



UNPLUG TO CONNECT 2019 – CLUB TOOLKIT

#UnplugToConnect | unplugtoconnect.ca

On **June 7, 2019** we are inviting Canadians to join Boys and Girls Clubs and Unplug to Connect!

- The internet and smartphones are changing the way that children and youth connect with the world around them
- Anxiety is on the rise, as kids and teens feel the need to be “plugged in” at all times
- Technological devices are designed to connect us with others, but in many ways they are causing us to feel isolated and alone

Boys and Girls Clubs believe that building relationships is an important life skill, and we strive to create a sense of community for all children and youth. At Clubs across the country, kids spend time away from smartphones and computers every single day—playing together, learning together, and being mentored by caring adults.

How can Clubs get involved?

Pick one hour (or more) to throw a special event at your Club where you Unplug and Connect with some or all of the following: Club staff, members and their families, partners, alumni, your board, politicians, community leaders, the media. For example:

- An arts and crafts exercise
- A group basketball game
- An unplugged talent show
- A community breakfast
- Something awesome we haven't even thought of yet

Whatever you decide to do for Unplug to Connect, please let us know by filling out the form on our website: <http://www.unplugtoconnect.ca/share/>. We will share your events in the news feed!

In this toolkit, you will find the following:

- Social media suggestions
- Media outreach tools
- Out-of-office sample
- Links to current news stories and statistics

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the national communications team at bgcc_communications@bgccan.com.



SOCIAL MEDIA

It may seem counter-intuitive to use social media to promote Unplug to Connect, but we all know that it is the easiest and quickest way to reach the largest audience.

We would also love to see youth voices on social media platforms, so please share with Club teens (or NYC / PYC members!) to get their input.

We suggest the following timeline for social media:

Leading up to June 7:

- Posts encouraging your followers to join you, either at your Club or online

On June 7:

- Announce when you will be offline for #UnplugToConnect
- Choose a dedicated person to take a few photos during your event
- Post on social media letting everyone know how you chose to Unplug to Connect, and asking them to share what they did

Make sure to use the hashtag **#UnplugToConnect** and share our website: unplugtoconnect.ca

Suggested social media posts below ...



BEFORE JUNE 7

1. General

Join us on June 7 and #UnplugToConnect! <http://unplugtoconnect.ca>

<insert social media graphic / choose automatic image from website / share teaser video>

2. Club member testimonial

“When I put away my phone/tablet/computer, I <insert activity>” – <insert first name of Club kid>
#UnplugToConnect

<insert image of kid or social media graphic>

3. Stat graphic

#UnplugToConnect <http://unplugtoconnect.ca>

<remove automatic image from URL & insert social media graphic with screen-time statistic>

4. Kid art (draw hashtag on sidewalk with chalk, create handmade poster with URL, etc.)

Join us on June 7 and #UnplugToConnect!

<insert photo of kid art>

5. Social media poll

Do you think social media can replace real human connections? YES | NO

[or add your own poll based on Club member feedback]



ON JUNE 7

1. Pre-announcement

Starting at <insert time>, we will <insert event> at <insert Club name>! If you can't join us in person, tag us and let us know what you're doing to celebrate #UnplugToConnect <http://unplugtoconnect.ca>

<insert social media graphic>

2. Right before event

Signing off! It's time to #UnplugToConnect!

<insert image of kids waving or social media graphic>

2. After event

We had a blast <insert brief description of event> with young people at <insert Club name>! How did you #UnplugToConnect? Let us know in the comments ...

<insert a few photos of event—don't forget to select someone to take photos during your event!>

Make sure to retweet / repost anything from your followers ...



LOCAL MEDIA

If you are throwing an event at your Club for #UnplugToConnect, make sure to invite local media! Below you will find templates for a pitch email and a media advisory.

Reach out to media via email **1 week** before your event, with your media advisory attached, and follow-up shortly after with a phone call ...

Media pitch email: template

[subject line: Join us on June 7 and Unplug to Connect]

Hello <insert reporter name>,

Did you know that 61% of people can't ignore their smartphones?

We have been flooded with research that tells us a simple fact: The internet and smartphones are changing the way that children and youth connect with the world around them. Anxiety is on the rise, as kids and teens feel the need to be "plugged in" at all times. Technological devices are designed to connect us with others, but they are causing us to feel isolated and alone.

On June 7, 2019 we are inviting the community to join <insert Club name> and Unplug to Connect.

Unplug to Connect encourages all Canadians to spend more time with friends, family, and co-workers, and less time in front of their screens. For one hour, we are asking people to unplug from their devices and spend time connecting with the people around them.

I have attached a media advisory, and added the pertinent details below. You can also learn more at <http://www.unplugtoconnect.ca/>.

I hope you'll join us!

Sincerely,

<insert name>

<insert date / time / address / event details from media advisory>



Media advisory: template

Cut and paste into a new Word doc and add Club information.

MEDIA ADVISORY

Real People, Real Connections.

Young people from **<insert Club name>** will Unplug to Connect on June 1

- Date:** Friday, June 7, 2019
- Event:** **<brief description of event>**
- Place:** **<Club address>**
- Time:** **<event timeline>**
- Special guests:** **<executives, prominent community members, etc.>**

Additional Information

Boys and Girls Clubs believe that building relationships is an important life skill, and we strive to create a sense of community for all children and youth. At Clubs across the country, kids spend time way from smartphones and computers every single day—playing together, learning together, and being mentored by caring adults.

On June 7, Unplug to Connect events are happening at Clubs across the country. **<insert more details about event, if necessary>**. Visit our website at <http://unplugtoconnect.ca> and follow #UnplugToConnect.

We look forward to seeing you at our event. For more information, please contact:

- <insert contact name>**
- <insert position>**
- <insert Club name>**
- <insert email>**
- <insert phone number>**



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Out-of-office (set to time of your event)

I am offline for Unplug to Connect from <insert times>! Learn more at <http://unplugtoconnect.ca> and follow #UnplugToConnect on social media.

Current news

1. Have Smartphones Destroyed a Generation?
<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2017/09/has-the-smartphone-destroyed-a-generation/534198/>
2. Early Facebook and Google Employees Form Coalition to Fight What They Built
<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/04/technology/early-facebook-google-employees-fight-tech.html>
3. Teens who spend less time in front of screens are happier — up to a point, new research shows
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/inspired-life/wp/2018/01/22/teens-who-spend-less-time-in-front-of-screens-are-happier-up-to-a-point-new-research-shows>
4. Smartphone addiction could be changing your brain
<https://www.cnn.com/2017/11/30/health/smartphone-addiction-study/index.html>
5. Has Social Media Become a Full-Time Job for Teen Girls? <http://www.macleans.ca/culture/social-media-full-time-job-teen-girls>
6. Can't Fight This Feeling: Technology and Teen Anxiety
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/more-feeling/201712/can-t-fight-feeling-technology-and-teen-anxiety>



Infographic (external source)

