OUT OF TOUCH, OUT OF TIME: TENSIONS AROUND DEVICE TIME LIMITS IN THE FAMILY
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INTRODUCTION
Research Questions
- How do families enforce rules about their child’s phone use?
- How does using a parental control software or a behavior contract impact family time limits?
- How can parenting software balance enforcement and flexibility?

RESULTS
Screen Time Concerns Families

C15, 15 y.o. girl: “Oh god... oh dear... It's a long time, I hate to admit it, but I'm pretty much glued to my phone.”

Enforcement of rules matters
Parental control software perceived as inflexible by children

C27, 14 y.o. girl: “Where’s your limits? Tell me where your limit is. I know I’m a kid, but it doesn’t make a difference. I am a person too.”

Behavior contracts seen as hard to enforce by parents

P13, mother of 13 y.o. boy: “I'm not tracking your time. Youhave got to be responsible for it.”

METHODOLOGY
Interviews
Two-hour interviews with 31 parent-child pairs

Recruiting
Social media, community mailing lists, referrals and snowball sampling

RESULTS

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<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Teen Demographics</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Parent Demographics</th>
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<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>Mean Age</td>
<td>46.3</td>
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CONCLUSION
Recommendations for Parenting Tools
Be mindful of framing
- Offer weekend/weekday settings or individual days of the week

Avoid relying on human judgment for specific time limits
- Parent or child estimates of [X] hours of screen time prone to inaccuracy, unfairness

Build flexibility into automated enforcement of time limits
- Enable child user to request more time from parent, and parent to quickly allow the request
- Consider automatic short time extensions or pre-emptive warnings to prevent device shutdown mid-action