



Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**ESCAPING DIGITAL OVERLOAD IN THE NEW YEAR:
SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS AMERICANS' COMMUNICATION STRESS POINTS**

*VTech encourages people to reconnect with the ones that matter most,
as Americans rank being constantly accessible for work
and keeping up with technology changes as top tech stressors*

BEAVERTON, Ore., January 11, 2011 – According to a new survey¹ conducted by independent market research firm Toluna and the No. 1 U.S. cordless phone manufacturer VTech Communications, Americans are feeling overwhelmed by the constant accessibility and influx of digital information of the 21st century. In fact, when asked to rank the most stressful technology-related issues, consumers cited “being constantly accessible for work” and “keeping up with all the technology changes” as the top two sources of stress (33 percent and 20 percent, respectively).

This issue hit closest to home for 25-to-34-year-olds – nearly a quarter (23 percent) said that they now spend more time working because of today’s technology capabilities. Yet, the newest digital tools that keep consumers constantly connected also may be the least desired. When asked what they could “live without for a day,” 33 percent of survey respondents chose social networking and 28 percent chose text messaging.

The feeling of being buried by a constant deluge of information is becoming universal. Created to teach consumers to remember and embrace the art of good communication, VTech’s StayGrounded.com online hub features advice from developmental psychologist and life coach, Dr. Michelle Callahan, along with weekly polls, tips and articles on building bonds with friends and family through one-on-one communication.

“Too often people get caught up in all of the latest technology advances when sometimes just having a real one-on-one conversation is the best way to stay connected to what’s ‘real’ and the things that matters most,” says Dr. Michelle, host of syndicated daytime talk show *Wedlock or Deadlock* and author of *Ms. Typed: Stop Sabotaging Your Relationships* and *Find Dating Success* (Three Rivers Press, 2010). “Make 2011 the year you unwind and reach out to someone you haven’t thought of in awhile. A quality conversation can be the best way to de-stress and reconnect.”

Current content on StayGrounded.com focuses on reminding people that a good one-on-one conversation can provide a psychological escape from even the busiest lifestyle, and that taking time to connect with loved ones in the New Year can offer a renewed perspective. To help people overcome the digital overload of modern life, VTech is encouraging consumers to share the ways they plan to “escape” after the holidays, at <http://www.facebook.com/VTechPhones>.

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Those who share may be eligible to win weekly prize packages valued at up to \$200 each.

As people look to get a fresh start on the year, the survey found that the majority of Americans are placing a high priority on connecting with loved ones. More than half (52 percent) want to connect with an old friend they haven't seen in a while, and 37 percent ranked "calling distant family/relatives more often" as their No. 1 communication resolution. A phone call with a loved one at the end of the day is the perfect way to unwind and re-establish one-on-one connections.

StayGrounded.com highlights more detailed data from the Toluna/VTech survey. Other key findings include:

- **The downsides of smartphones:** Forty-four percent of 25-34 year-olds who own smartphones say they call others less now, and 23 percent said they spend more time working, because they're expected to be constantly accessible.
- **Who do Americans vent their frustrations to?** Thirty-four percent said their significant other. If not to a significant other, respondents would rather keep things to themselves, and mid-Westerners are the most stoic (37 percent would rather keep things to themselves compared to residents in other parts of the country).
- **Who do you want to "escape" from this year?** When asked if there were any individuals they would want to "escape" in 2011, 36 percent said "a clingy friend I can't seem to get rid of." And apparently, older adults have the clingiest friends – 55 percent of respondents above age 55 chose a "clingy friend." Twenty-six percent of Americans wish they could avoid "an annoying co-worker."
- **2011 could be the year to reach out and reconnect:** Adults over 45 ranked calling more often as their No. 1 communication resolution.

"The survey shows that a simple phone call and real conversation with friends and family is what Americans want and need to stay grounded," said Tom Bacon, vice president of marketing, VTech Communications, Inc. "We want to help people escape from the stresses of everyday overload by remembering the power of great conversations, in addition to their everyday digital indulgences."

A VTech Phone for Any Lifestyle

VTech's latest DECT 6.0 cordless phone systems offer superior call quality, range and reception for the conversations that matter most. Available now on www.vtechphones.com and through major retail stores nationwide, the current lineup includes:

- The **LS6325-4** is ideal for busy families who need to connect with friends and family – and with each other throughout the home – thanks to an added Push-to-Talk (PTT) feature.
- VTech's **two-line DS6151 system** is also great for busy households, as well as small office/home office users. It eliminates fights for phone time and frustrations over having just one phone line, and features intercom, call transfer, conference capabilities and a dedicated voicemail box for each line.

Connect to Win Today

VTech's StayGrounded.com features weekly visitor polls, regularly updated tips, fun facts and videos focused on the art of good conversation, along with special product discount offers. Visitors can continue the dialogue by sharing with others through email, Facebook® or Twitter®.

- **Facebook:** Visitors can share the ways they plan to escape from technology at <http://www.facebook.com/VTechPhones> to be eligible for weekly relaxation prize packages (valued at up to \$200/each), and receive information on VTech discounts, events, sports and music initiatives.

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- **Twitter:** Follow VTech at <http://twitter.com/vtech411> for the latest news, including links to product reviews, contests and giveaways.

About VTech®

VTech is the world's largest manufacturer of cordless telephones and a leading supplier of electronic learning products. It also provides highly sought-after contract manufacturing services. Founded in 1976, the Group's mission is to be the most cost effective designer and manufacturer of innovative, high quality consumer electronic products and to distribute them to markets worldwide in the most efficient manner.

For further information on VTech and its array of products, please visit www.vtechphones.com.

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1. Survey methodology

Toluna, Inc. fielded the study on behalf of VTech on Dec. 9, 2010 via its online omnibus service, interviewing a nationwide sample of 1,000 adults aged 18 years and older. Data were weighted using propensity score weighting to be representative of the total U.S. adult population on the basis of region, age within gender, education, household income, race/ethnicity, and propensity to be online. Data for questions related to online use or behaviors were weighted specifically to the respective "online" populations. No estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated; a full methodology is available.

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