

Electronic Addiction

“Everything is permissible for me,” but not everything is beneficial. “Everything is permissible for me,” but I will not be mastered by anything. *1 Corinthians 6:12*

It’s natural to be concerned about our teens’ attachment to their phones or electronics. In today’s digital age, these devices are a significant part of our lives, but they shouldn’t overshadow the joy of real-world experiences and relationships. Remember, your guidance and example can help teens find balance and understand the value of being present in both the physical and spiritual world. Emphasize the importance of moderation and self-control as taught in the Bible, and reassure them that while technology is a useful tool, it is not the center of our lives.

➤ conversation starter

I’ve noticed that we both spend a lot of time on our phones. What do you think about setting aside some time to disconnect and do something together?

Can we talk about how you feel when you’re not using your phone or electronics? What are some activities that you enjoy that don’t involve screens?

➤ navigating the conversation:

- **Lead by Example:** Demonstrate healthy electronic habits. Limit your screen time and engage in more face-to-face interactions.
- **Create Tech-Free Zones/Times:** Establish certain areas or times when electronic devices are not used, such as during family meals or an hour before bedtime.
- **Encourage Other Interests:** Help teens find hobbies or activities they enjoy outside of the digital world. This could include sports, reading, crafts, or outdoor activities.
- **Discuss, Don’t Lecture:** Engage in open-ended conversations, so teens will feel comfortable sharing their thoughts. Avoid lecturing as it might lead to resistance.
- **Set Reasonable Boundaries:** Work together to set reasonable limits on screen time. Empower teens by involving them in the decision-making process.
- **Focus on the Positive:** Highlight the benefits of reduced screen time, such as improved sleep, more time for hobbies, and deeper connections with family and friends.
- **Seek Professional Help If Needed:** If you suspect a severe addiction, don’t hesitate to seek help from a counselor or therapist, especially one who understands the challenges of raising teens in a Christian household.

