



Family Life

Media Time Family Pledge

At the beginning and end of the day, the best way to keep our kids safe online is to parent them. Kids learn best with small lessons over time as opposed to one big lecture or sit-down talk. Looking for teachable moments when your kids are using the computer will have much more staying power than talking about the issue out of the blue. Similarly, bringing up a headline from the news about a child in the same peer bracket can pack a powerful teaching punch.

The following is a Family Time Media Pledge that you can use for your family. Use this as a starting point and modify as needed for your family's needs. The goal is to incorporate technology into our lives in a meaningful way that allows us to have a healthy balance of online and off-line time.

Kids and Teens

- I will never give out personal information online or by text and will avoid all chat rooms except ones my mom and dad have looked at and approved.
- I understand my parents have a right to check into my media history on my computer and phone and other devices such as iPod Touch, games, and whatever else I use regularly. I will try and keep my total screen time to 2 hours a day except when doing a project for school, or when my parents give me permission.
- I will not watch shows or play games that are inappropriate for me or for friends and family watching or playing with me.

Parents

- I will check what my kids are doing online and on their phones, consider using parent controls, and use them judiciously.
- I will let my kids know before I check their computers or enable parent controls on their computers or gaming units.
- I will take the time to be interested in what my kids are doing online and in the digital world and talk to them about that world.
- I will help them make good media choices.
- If my child makes a mistake, I will ask questions and learn what happened before I punish or take away technology.
- I will only take away technology as a last resort for defying our family pledge when other consequences have failed to work, such as reinforcing the rules and increase off-line chores.

Entire Family

- We will talk as a family at a meal a day with no technology in sight!
- We will agree to technology-free times such as meals, weekends, and vacations.
- We won't sacrifice important family time for media or digital use of any kind. If media gets in the way, we need to recognize we are using it too much or in a way that is not helping our family.
- We agree to use technology responsibly by not
 - Texting or talking on a cell phone while driving
 - Using cell phones in a public location where it may annoy others
 - Using technology to harm others by engaging in bullying or slanderous actions
 - Listening to music with earbuds in a manner that prevents us from hearing passing cars or pedestrians, and never while in the car as the driver

Date: _____

Signed

Parents: _____

Kids and Teens: _____

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Source

CyberSafe: Protecting and Empowering Kids in the Digital World of Texting, Gaming, and Social Media (Copyright © 2011 American Academy of Pediatrics)

<http://www.healthychildren.org/English/family-life/Media/Pages/Media-Time-Family-Pledge.aspx>