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To Text or Not toText  
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***“Young people are prone to foolishness and fads; the cure comes through tough-minded discipline.” Proverbs 22:15 (MSG)***

**Devotion:**

To text or not to text...that is the question. My husband and I struggled with this question when our two daughters entered middle school. Some how they convinced us that we would be better parents, and they would be safer children, if they were given cell phones. We fell for it.

Since then, they have come to believe that texting is one of the four primary food groups which sustains life as we know it.

I am a strong believer in random text checks. On occasion, I will pick up my daughters' phones, without warning, and skim through their messages. Something in my spirit told me it was time for a random check. I immediately glanced at the conversations taking place in her private world of texting. As I read through the messages, my heart sank. I was devastated at the conversations she had been engaging in. Although her responses were not entirely inappropriate, the things that were being said to her were. I was disappointed that she would allow boys in her school to say such offensive things, and crushed that she had not stood up for her faith and distanced herself from people who obviously did not respect her.

As I sat there, feeling like a complete failure as a parent, I received an email. My friend Mary Beth had posted an entry on her blog regarding texting problems among teenagers, and thought I might be interested. I immediately linked over to read it, and praised God as I wiped away the tears from my eyes. Through a simple blog entry, God communicated to me that I was not alone. He used Mary Beth's words to reassure me I was not a failure as a parent. We live in a corrupt world, and the enemy will use whatever means he can to pierce the hearts of our children and gain control of their thoughts and actions.

Although I trust my children, I had to recognize that even good kids make mistakes. Even good kids, from good families, raised in Christian homes, can get caught up in the trappings of this world, and pulled into ungodly actions. It is our job as parents to help our kids set themselves apart from the fads of today's society that are not healthy for them. If we allow our kids the privilege of their privacy so much that they are living a life that parents are not a part of, then we, as parents, have gotten pulled into the trappings of this world as well. As my mom used to say, just because everybody else is doing it, doesn't mean that you have to do it. This also applies to us parents! Just because other parents allow their kids to have cell phones, unlimited texting, and completely private lives doesn't mean I have to! Mary Beth said it perfectly when she wrote, "Today, I realized that our position on cell phones is "weird" by our kids and the rest of the world's standard, but that is okay. If it means helping our kids emerge from the teen years holy and healthy, I am willing to be weird."

My husband and I made the difficult decision that we would not only block texting from cell phones but the phones would be temporarily, if not permanently, taken away. Did that win us the parent popularity award? Absolutely not. Did our daughters expend all of their energies trying to convince us they would be social outcasts in society? Yes. Did they use scare tactics, like something might happen and they won't be able to call us? Yes they did.

But do we believe we are doing what God would have us do to protect our children and teach them what is holy and just? Absolutely.

If need be, are you willing to be “weird”?

Dear Lord, parenting is hard. Please guide me in making difficult decisions that are in the best interest of my child, even if they don't agree. Please wrap your arms around them and keep them safe from the evils of this world. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Related Resources:

[Be the Parent](#) by Kendra Smiley

[Visit Tracie Miles' blog](#)

[Teenagers and Cell Phones](#), by Mary Beth Whalen

Application Steps:

Do a random text check today on your teenager's phone.

Be willing to take appropriate action to protect your child, even if it is not a popular decision.

Reflections:

Am I unaware of my children's world?

Am I affording my teenager too much privacy?

Am I *being* the parent?

Power Verses:

Proverbs 19:18, “Discipline your children while you still have the chance; indulging them destroys them.” (MSG)

Proverbs 22:6, “Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it.” (NKJ)