



# Cell Phone/Device PRIVILEGES

When(ever) you decide to allow your child to have a cell phone ...setting clear rules will help you all avoid misunderstandings.

## Spell out your expectations.

"Most parents think a "contract" with their child is unnecessary and silly. But a written agreement is a great way for your child to step into this new responsibility without you "over-parenting." When that first cell phone comes with written rules and responsibilities in the form of a signed agreement, young people learn how to handle them responsibly. If you ask your kids what they think the rules should be, and negotiate until you're happy, they will "own" those rules." (Copied from the article linked below)

- There are many, many sample Cell Phone Contracts online. Search the web then cut/paste the rules that work for your family.
- One local mom shared a letter that she wrote to her child when he was given a phone. *A copy of that letter is printed on the back side of this sheet.*
- There are many articles on this topic. Below is an excerpt from one that we found one article entitled, **"The First Cell Phone: Rules for Responsibility."**



Research shows that virtually all kids who are allowed to keep their cell phone in their room overnight will answer a late-night text, and most of them have spent at least some late nights sending texts.

Only 11 percent of parents suspect their teens have ever sent, received or forwarded a sexual text, while 41% of teens admit they've done so.

Only 4 percent of parents believe their teens have ever texted while driving, while 45% of teens admit that they routinely text while driving!

So it's natural to worry when your child is ready for her first cell phone. It takes a fair amount of self-discipline to manage the responsibility of a mobile phone -- and most kids

are not ready for that before middle school, if then.

Often, parents also find themselves with a vague sense of dread. Yes, this device is an instrument of connection, and it will allow you and your child to be more connected when you're apart. But it's also a symbol of separation, a reminder that your child is now spending enough time at a distance from you -- and other supervising adults -- to need it. Worse, it's a harbinger of the dangers lurking in the outside world that threaten to pop up and menace your child at any time, without you there to stop them...

Read more by linking to the article online:

<http://www.ahaparenting.com/ages-stages/tweens/cell-phone-rules-safe-responsible-kids>

Dear son,

This is your phone (electronic device) contract! You are now the proud renter of an iPhone. You are a good & responsible 12 1/2 year old boy. But with the acceptance of this phone come rules and regulations. Please read through the following contract. I hope that you understand it is my job to raise you into a well rounded, healthy young man that can function in the world and coexist with technology, not be ruled by it. Failure to comply with the following list will result in termination of your iPhone ownership.

I love you madly & look forward to sharing several million text messages with you in the days to come.

1. It is my phone/device I bought it. I pay for it. I am loaning it to you. Aren't I the greatest?
2. I will always know the password (to all apps too).
3. If it rings, answer it. It is a phone. Say hello, use your manners. Do not ever ignore a phone call if the screen reads "Mom" or "Dad". Not ever.
4. Hand the phone to one of your parents promptly at 8:00 pm every school night & every weekend night at 9:00pm. It will be shut off for the night and turned on again in the am. If you would not make a call to someone's land line, wherein their parents may answer first, then do not call or text that person. Listen to those instincts and respect other families like we would like to be respected.
5. Have a conversation with the people you text in person. It's a life skill.
6. If it falls into the toilet, smashes on the ground, or vanishes into thin air, you are responsible for the replacement costs or repairs. It will happen, you should be prepared.
7. Do not use this technology to lie, fool, or deceive another human being. Do not involve yourself in conversations that are hurtful to others. Be a good friend first or stay the heck out of the crossfire.
8. Do not text, email, or say anything through this device you would not say in person.
9. Do not text, email, or say anything to someone that you would not say out loud with their parents in the room. Censor yourself.
10. Group Texts are tricky to navigate. Be careful of how you utilize this form of communication. Things you write can and will come back to haunt you. Only text positive messages. You can and should be asked to be taken off a group text that is full of hurtful language, gossiping or inappropriate context.
11. Search the web only for information you would openly share with me. If you have a question about anything, ask a person – preferably me or your father.
12. Turn it off, silence it, and put it away in public. Especially in a restaurant, at the movies, or while speaking with another human being. You are not a rude person; do not allow the iPhone to change that.

13. Do not send or receive pictures of your private parts or anyone else's private parts. Don't laugh. Someday you will be tempted to do this despite your high intelligence. It is risky and could ruin your teenage/college/adult life. It is always a bad idea. Cyberspace is vast and more powerful than you. And it is hard to make anything of this magnitude disappear – including a bad reputation. You must come to me, or your father if you receive any inappropriate content. We will navigate the issue together.
14. Don't take a zillion pictures and videos. There is no need to document everything. Live your experiences, be present and in the moment. Your experiences will be stored in your memory for eternity.
15. Leave your phone home sometimes and feel safe and secure in that decision. It is not alive or an extension of you. Learn to live without it. Be bigger and more powerful than FOMO – fear of missing out.
16. Download music that is new or classic or different than the millions of your peers that listen to the same exact stuff. Your generation has access to music like never before in history. Take advantage of that gift. Expand your horizons.
17. Play a game with words or puzzles or brain teasers every now and then.
18. Keep your eyes up. See the world happening around you. Stare out a window. Listen to the birds. Take a walk. Talk to a stranger. Wonder without googling.
19. I will walk this walk with you and may also need to be reminded to unplug.
20. You will mess up. I will take away your phone. We will sit down and talk about it. We will start over again. You & I, we are always learning. I am on your team. We are in this together. It is my hope that you can agree to these terms. Most of the lessons listed here do not just apply to the iPhone or other electronic device, but to life. You are growing up in a fast and ever changing world. It is exciting and enticing. Keep it simple every chance you get. Trust your powerful mind and giant heart above any machine. I love you.

xoxoxoxo, Mom

***One last thought on the topic:*** Pay attention to your phone habits. Kids follow our example, not our advice.

