceptance, as does involvement in social, community or religious groups.

Clearly, feeling connected to people via Twitter, Facebook and Instagram helps to fulfill some of this need to belong and feel cared about.

But social connectedness has a cost...

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