



Core Connectivity: A Foundation for Empowering Families

www.coreconnectivity.org

Preparing Children for the Social Network

Consequences + Love = Empowerment

Genuine love involves setting personal boundaries within the realm of hearts and minds that liberate us from the undue influence in the physical and cyber realms, including: bullying, exploitation, and addiction. Our aim is to create a home environment where the trustworthy character of love is expressed as discipline.

House rules involve boundary setting that relies upon individuals to take personal responsibility for thoughts and actions in age appropriate ways. The following are some criteria for establishing and enforcing cyber safe house rules:

- Consider internet access and smart phones as a rite of passage – not a right.
- No secrets, no surprises. Transparency is mandatory.
- Explain why each rule exists and how it benefits individuals and the family
- Regulate schedule and access to cyber tools
- Unplug phones at a designated time in the evening
- Only hit “send” if your mother could read it and be proud
- Establish and enforce consequences for rules violations
- Clean slate. Once a consequence has been enforced give your child a clean slate, expressing confidence in your child’s ability to stand corrected.

Bring clarity to key concepts, such as:

Brave v. risky: Both can make you feel discomfort. However, you are brave when you do the right thing even though you are afraid of displeasing your friends of being left out; while risky is ignoring your little voice warning you that it’s not right or dangerous.

Private v. secret: Private is when you decide not to disclose information about yourself in order to be safe. Privacy involves discretion and is active boundary setting. A secret, on the other hand, is something that is determined cannot survive the light of day because it is not acceptable: i.e., exploitive, harmful or illegal. Secrets nurture risky behavior.

Trust v. faith: Trust among people is always verifiable, while faith is reserved for God who does not require proof. Too often children expect trust and privacy, which are dangerous – especially in their on-line worlds. When we put our faith in children to handle things without guidance, we leave them vulnerable to risky circumstances beyond their ability to respond with confidence.

Forgive v. excuse: Forgiveness is liberty; it’s the act of letting go of the offense in your own heart and mind when someone has hurt or offends you. It does not mean you excuse the offensive behavior, give in to it, or enable it. It does mean that you do not allow yourself to become emotionally and spiritually bonded to the offense. The most powerful way to hold an individual accountable is to be in a state of forgiveness because you are not thinking and acting like a victim and makes possible atonement and reconciliation.

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Social Media Etiquette for Parents & Teens



Texting and social media is the main artery of communication for teens, and so it is important that parents accept this social reality, and help their teens understand how to be true to themselves (i.e., behave on line according to their core values as a trustworthy person).

The most important thing teens value is trust.

The point of social media etiquette is to build trust.

Examples of etiquette for parents

- Be kind (the Golden Rule)
- Be mindful of being present/give undivided attention when you are in the same room (how we give our attention is a measure of respect and how kids feel loved)
- Parents monitor/random checks in lurk only mode (catch them doing things right)
- Avoid shaming
- Correct your child off line/give him a chance to make things right
- Be mindful they need your wisdom (why a behavior is good or not good), not your opinion (condemning a behavior driving it into secret mode)
- Periods/emojies/ know your audience
- Do send words of encouragement via text
- Handle disagreements in person
- Protect privacy
- Avoid posting pictures without permission

Examples of etiquette between teens and their peers

- Be kind (the Golden Rule)
- No nude or explicit photos (child porn is a federal offense)
- Recognize gossip, do not pass it on, and redirect the conversation
- Report bullying/harassment to a trusted adult (personal attacks should never be shrugged off – both the aggressor and the target need help)
- Establish a sundown time (let your friends know when you are signing off for the day)
- Establish response grace periods for driving, studying and family time (i.e, no immediate replies)