

# technology

provides many benefits.

However, excessive screen time can result in a flat, one-dimensional existence. We were made for a rich, three-dimensional relationship with God and one another. Don't settle for less.

*"My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life."*  
John 10:10b

*"And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another..."*  
Hebrews 10:25b

While technology can be a great communication tool, it is a poor substitute for real-world, face-to-face communication. In a culture that is more factually connected than ever before, people often feel relationally disconnected.

## ask yourself

- Do I control my devices or do my devices control me?
- How can I foster and strengthen genuine, valuable, relational connections?
- How can I tame my technology?

consider the following 3-D connection ideas:

- 1 **Disconnect to connect**
- 2 **Deepen internal values**
- 3 **Develop external boundaries**

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Pledge

I/We pledge to Disconnect to Connect, Deepen Internal Values, and Develop External Boundaries to become more relationally connected. Download the Taming Technology Contract online at:

[bellevue.org/family](http://bellevue.org/family)

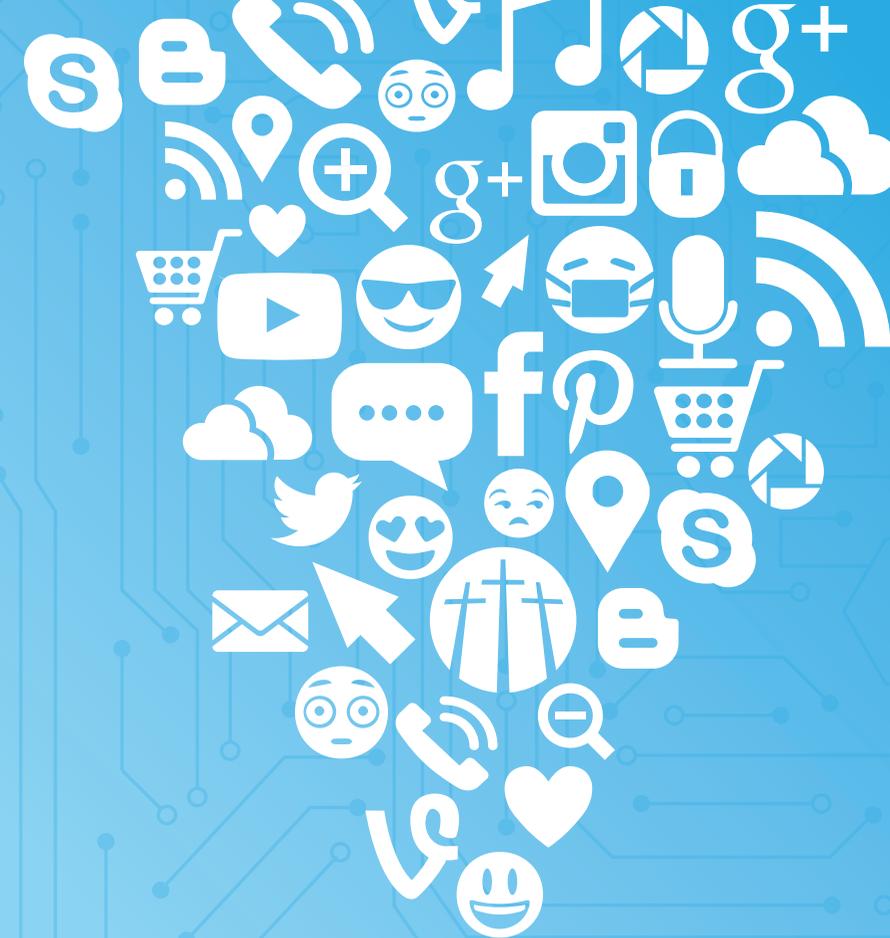
## going further RESOURCES:

- *Tech Savvy Parenting: Navigating Your Child's Digital Life* by Brian Housman
- *Plugged-in Parenting* by Bob Waliszewski
- *Logged In and Tuned Out* by Vicki Courtney
- *Should I Just Smash My Kid's Phone?* by Doug Fields and Jonathan McKee
- *Biblically Handling Technology and Social Media* from Biblical Discipleship Ministries
- *Screen and Teens* by Kathy Koch, PhD
- *12 Ways Your Phone Is Changing You* by Tony Reinke
- *The Tech-Wise Family* by Andy Grouch

## suggested apps for positive technology use:

- Bible — Bible reading plans, reminders, and devotional content
- Air1 — Enjoy current popular Christian music and daily encouragement

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Using Technology in a God-Honoring Way

# 1 disconnect

## Disconnect to Connect

*Establish tech-free areas and upgrade the time with genuine connections.*

### Tech-Free zones

Choose several zones where the family agrees to shelve devices in order to enhance real-life connections. Consider placing a basket in each location to “park” devices while investing in relationships.

- 1 date time**—Give the gift of undivided attention to your spouse while on dates.
- 2 mealtime**—Foster face-to-face conversation. If possible, choose affirming and constructive topics to create a positive mealtime atmosphere.
- 3 drive time**—Choose to connect through intentional conversations while you have a captive audience. Tell funny stories, ask for high and low points of the week, and share prayer requests. Balance conversation and use of devices on longer travel trips.

### connection ideas

As you reduce screen time, increase relational time as a couple, as a family, or with friends. Choose from the following ideas or design your own relationship-building activities.

- Play a board game.
- Cook a meal or dessert together.
- Go for a walk.
- Read a book aloud together.
- Choose a Serve In or Serve Out opportunity.
- Make a photo album of a recent friend or family activity.

# 2 deepen

## Deepen Internal Values

*Model and coach your family toward God-honoring technology habits.*

Forming usage boundaries for devices is a valuable step in taming technology, but the most important step is establishing internal values. These inner guardrails establish a foundation and act as an internal compass when boundaries are fuzzy.

- 1 model**—Wisdom is more caught than taught. Evaluate your personal technology choices. Do you provide a strong example of internal values? Display healthy choices and habits in your own life. Admit your mistakes and use them as discussion points with friends and family.
- 2 discuss**—Highlight your use of internal values in everyday situations. Share an inspiring post on social media. Discuss, for example, how to manage inappropriate pop-ups and search results while online.
- 3 read**—Use key verses to establish internal values and guidelines. Help your children see that technology standards are not simply mom’s or dad’s rules but are a path to experience God’s best.
  - Philippians 4:8—Guard your mind.
  - 1 Corinthians 6:12—Set time limits.
  - Psalm 101:3–4—Filter inappropriate content.
  - Ephesians 4:15, 29—Honor God with your words.

# 3 develop

## Develop External Boundaries

*Establish a safety and accountability strategy for yourself and those in your home.*

Take practical steps to protect yourself, your family, and your friends from the many temptations and pitfalls associated with technology.

- 1 Learn the device**—Know the strengths and weaknesses of the device before activating it. Set restrictions utilizing built-in safeguards.
- 2 set rules**—Discuss and sign the “Taming Technology Family Contract” to create accountability. Contracts are available online at [bellevue.org/family](http://bellevue.org/family).
- 3 Find help**—Research and invest in safety and accountability programs and resources. For example:

### tools to restrict and monitor browsing activity:

- A. Bark—Parental Control App
- B. CovenantEyes.com—Accountability and filtering
- C. Mobicip.com—Mobile web filtering

### websites and resources:

- A. [bellevue.org/family](http://bellevue.org/family)
- B. [commonsensemedia.org](http://commonsensemedia.org)
- C. [focusonthefamily.com](http://focusonthefamily.com)
- D. [familysafe.com](http://familysafe.com)

