

Cell Phones



parent
tips



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The worst punishment a student could receive has changed over the years from grounding to taking away their cell phone.

When it comes to phones for our students, it's not a question of **if** they will get a cell phone but **when** they will get a cell phone. With this comes uncharted waters. What is a good time limit? What do you do about social media? How can you best set expectations? We've got you covered with a few of the most important tips we could give.

1. Charge them in an open space, not in their rooms.

Why is this helpful? People are most vulnerable when tired. Putting a rule in place to charge phones outside of rooms can protect your student from letting their eyes wander late at night. Another reason this is helpful is that it's been proven to protect sleeping habits. According to recent polling, almost half (45%) of young people are checking their mobile phones after they have gone to bed. Keeping the phone in a different room will help protect this sleep cycle!

2. Utilize apps that help you track activity.

Here are some apps you can explore to monitor your teen's activity on a phone:

- i. **Norton** - This allows you to set phone time limits and filter web content coming in.
- ii. **TeenSafe** - This allows you to track your child's calls, texts, GPS and social media activity.
- iii. **MobSafetyRangerBrowser** - This enables you to view your child's website browsing and set time limits.
- iv. **PhoneSheriff** - This enables you to do all of the above, but it is available for fewer devices.
- v. **DinnerTime** - This allows you to limit phone Internet use during family meals.
- vi. **Qustodio** - This allows you to track and set a phone curfew where phones shut down.

3. Parenting apps are helpful, but not the catch all.

This may seem strange with the app tip above. Apps will help, but they won't catch everything. We suggest setting the expectation with your student that you can go through their phone from time to time. I know, this sounds like an invasion of privacy. But what is true is that bad things grow in the dark. This is a way you can protect your student and know if there are any detrimental activities that could harm your student in the long run.

4. Disable location services per app.

Most parents get phones for their students to track where they are and to give them an easy way to contact family. So, without taking that away, how can you keep your student safe from online predators? Disable location services by the individual app. Doing this by each app will allow you to keep them safe from

predators looking for their location on Instagram but still keeping Find My Friends on their phone so you can keep track of where they are.

5. Cell phone agreement.

We all know that frustrations come from unmet expectations. It could be expectations that students have that are unsaid or parents expectations that were not talked about with their student. And we know that if expectations are not made, then they tend to make themselves as friction comes.

It is better to get ahead and be a thermostat setting the temperature instead of allowing phone to be more like a thermometer reacting to what is going on. The best way to do this is to set or reset expectations using a cell phone contact. You can find a "Cell Phone Agreement" template to copy and edit on our website at [**hopefellowship.net/parentresources**](http://hopefellowship.net/parentresources).