

Technology

Dear Facilitator: For several weeks we have been discussing how successful families communicate, support one another, and organize their lives.

This week we are going to focus on technology. Before we begin, I would like you to think about the methods that Jesus used to teach people:

- He used mud on eyes.
- He used his voice to command Lazarus to come out of the tomb.
- He wrote in the sand with the woman who was caught in adultery.
- He modeled prayer.
- He broke bread and fed over 5,000 people.
- He used stories such as parables that related to the times.
- He used shocking statements.
- He used memorable sayings.
- He used repetition.

If Jesus walked this earth today, what other methods would he use to teach?

I believe Jesus would use the tools of today. One such tool is technology. As with every good thing, technology can be misused. We need to be prepared to keep our families safe, while at the same time, use the tools of today.

It might be helpful for you to know what we hope to accomplish through this lesson. Participants will:

1. Identify resources to protect the family from dangerous technology.
2. Explain how technology can be helpful in today's world.

continued


Notes

During the past few lessons, we have made commitment statements. This week's commitment statement is: I will honor God with my use of technology.


We pray that God will give you direction and clarity as you prepare the lesson and activities. We hope that the families in your group will grow together in God's love and become a source of friendship and support for one another.

Blessings


Prior to Meeting

 **Do:** Leaders will need to make copies of Handout 1 (pages 8-9), Handout 2 (pages 10) and Handout 3 (pages 11-12).


Welcome *5 minutes*

 **Say:** Welcome back! I hope it's been a good week for all of you as you have been working diligently on many things that are positively influencing your family.

Last week we spent time discussing the importance of volunteering—why we should volunteer, ways in which we can volunteer, and the blessings gained through volunteering.

 **Ask:** Did anyone try something this past week that made a positive difference in your family that you would be willing to share?


Introduction 5 minutes


 **Say:** Let's take a few minutes together to read out loud our Family Commitment Statements (read together out loud the previous statements).

Before we begin, what methods did Jesus use to teach people?

 **Say:** Possible responses:

- He used mud on eyes.
- He used his voice to command Lazarus to come out of the tomb.
- He wrote in the sand with the woman who was caught in adultery.
- He modeled prayer.
- He broke bread and fed over 5,000 people.
- He used stories such as parables that related to the times.
- He used shocking statements.
- He used memorable sayings.
- He used repetition.

 **Ask:** If Jesus walked this earth today, what other methods would he use to teach?

 **Say:** I believe Jesus would use the tools of today. One such tool is technology. As with every good thing, technology can be misused. We need to be prepared to keep our families safe, while at the same time, use the tools of today.


Today's teaching objectives are to:

1. Identify resources to protect the family from dangerous technology.
2. Explain how technology can be helpful in today's world.

During the past few lessons, we have made commitment statements. This week's commitment statement is: I will honor God with my use of technology.

Notes

Family & Table Talk 20 minutes


 **Ask:** During our meal time, think and talk about all the ways you and your family uses technology.

1. What ways do you and your family use technology?
2. Before the technology was invented, what was used instead?
3. Which way is better?

After the meal, children are dismissed to their group.

As you begin this portion of the evening, explain that each time you will start with the overview and then the lesson time.

Overview

 **Ask:** What do these abbreviations mean? (from iRules)

ASL (age, sex, location)

BFF (best friends forever)

BRB (be right back)

HBU (how 'bout you)

HMU (hit me up)

IDC (I don't care)

ILY(2) (I love you (too))

IRL (In real life)

LOL (laugh/laughing out loud)

OH (overheard)

OMG (oh my God/goodness)

OMW (on my way)

PAW(parents are watching)

ROLF (rolling on the floor laughing)

RT (retweet)

TIA (Thanks in advance)

TMI (Too much information)

40 minutes

Parent Training

Engaging the World

TECHNOLOGY

Jesus used a number of methods to teach:

- **Jesus's use of repetition:** Mark 8:31, 9:31, 10:33-34
- **Object lessons:** John 13:3-17, Matthew 18:1-4, Mark 12:41-44
- **Asking questions:** Matthew 16:26, 22:20-21
- **Memorable sayings:** Luke 6:37-38, Luke 6:31
- **Stories:** Mark 4:34

(From <http://www.lifeway.com/pastors/2014/03/10/6-preaching-methods-jesus-used-that-you-should-too/>)

So where do we begin? Should we use technology within our families?

In an article adapted from <https://www.faithandsafety.org/-/using-technology-in-a-christian-way>, it says:

In his Epistle to Timothy, St. Paul says, “Let no one have contempt for your youth, but set an example for those who believe, in speech, conduct, love, faith, and purity.” [1] Our actions, words, and lifestyle are all essential parts of living the true Christian life. The power of all these digital devices provides us with an almost unprecedented opportunity to follow St. Paul’s words.

Our use of technology should be consistent with our Christian faith. Our digital communications and the content we create and share should all be positive examples to others. That isn’t always the case. Sometimes, we may use the gift of technology—accidentally or on purpose—in inappropriate ways.

As Christians, we need a guideline to help us determine if our intended actions are consistent with or run contrary to our faith.

Of course, thinking about technology in this way might seem a bit strange. We live, after all, in the nation of “why not?” We love the

new and get excited about the many things that we stand to gain with each new gadget. Rarely do we stop to consider whether we really need to check out that new web site or buy that new device. After all, “why not”?

Before engaging in any online behavior, we would do well to change our perspective by considering several questions:

1. Why am I engaging in this activity?
2. Is this activity spiritually beneficial to me or another person?
3. Will my activities directly or indirectly hurt, harm, or embarrass another person?
4. Would Christ approve of my actions or activities?

If we cannot answer even one of these questions appropriately, then we shouldn't engage in that activity or behavior. As St. Paul said, we should set an example for others. Therefore, let's prayerfully reflect on the power and capabilities gifted to us through these new technologies. May we always use those capabilities with wisdom and discernment for God's glory.

How do you keep your family safe?

DISCUSS

Review Handouts 1 & 2

- As you go through the handouts, ask participants to respond on how they are feeling or thinking about the information. What are some things you wish you would have started sooner than later?

One concern is the easy access of porn through technology.

Review Handout 3

- As you go through the handout, ask participants to respond on how they are feeling or thinking about the information.

How about a little experiment?

Do you need to detox (or e-tox) from electronics?

Have the whole family try it for one day or weekend.
Talk about how the experience made everyone feel.

We covered so much in today's lesson.

By now, you should be able to:

1. Identify resources to protect the family from dangerous technology.
2. Explain how technology can be helpful in today's world.

This week's commitment statement is: I will honor God with my use of technology.

To end our lesson, please answer the following:

1. Who has an insight about something you've learned or want to try?
2. What will you change or improve in your role as a parent this week?

Notes

Handout 1

All safety—especially mobile and online safety—begins at home. The habits you exhibit about technology use in your home will be the same habits your children learn. Ask yourself what you consider appropriate and inappropriate uses of technology and then compare that with how you might be acting.

Do you use your phone at the dinner table? Do you text while talking with others? Do you instantly pull out your phone when a new message arrives? Do you text while driving? Do you use computers in public areas of the house or do you habitually bring them into your bedroom behind a closed door? Model the behavior you yourself expect from your children.

In addition to your living example, consider following some of these steps:

1. Use antivirus, Firewall, and antimalware software.

These software packages provide a baseline of protection. However, also make sure you and your kids don't visit file sharing websites or open email attachments from people you don't know or open attachments that look suspicious. There are many software packages available. Here are a few places to start:

Antivirus software for PC (<http://www.pcmag.com/article2/0,2817,2372364,00.asp>)

Antivirus software for Macs (<https://home.sophos.com/mac>)

2. Put all computers in a public space.

A central place in the house where you can see what is on the screen is preferred. Don't put computers in kids' rooms. Refrain from using laptops in bedrooms or private areas. If computers absolutely must be put in a private room, have a policy that doors must be open when they are in use. Internet connected devices in concealed areas just offers kids too much unnecessary temptation.

3. Review where your kids go online.

Let your kids know that you will be periodically reviewing the sites that all of you, as a family, visit. Don't do this in an authoritarian way, but rather to engage your kids in dialogue.

4. Teach internet safety.

It may seem self-evident, but before you let your kids loose online, teach them ethical behavior and Internet basics, which include:

- Make sure they use strong passwords.
- Do not give out personal or identifiable information about themselves or their family.
- Do not talk to strangers online.
- Remind kids that nothing on the Internet is private and that people online are not always truthful and may not be who they say are.

Handout 1 (Continued)

5. Review internet safety with your kids.

Once you've taught your kids some basics, review those basics and even do some roleplay. Just because you have told your children something doesn't mean that they will be able to do it. Roleplaying can help.

6. Discuss what your kids see online.

Interact with your children regularly about their online behavior. Computers are not baby sitters or a substitute for interactive parenting.

7. Consider an online contract as a family.

Several websites offer "family internet use contracts" that clearly define the boundaries for Internet usage, what they should ask for, and permissible behavior. Both parents and kids sign the contract.

8. Promote safety in your parish.

Provide internet safety literature (such as this guide) in the church narthex, vestibule, or other locations where you distribute parish information. You can publish internet safety tips from this publication in the print and digital editions of your weekly or monthly parish bulletins.

There are many other things that you can do, which will be defined in more detail in the following sections. However, we want to reiterate something that you will see in several places throughout this guide: you, your example, and your attitudes are among the most important parts of any safety plan for your family. Internet safety starts with you!

adapted from <https://www.faithandsafety.org/promoting-safety-in-your-home>

Handout 2

Social Media Contract for Kids

SETTING UP

- I will ask my parents' permission before joining any social media site.
- I will allow my parents to set my privacy settings and parental control settings on all my accounts.
- I will give my parents my passwords for all my social media accounts.
- I will NOT give my passwords to anyone other than my parents.
- I will NOT change any of my passwords without my parents' permission.
- I will NOT set up any private or secret social media accounts.

SHARING

- I will NOT post or share my name, age, address, school, interests, or other personal information without my parents' permission.
- I will NOT post or share photos of myself without my parents' permission.
- I will NOT post or share photos of my family or my friends without their permission.
- I will NOT post or share offensive or inappropriate images, language, video, or other content.

CONDUCT

- I will NOT meet anyone in person who I have met through social media.
- I will NOT engage in online bullying including leaving unkind comments on other's posts or photos.
- I will let my parents know if I am the victim of online bullying.
- I will meet academic standards set by my parents.
- I will follow my parents' rules regarding time limits for online use.
- I understand that the posting of certain types of photos and information on social media sites is punishable by law.

CONSEQUENCES

I understand that I risk the following consequences for violating any of the above:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

I, _____, agree to the above conditions for using social media. I also understand that my parents are setting these conditions because they love me and want to keep me safe.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

<http://www.imom.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/imom-social-media-contract-for-kids-color.pdf>

Handout 3

Technology and Pornography

Many people who use pornography think that it doesn't hurt anyone. After all, they might think, they are just looking at pictures—not real people. However, research has shown that pornography is harmful in three ways.

First, pornography harms the brain of the person who is using pornography.

- Looking at pornography makes the brain release the same chemical that drugs do. People can easily become addicted to pornography, craving more and more. Just like drugs, a person needs to look at more pornography and more extreme types of pornography to get the same levels of excitement.
- Using pornography can even shrink a person's frontal lobe, which is the part of the brain used for self-control and making decisions.

Second, pornography harms the person's ability to have loving, meaningful relationships with others.

- Using pornography sets unrealistic standards that no real person can meet. Pornography shows people who are airbrushed and photoshopped to look more attractive than they actually are and more attractive than anybody could ever be.
- In one study, men who spent a few minutes looking at Playboy said that their wives were less attractive than men who looked at another magazine. They also said that they were less in love with their wives! If looking at pornography for just a short amount of time has these effects, imagine what happens to people who use pornography on a regular basis.
- When the partner of a person who uses pornography finds out about it, the partner often feels angry, embarrassed, guilty, or like they can never measure up. Some partners question their entire relationship and doubt that the other person loves them.

Third, pornography harms society.

- There is always someone on the other side of the camera. Quite often, women who are involved in the pornography industry are not in it by choice. Instead, many women are victims of sex trafficking and are held against their will. If they don't cooperate with making the pornography, their lives may be in danger.
- Over 75% of pornography contains physical violence, but the victims of the aggression almost always appear to be fine with it—or even happy.

Handout 3 (Continued)

The good news is that there is help for anyone who is caught up in pornography.

Some resources include:

- Fight the New Drug (fightthenewdrug.org)
- Sex Addicts Anonymous (saa-recovery.org)
- Qualified counselors and therapists

Many children are first exposed to pornography at a very young age. The average age that children first see pornography is eight years old. That means that some children first see pornography even before that! Children might accidentally stumble across pornography on a computer, phone, or tablet. Or, another child or even an adult might show them pornography. Because children might see pornography at such a young age, parents should talk to their children about pornography even earlier. The book *Good Pictures, Bad Pictures: Porn-Proofing Today's Young Kids* is a great book that parents can read with their children as young as five years old. Some points from this book include:

1. Explaining what pornography is.

Pornography can be pictures or videos of people who don't have clothes on to cover the parts of their body that are covered by a swimsuit.

2. Telling the child that they are not bad if they see pornography.

Until they see it, children don't just go looking for pornography. They see pornography for the first time because they stumble on it by accident or because someone else shows it to them. They shouldn't feel guilty if this happens to them.

3. Teaching that pornography can affect a person's brain.

Seeing pornography makes a person's "feeling brain" release chemicals that can make the person want to see even more pornography. That's why it's so important for children to use their "thinking brain" if they ever see pornography. If they use their "thinking brain," they can use their plan of what to do if they see pornography.

4. Planning for what to do if the child sees pornography.

This plan should include:

- Looking away and turning off the device immediately.
- Telling a parent or trusted adult.
- Making sure they use their "thinking brain" instead of their "feeling brain."

Ages 4-16

40 minutes

Student Training

Engaging the World

TECHNOLOGY

Objectives

- **Help children be aware of positive uses of technology.**
- **Help children be aware of dangers of technology.**
- **Help children be aware of their responsibility in the use of technology.**

“Technology” is something that human beings create to help us accomplish more than we would be able to accomplish without it—whether that is just improving a process or device from earlier years or doing something that was entirely impossible before. Technology benefits us in many ways. It helps streamline schedules, simplify work, coordinate activities, stay in contact with loved ones who are far away. Technology makes it possible for us to communicate with people in remote places in the world. These are just some of the ways technology makes our lives easier and better. If Jesus walked the earth today, I believe He would use the tools of technology to spread the good news about

the kingdom of God. But as with every good thing, technology can be misused.

The internet, social media, mobile phones, tablets, and movies have become a noticeable part of family life. Though there are many positive benefits that technology brings into our lives, there are also some pitfalls that we need to be aware of. Besides evil, devious acts such as cyber bullying and identity theft, researchers now say that overuse of technology negatively affects a child’s development, which diminishes academic achievement. Other problems caused by overuse of technological devices include childhood obesity, sleep deprivation, aggressive behavior, addiction, unhealthy exposure

to radiation and more. Overuse of technology can also impair children's ability to socialize and interact with others. If you're not careful, it can even damage your closeness with your family. So, we need to be aware and wise about our use of technology.

Technology is all around us. It is so much a part of our lives that we hardly even think about it. For children there's Minecraft, Pokémon, NBA 2. For older children there's Snapchat, Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, WhatsApp, kik Messenger, and Instagram. And don't forget to include video games, laptops, and numerous other gadgets children are fascinated with today. All these apps, websites, and gizmos can be okay when used appropriately and respectfully with parent guidance and monitoring.

Digital Media consumes the hours of time children used to spend playing with their siblings, friends, and neighborhood buddies. Because of overuse of technology, time spent together as a family has lessened greatly. According to researchers, 8 to 10-year-old children are daily exposed to almost eight hours of on-screen media, and as children grow older, that time frame increases. Before the internet, children had to go to the library to do research. Now, with just a click, a child can find any information they are looking for in minutes.

Technology is here to stay, so as Christians, it is up to us to pay attention to what the Bible says about the use of technology. What is God speaking to our hearts about our responsibility to handle this tool appropriately?

As a child of God, He is expecting you to cooperate with your parents so that you can enjoy the positive benefits of technology. God has given you the parents that are just right for you, and He has placed them as the authority in your life. In Proverbs 22:6, God tells parents, "Start children off in the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it." God is holding your parents accountable for keeping you safe and raising you to be the kind of person He wants you to become. He has commanded your

parents to make decisions, set rules and boundaries, and enforce obedience in every area of your life. Technology is one of those areas.

How you use technology is important to God because He realizes it has the potential to be helpful or harmful to you. As your parents ask God what guidelines to set for you and your family about technology, the Holy Spirit will help them create a plan that will keep you and your family safe online. Your responsibility is to be obedient to the guidelines your parents establish for you. Ephesians 6:1 says, “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.” And don’t forget that Hebrews 12:11 says, “No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.”

As a Christian child, you want to make sure that you are using technology in moderation and not allowing it to become an idol in your life. The definition of idol is, “A person or thing that is greatly admired, loved, or revered.” In 1 Corinthians 10:23, Paul says, “I have the right to do anything,” you say—but not everything is beneficial. “I have the right to do anything”—but not everything is constructive.” He is telling us that just because something is available to us, doesn’t mean it is good for us. As Christians, when we do decide to be involved with something, God expects us to use moderation in all things and not let anything rule us. It is very important to make good choices about the media you engage in and balance the amount of time you spend with it.

God created a beautiful, wonderful world for you to experience. He wants you to spend time enjoying the sunshine, parks, museums, zoos, sporting events, books, and most of all, spending time with your family. He also wants you to set aside some time for Him. And when you spend time praying and listening to God, The Holy Spirit will convict your heart and help you to make wise decisions about the role you allow technology to play in your

Notes

life. First Corinthians 10:31 says, “Whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.” That includes your use of technology.

DISCUSS

- Lead children in a discussion about what technology is.
- Lead children in a discussion about positive uses of technology.
- Lead children in a discussion about the pitfalls of technology use.
- Lead children in a discussion of parent responsibility for setting technology guidelines for their family.
- Lead children in a discussion about their responsibility in the use of technology.
- Lead children in a discussion about other ways God wants them to spend their time.



Activities

Activities are age appropriate. One is focused on ages 4-11, and the second is for older children ages 12-16.

AGES 4-11

Materials

Technology to show video

“Technology: The Good and the Bad” worksheet

“The Family Contract for Digital Citizenship”

Pencils, crayons, or markers

Easel or white board for group discussion (optional)

Have children view YouTube:

<https://youtu.be/xKEvKHEnuBk>

“Now I Know: Internet Safety” (Discuss briefly.)

(If not possible to view video, do activity without it.)

- After viewing video, in a large group, discuss briefly the good things about technology as well as the bad things about technology. (Use information from the lesson and video.) Use the whiteboard to list children’s

responses. After discussion, have children fill out the “Technology: The Good and the Bad” worksheet.

- Explain and read the “The Family Contract for Digital Citizenship.” Let children know that this is our way to make a commitment to practicing internet safety. Finally, have students sign the “The Family Contract for Digital Citizenship.”

AGES 12-16

Materials

Technology to show video

“Technology: The Good and the Bad” worksheet

“The Family Contract for Digital Citizenship”

Pencils, crayons, or markers

Easel or white board for group discussion (optional)

Have children view YouTube:

<https://youtu.be/xKEvKHEnuBk>

“Now I Know: Internet Safety” (Discuss briefly.)

(If not possible to view video, do activity without it.)

- After viewing the video, put students in pairs. Have them work together to fill out the “Technology: The Good and the Bad” worksheet. When they have finished, have pairs share with the group the things they have listed.
- Explain and read the “The Family Contract for Digital Citizenship.” Let children know that this is our way to make a commitment to practicing internet safety. Finally, have students sign the “The Family Contract for Digital Citizenship.”



Scripture SUPPORT

Proverbs 22:6

Start children off in the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.

Ephesians 6:1

Children, obey your parents in the LORD, for this is right.

Hebrews 12:11

No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

1 Corinthians 10:23

“I have the right to do anything,” you say—but not everything is beneficial. “I have the right to do anything”—but not everything is constructive.

1 Corinthians 10:31

Whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.




CHALLENGE QUESTION

DO I PRACTICE INTERNET SAFETY WHEN USING
TECHNOLOGICAL DEVICES?

CHALLENGE COMMITMENT

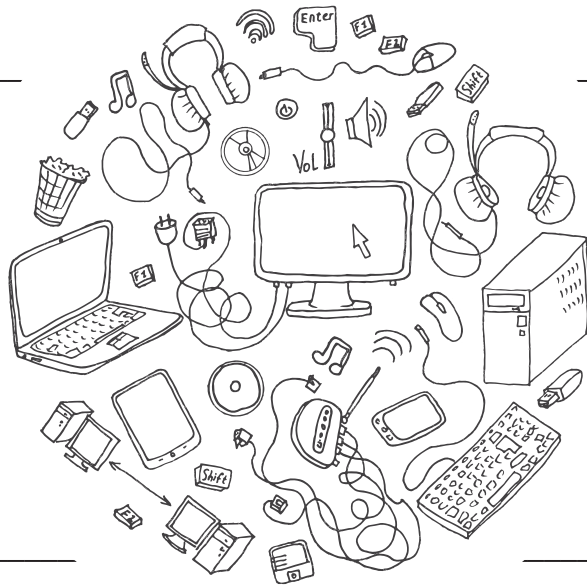
WHAT AM I WILLING TO DO TO WORK ON THE
CHALLENGE QUESTION?

	AFFIRMATION <i>Have children repeat:</i>
	<i>I use technology in a safe, moderate, and respectful way.</i>

TECHNOLOGY: THE GOOD AND THE BAD WORKSHEET

The Good:

The Bad:



FAMILY CONTRACT FOR DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP

Child Pledge

1. I will remember that not all people have access to or utilize technology in the same way. I will not treat others differently if they do not have the same options.
2. I will tell my parents or another responsible adult right away if I come across any information that makes me feel uncomfortable. I understand that to have technology rights, I must be responsible in all my actions.
3. I will tell my parents if I experience any pain or discomfort when using technology. I will remember that I need to balance technology use with other activities.
4. I will not respond to any messages that are mean or make me feel uncomfortable. It is not my fault if I get a message that is inappropriate. If I do get an inappropriate message, I will tell my parents or a responsible adult right away, so they can contact the proper groups.
5. I will talk with my parents, so we can set up rules for making online purchases. We will decide if and when online purchases can be made, and which sites are secure for me to use.
6. I will treat others the way I wish to be treated when using technology. I will keep in mind that my technology use affects others.
7. I will check with my parents before downloading or installing software or doing anything that could possibly hurt our computer or jeopardize my family's privacy. I will also keep programs such as antivirus, spyware, and adware u-to-date to protect our information.
8. I will be a good online citizen and not do anything that hurts other people or is against the law.
9. I will help my parents understand how to have fun and learn things online and teach them things about the Internet, computers, and other technology.

I agree to the above:

Child signature

I will help my child follow his agreement and will allow reasonable use of digital technology if these rules and other family rules are followed:

Parent signature

Technology Terms

Social Networking sites

The activity of creating personal and business relationships with other people especially by sharing information, photos and personal messages, etc., on the internet.

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Snapchat

Micro blogging platforms

Blogging done with severe space or size constraints typically by posting frequent brief messages about personal activities.

- Tumblr
- Facebook
- Twitter

Photo Sharing App

Instagram is a mobile, desktop, and internet-based photo-sharing application and service that allows users to share pictures and videos either publicly or privately.

- Instagram

Instant Messenger

Instant messaging (IM) is a type of online chat that offers real-time text transmission over the internet.

- WhatsApp
- kik Messenger

Video Games

- Minecraft
- Pokémon
- NBA 2
- NBA 2