

**To My 13-Year-Old,
An iPhone Contract From Your
Mom,
With Love**

Dear Gregory

Merry Christmas! You are now the proud owner of an iPhone. You are a good and responsible 13 year-old-boy and you deserve this gift. But with the acceptance of this present comes rules and regulations. Please read through the following contract.

1. It is my phone. I bought it. I pay for it. I am loaning it to you. Aren't I the greatest?
2. I will always know the password.
3. Hand the phone to one of your parents promptly at 7:30 p.m. every school night and every weekend night at 9:00 p.m. If you would not make a call to someone's land line, wherein their parents may answer first, then do not call or text.
4. Do not use this technology to lie, fool, or deceive any other human being.
5. Do not text anything through this device that you would not say in person.
6. No porn. Search the web for information you would openly share with me.
7. Play a game with words or puzzles or brain teasers every now and then.
8. You will mess up. I will take up your phone. We will sit down and talk about it. We will start over again. You and I are always learning. I am on your team. We are in this together.

It is my hope that you can agree to these terms. I love you. I hope you enjoy your awesome new iPhone.

xoxoxo,

Mom

*This is a sample iPhone contract that one mother made with her son on Christmas morning. She has some pretty good ideas.

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BATTLE FOR THE FAMILY *Guarding our Children*





The Road:

We all desire to protect our children. We know that the world can be a dangerous place, so we try to place boundaries and guardrails in their lives to keep them on the right path. We will talk more about guardrails and boundaries in a moment. But, before we strive to adjust the behavior of our children, we need to ask a few questions that pertain to their hearts.

- 1) Are your kids hearing the truth from God's word in your home?
- 2) Do you have a regular time where you meet with your kids—breakfast, coffee, etc.—to build into them and teach them lasting values?
- 3) Are your kids plugged into a church where they hear Godly teaching?
- 4) Do your kids have another adult mentor that is discipling them and/or encouraging them in their relationship with God?

Before we set guardrails, we want to make sure the road is heading in the right direction. The best way to protect our children is to constantly pour biblical truth into them, so that they can be discerning about which things are appropriate and which are not.



Guardrails:

The following are simply ideas to use in determining the guardrails you need to implement in your child's life to protect them and hold them accountable. They are not meant to be guidelines for your family but simply ideas to jumpstart your own thinking.

- 1) There is only one computer for the children in a room we all share.
- 2) We discuss all secular music before downloading.
- 3) Only worship music is allowed the first and last hour of the day.
- 4) The mobile phone is off at night.
- 5) Mom and Dad can check Facebook, text messages, etc. any time we want.
- 6) Mom and Dad will have the passwords to your phone and social media outlets.

Guidelines after Failure:

- 1) Delay Punishment Until Your Emotions Have Calmed
- 2) Make the Consequence Match the Violation.
- 3) Look for Teaching Moments.
- 4) Demonstrate Unmistakable Love.



Walking the Yellow Line

Parenting a child is a lot like walking the yellow line between oncoming traffic. Step too far to one side and you are in danger of being the over-protective parent that keeps your child from growing up, too far to the other side and you neglect your parental duties altogether. Here are some concepts to keep in mind as you work through these issues in your own household.

- Children should be given more and more freedom as they age, but the freedom must come with responsibilities.
- Keep the conversation lines open. Get input from your children.
- Don't use ignorance about technology as an excuse.
- Make your expectations clear from the beginning.
- Monitor your child's activity online.
- Focus on teaching discernment. Watch movies and TV shows together. Have conversations. It will be obvious very quickly if the show is healthy.