

We Need Rules

J. Antonio Rodriguez Carreon

BEFORE YOU READ:

1. What are some age-based rules we have in our society? For example, how old do you have to be to start first grade? How old do you have to be to buy cigarettes?
2. What does *minimum* mean? Try using it in some sentences.
3. A *gadget* is a small electronic or mechanical device, such as a tablet or a can opener.

Beer for Gustavito

"I'm going to get a beer for Gustavito," I said to my wife. Gustavito is our five-year-old grandson, and my wife takes care of him.

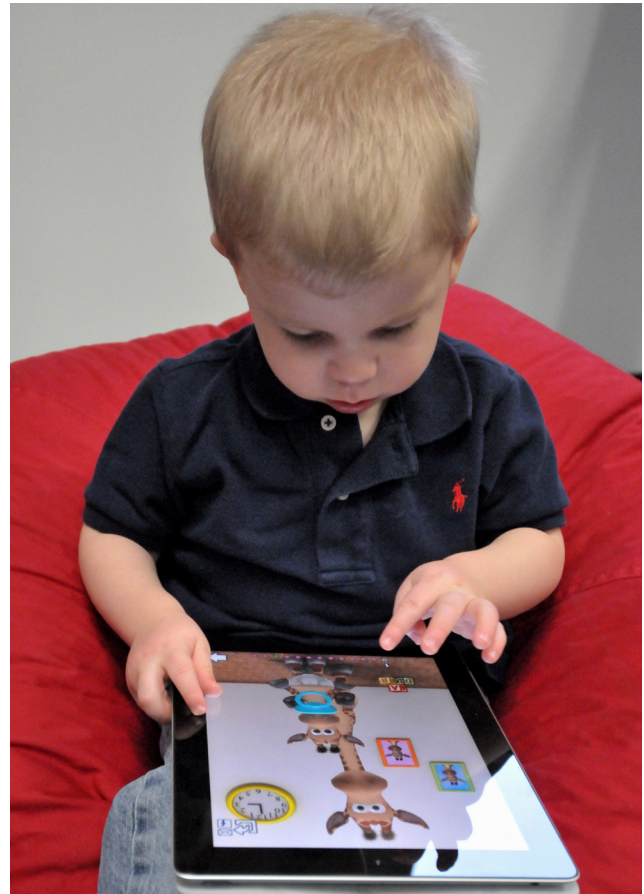
"Are you nuts?" she shouted. "He is only five years old!"

"Why can't I give him a beer? You give him a cell phone to play with. And you don't control what he sees on the phone. For me, it is the same thing!" I told her.

Protect Developing Brains

We have a *minimum* age for lots of things—driving, voting, drinking alcohol. We need a *minimum* age for using these *gadgets*. When we give a child a cell phone, they can see a whole world of information. Why are we doing this? Does the child have the skills to understand all this information? No! We must protect their developing brains.

When we leave our children alone on the internet, we are giving them to people we don't know. These people should not be raising our children. They will shape their idea of reality—the same way alcohol does. The same way people become addicted to alcohol, our children are becoming addicted to images on the screen. These images affect how they see the world. These images affect their mental health.



A small child playing with a device. Photo by Alistair Kelman from [Wikimedia](#) CC 2.0.

We Should Have Rules about Technology

When it comes to technology, we need rules about how old children should be before they can use it. We have rules about alcohol. We should have rules about technology, too.

"Cheers, Gustavito!"

AFTER YOU READ: What is the author's main point? How does he use humor to make his point?

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