

Top 10 Ways to Tame the Cell Phone Beast

Here are the Top 10 Tips that Real Life Parents use to stop cell phone fights before they begin.

10. Use the Parental Controls.

All the Major Cell Phone Carriers have some sort of Parental Controls. There are some pretty great features that help parents. Some carriers let you set the hours your teenager can use their phone and others allow you to track their whereabouts through GPS. You might pay an extra fee for these services, but parents tell us that it is well worth it.

9. Have Your Teenager Take a Picture of Their Destination

Instead of just having them call you when they arrive at their destination, have them send a picture which gives visual evidence that they are where they are supposed to be. This gives them an amazing opportunity to earn your trust.

8. Don't Give a SmartPhone Right Away

A lot of the parents we talk to gave their teenager an older phone to start with and let them have more features as they earned more trust. This sets your teenager up for success and avoids giving them too much too soon.

7. Learn the Texting Abbreviations

You are one Google Search away from being an expert in the language of text message abbreviations. It's true that teenagers have their own language when they text, but the smart parent chooses to become fluent in that language so they can understand what their teenager is saying to them and others.

6. Use a Cell Phone Contract

Sit down with your teenager and work together to set guidelines for cell phone use. Write them down, sign the bottom of the paper, and hang it up in a public place in your home. This will give you a reference point to refer to in the future.

5. Shut Down Texting and Driving

Talk early and often with your teenager about Texting and Driving. It will be one of those subjects that they are tempted to ignore, but it is crucially important that they respect. By the way, if you text and drive in front of them you will fight an uphill battle convincing them not to pick up the habit.

4. Break the ICE

Make sure your teenager has a contact in their list titled ICE (In Case of Emergency) with your phone number listed. Emergency Responders are trained to check the phones they find for this contact.

3. Fight for Your Right to Read Texts

You might disagree with us and that is OK, but we believe that you should have the right to read your teenager's text messages. The older they get the more right they have to privacy, but we believe they should earn that right over time. If you are watching their texts you have a chance to teach them how to act responsibly.

2. Plug In The Cell Phone By the Parent's Bed at Night

This is a Parenting Ninja Secret. To keep their teenager from texting until 2 am in the morning, we know some really smart parents who have their teenager charge their cell phone in the Parent's bedroom at night.

1. Teach Your Teenager Early That Their Phone is a Privilege not a Right

If you pay the bill then you are in control of whether or not your teenager gets to use the phone. When we asked parents for tips on taming the cell phone beast, this was by far the most popular. We hope it helps!