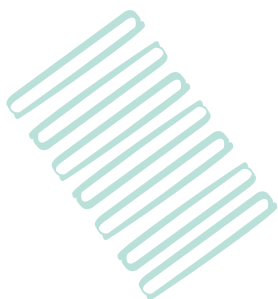


DIGITAL DETOX

sample scripts

You want to Digitally Detox the kids, but you're terrified to break the news to them.

Here are sample scripts to get you started, depending on your child's age. Use what you like, ditch what you don't. Make the conversation your own.





Step 1: Prepare delicious food.

Step 2: Segue from a positive interaction/conversation. Do not approach the topic as discipline or consequence for bad behavior.

Step 3: Calmly, confidently, and optimistically tell your kids the plan.



Hey guys. Your mom/dad and I want to try something new. We are going to take a break from screen time for a little while. This isn't a punishment, it's just to give our minds and hearts a fresh start.

We know how much you enjoy your tablet/video game. But there are bad parts to these devices, too. It's kind of like when you eat too much junk food and your tummy hurts. If you spend too much time on screens, it's not good for your brain. This is true for kids and adults!

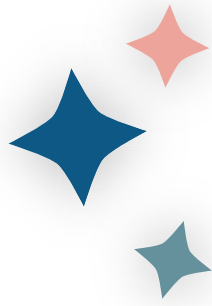
Our break is going to give us space to breathe and even plan for more family fun together. We're really excited about it.

I know it's hard to give up something you like, even for a little bit. But we love you so much and we know this will be good.

When we are all done with our break, we will make a new plan for how we want these games and shows and stuff to work in our house. Your mom and I will keep you posted on that, okay?

Do you have any questions?





DIGITAL DETOX

kids
ages 7-12

Step 1: Prepare delicious food.

Step 2: Segue from a positive interaction/conversation. Do not approach the topic as discipline or consequence for bad behavior.

Step 3: Calmly, confidently and optimistically tell your kids the plan.



Hey kids, mom and I want to talk to you about our technology use. A lot of studies have come out recently that show too much screen time is hurting kids' brains.

Have you ever felt grumpy or mad or sad after screen time/video games/? Well we're learning that's not entirely your fault! It's actually how the games are made that's causing that kind of response inside your brain.

Have you ever spent time with someone who wasn't paying attention to you? Like a friend or a teenager who was always looking at their phone? How did that make you feel? (If appropriate, and if you've done this, own it humbly and tell them that this is exactly what you want to fix.)

Mom and I have noticed places we could improve, too. And we are working on that.

To give us space to make wise decisions about how we use technology, we are going to take a complete screen break: YouTube, tablets, gaming. (If possible, leave this open ended. 'Until further notice.' This way, if you decide to extend your detox you won't be breaking any promises. If your kids need a firm timeline, tell them it will be two weeks.)

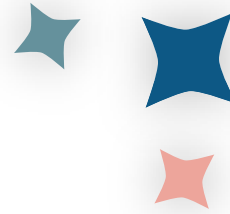
We are not planning to take away all digital devices forever. This is just a break. At the end of our break, we will make a plan for which kinds and how much gaming, tv, apps we want to have in our lives. Our goal is to enjoy the best parts but not suffer the drawbacks of too much.

Does this make sense? Do you have any questions?



DIGITAL DETOX

kids ages 13-15



NOTE: WHEN DIGITALLY DETOXING ANY AGE CHILD, RELATIONSHIP IS THE KEY TO THE DETOX'S SUCCESS. THIS IS ESPECIALLY TRUE FOR YOUR OLDER KIDS. TWEENS AND TEENS NEED TO KNOW THAT YOU ACTUALLY, GENUINELY, DEEPLY CARE ABOUT THEM. YOU ARE NOT A DICTATOR. YOU ARE A LOVING PARENT AND GUIDE.

THE IDEAL APPROACH HERE IS GOING TO BE SIMILAR TO RECRUITING YOUR FAMILY TO ACCOMPANY YOU ON A WHOLE 30. YOU'D EXCITEDLY SHARE THE PROMISE OF WHAT'S TO COME. BUT YOU'D ALSO EXPECT GROANING.

BRING YOUR OLDER KIDS IN ON THE CONTEXT FOR YOUR DECISION. SHARE A FEW STATS AND FACTS WITH THEM. ASK THEM FOR THEIR OWN INSIGHT ABOUT THEIR PEERS.

““ Step 1: Prepare delicious food.

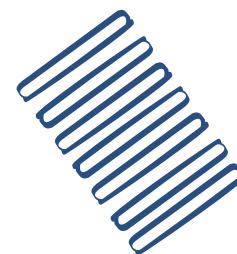
Step 2: Segue from a positive interaction/conversation. Do not approach the topic as discipline or consequence for bad behavior.

Step 3: Calmly, confidently and optimistically tell your kids the plan.

“Do you know that feeling when you're with someone, but you're not really “with” them? Like, they're so busy staring at their phone or tablet or whatever that they'd never even notice if you disappeared? (If you have ever made your child feel that way, own it humbly!)

I've felt like that, too. Like for example, (give example that doesn't involve your child).

I've been reading about all of these doctors—neurologists, psychologists, therapists. They're all reporting that brains are changing because of too much tech and not enough real-life interaction. What really surprised me was learning that Steve Jobs wouldn't let his own kids near an iPad. Turns out the Silicon Valley CEOs are the strictest parents about tech, because they know what it does to people.”



I was thinking about how your generation has access to a lot more convenience and connection than I did as a kid. It's incredible the kinds of things you can do online today. But the studies show that having a computer in your pocket at all times is both a blessing and a curse.

When it comes to tech in our home, and helping you navigate everything, I really want us to get this right. My goal is that when you move out, you're ready to take on the world, you have developed skills to put addictive technology in its right place in your life.

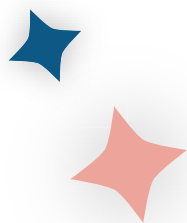
We want to try something new as a family. Two weeks, Digital Detox. No TV, no YouTube, no digital entertainment. It won't be forever. More like a cleanse diet. Then at the end, we'll make a plan for how much and what kind of digital stuff we want back in our lives. I'll want your feedback and ideas for all of this, because you aren't a little kid anymore and you have a lot of good insight.

For me, I'm going to take all social media off my phone for these two weeks. I'm also going to give up TV shows. [Or insert your selected parent digital detox item of choice]

Here are the ways dad and I have discussed that your detox will work: (lay out your family's plan.)



*If your child needs to keep a dumb phone due to ride situations, let them. Allowing full access to smartphones during a detox is undermining your detox.



A NOTE ON OLDER KIDS

By the time our kids reach that 18-year mark and are almost ready to fly the coop, they will have few parental restrictions. So a digital detox will necessarily work itself out differently than detoxing young children. A parent's role has shifted from commander to coach to counselor. This is more like detoxing with a friend/accountability group.

If your older teen (who is close to flying the coop) is not on board, you can leave that up to them. But it is entirely reasonable to take a household approach to your detox. Like, "We've turned off the wifi," or "As the owner of these devices, we are turning them off for two weeks." If your older child pays for their own devices, you may need to just let that go, taking on an invitational tone, rather than enforcement tone. Warmly invite them to partake in your adventure. "Hey, we're all going to play Monopoly tonight after dinner instead of doing our own thing, would you join us?" "Hey, we're going for a walk around the block, would love for you to come. What do you think?")

Expect hiccups, but keep inviting, keep moving towards connection and intentional time with your kids. You want to amp up your connection with your kids. The alternative to gaming/social media isn't staring at a wall; it's conversation, laughing, connecting with real people.

