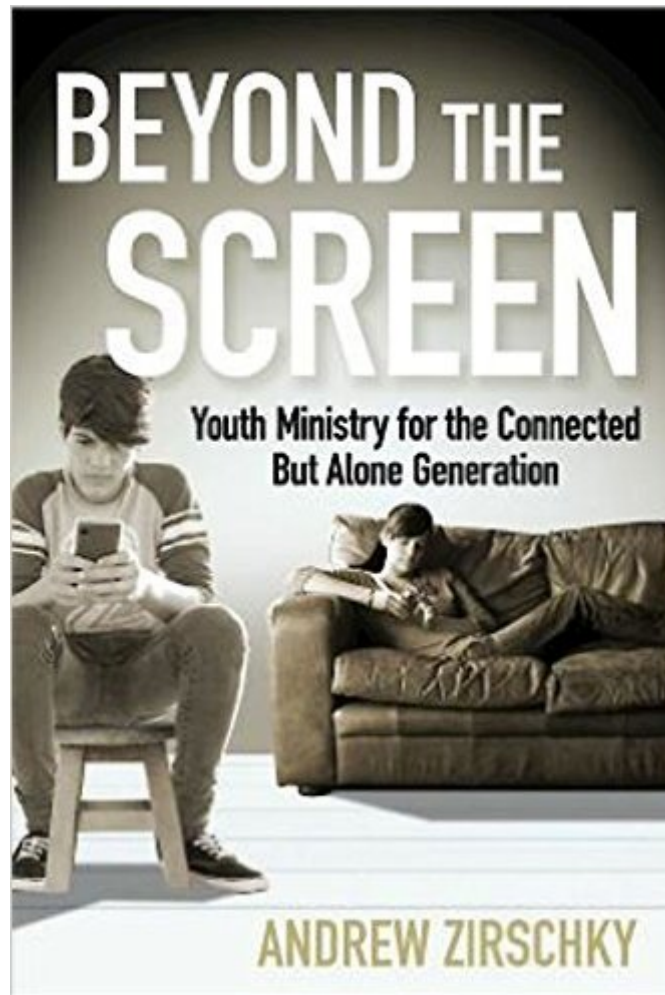


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# Beyond The Screen: Youth Ministry For The Connected But Alone Generation



## Synopsis

It's no secret that teenagers are perpetually connected via social media and mobile devices, but while we've analyzed as a culture how youth are connecting we've done less well at understanding why teenagers are drawn to the glow of the screen. *Beyond the Screen* explores the reality that teenagers use these technologies in desperate bid for an intimacy and depth of relationship largely absent from face-to-face society and the church. Employing the latest ethnographic research on youth and digital media in tandem with theological reflection and interviews with teens themselves, author Andrew Zirschky provides a deeper glimpse into the world of teens and social media and gives new direction and directives for ministering to Millennials.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

A book I have been looking for that didn't exist til now. Andrew engages with the teens perspective of technology and doesn't just write it off. In doing so *Beyond the Screen* addressees the bigger question: How can we truly be a faith community in the technology age? I highly recommend this to anyone who is working with children, teens, young adults, parents of kids, parents of teens...ok EVERYONE! Everyone should read this book.

I must confess . . . I have been weary of those who continue to bash social media for what it is doing to relationships and society in general. The rattling of their sabres and the threatening posture does nothing to endear me to their cause. I understand their concerns, but social media, in one form or another is here to stay so complaining, at best, is a waste of time. In *BEYOND THE SCREEN* we

finally receive a balanced treatment of the challenge with a solid response. How often have we heard when attending a meeting, "If you are going to come with a problem then come with some solutions." Andrew Zirschky has come with the problem and the solution. This solution is one of eternal value and offers the reader a pro-active and pre-emptive strategy. This quote, toward the end of the book, summarizes the thrust of the book, "Discussions of social media with youth shouldn't begin with the media, but instead with an exploration of what it means to be the koinonia of Christ and how that forms our relationships in all domains, whether those relationships are played out online or offline." (p. 148) What Zirschky proposes was as important for the first church as it is for today. These principles still hold true whether one was experiencing oppression from the Romans or is spending too much time "liking" comments on Facebook. Add this book to your priority reading list and "be communion!"

This is an important book to read for anyone who interacts with teens or young adults. Zirschky helps us understand how to interact with the world as Christians in a digital age. He argues that instead of using technology to escape from building connections with others, teens are really using technology in the hope of building meaningful connections with others in their lives. This book will change how you think about and use technology in your church and in your life.

Andrew Zirschky has woven together the age of technology with our basic human longing for relationship in a book that offers insight, understanding and hope for youth ministry. Andrew has blatantly put on display how youth ministers can misuse and misunderstand what is happening with our youth and their use of technology. He has cracked the code of the underlying good and bad of social media/technology use. Using scripture in a powerful way, Andrew reminds us of the importance of communion amongst believers. Grab this book and a pen to take notes!

As a youth worker who has read countless books on the topic of technology and teenagers, I was blown away by *Beyond the Screen*! Andrew Zirschky does an amazing job addressing the significance that technology and social media has on the life of teenagers today. Zirschky's insight and honesty on the topic is refreshing and his research is thorough. *Beyond the Screen* is more than a book for youth workers! I plan to give it to parents as a great resource that gives them useful insight into the actual realities of their teens lives. Great book and will definitely be recommending to all of my colleagues, volunteers and parents of teens!!

I have been waiting for someone to say this for a long time! Kids "addiction" to technology is merely a desire for connection. Andrew gives a great perspective and weaves it into practical steps for making meaningful connections with kids. He's done his research, and even parents who are not engaged in student ministry will gain perspective and practical techniques for connecting with kids.

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