



Cell Phone & Device PRIVILEGES

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

Spell out your expectations.

Many 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. You'll have a better chance at compliance if you ask your child what they think the rules should be, and then negotiate until you're OK with them.

There are many, many samples of cell phone and smartphone contracts online. Search the web, then decide which guidelines work for your family.

A local mom shared a letter that she wrote to her son when he was given a phone. *A copy of that letter is printed on the back side of this sheet.*



Monitor apps and phone time.

Be diligent about the apps your child is downloading and using. Find up-to-date descriptions of the apps!

Understand that the smartphone provides access to social media and pornography.

- It has been widely researched that excessive smartphone and social media use increases mental distress, injurious behavior and suicidality among youth and the effect appears to be greatest among girls.
- Social media affects a child's self-view and interpersonal relationships through social comparison, cyberbullying, and the normalization and even promotion of self-harm and suicidality.
- It is reported in "[Teens and Pornography](#)," that 73% of teen respondents age 13 to 17 have watched pornography online. And, that online pornography is shaping their views about sex and sexual relationships, as nearly half (45%) of teen respondents said that they felt online pornography gives "helpful" information about sex.



A message from ARCH. ARCH is a 501(3)(c) coalition of parents, educators, and community members committed to promoting the well-being of youth in Tredyffrin and Easttown Townships. We serve as a resource to families as they help their children form a positive self-image, make healthy choices, and reduce the use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs (ATOD). www.archcares.org

Dear son,

This is your phone (electronic device) contract! You are now the proud renter of an iPhone. You are a good & responsible 12 ½ 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 9:00 pm every school night & every weekend night at 10:00pm. It will be shut off for the night and turned on again in the am.
5. It is proven that social media can negatively impact your mental health. We will be setting limits on what apps you access and how long you are on them.
6. Have a conversation in person with the people you text. It's a life skill.
7. 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.
8. 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.
9. Do not text, email, or say anything through this device you would not say in person.
10. Do not text, email, or say anything to someone that you would not say out loud with their parents in the room. Censor yourself.
11. 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.
12. 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.
13. 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.

14. 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.
15. Do not ever use your phone to cheat. Even if you are the recipient of an assignment or test, you will get in trouble. Even if you didn't ask for it. Tell me or a trusted adult.
16. Please don't document your life on your phone and social media. Leave some space for reality, mystery, and learning about life by experience, not by watching. Live your experiences, be present and in the moment. Your experiences will be stored in your memory for eternity.
17. 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.
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. 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 in an 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