

Help kids become creators instead of consumers

 screenagersmovie.com/tech-talk-tuesdays/help-kids-become-creators-instead-of-consumers

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Before I start this week's Tech Talk Tuesday (TTT), I would love to address two key things. I get a lot of emails about people wanting to know how to download the TTT so they can share it at meal times without needing a tech device to read it. Every TTT, on the left, has a bar where it has an icon of a printer. Just click that and then you can download and print the TTT—so you can use it at a meal, in the car, hiking, you name it.

The other question I often get is, "*Is it ok to share TTTs*"? People often think it is copyrighted and can't be shared. Thank you for asking and yes... yes, yes, share away. The goal of TTTs, as well as all the other resources on the website, is to help as many parents, teachers, youth and others as possible. In fact, many schools put the link to the TTTs on their website and in their newsletters. I would just ask that you please credit us when you share the TTT and put a link to our website, www.screenagersmovie.com.

Now onto today's TTT.

When I ask a young person about how they might solve a major societal problem, so often they will start talking about an app-based solution. Thinking about the apps that people develop for social good is a great topic to discuss with our kids and students. The more we can help them think of tech as a tool, (rather than just an entertainment and social center) the better.

Recently my son, Chase, told me excitedly about having just met a guy in his mid-twenties named Andrew, who along with his friend, Miraj, got the idea to create the app, [Harness](#). One day Andrew and Miraj were driving when Miraj had to hit the brakes on his car fast and this caused the change in the cup holder to spill on the floor. Miraj said, "what a waste" referring to all the change that just gets thrown around. A few minutes later Andrew and Miraj started noticing that almost all the billboards they were passing were asking for donations for various causes. Soon they started talking about how they could harness the digital revolution to get the change floating around in people's lives to the people who could really benefit from it. From this, the app was born. With Harness, people can give a little change to a certain cause by rounding up on their purchases.

I have put some other examples here—and purposely included ones started by adults, and not just teens or young adults. The last thing I want youth to think is that this is yet another message that implies that a "successful" teen should have already started a foundation, created 2 apps, taken 10 AP courses, etc., etc.

[Kiva.org](#) was started back in 2005 by Matt Flannery and Jessica Jackley. They were inspired by a talk they saw during graduate school. Kiva is all about microfinance, enabling people to give a small loan to others using the power of the internet. People lend as little as \$25 to help a

borrower start or grow a business, go to school, access clean energy or realize their potential. 1.2 billion dollars have been lent to date with a 97% repayment rate. I started doing this with my daughter Tessa years ago because reading about the stories of what people are doing all over the world has been so inspiring—and being able to make loans to them has been rewarding.

AstraLabs was developed by Amanda Southworth who was a teenager suffering from anxiety and depression when she turned to coding as a way to find relief. The app has games and exercises to help a person get through a panic attack. It also uses a person's location to push local resources to help the person find help.

ScholarMatch, founded in 2010 by author Dave Eggers, delivers free in-person and online support to low-income students at key points in their college journey. The app enables students to develop a helpful support network from the time they first begin their college application all the way through to graduation.

For this week's TTT, talk with your kids about the process of finding solutions. Here are some tips to get you started.

1. What issues are dear to your heart and you could see doing more to help at some point in your life?
2. How might an app and the internet help with that cause?
3. If you can't come up with ideas right away, put the topics on the fridge and see if ideas come up later.
4. Set aside some time to sit down and look at the apps and websites together. See what you like and don't like about them and how your app would be similar or different.