



March 2010



Guide Children's Media Choices

With the explosion of technology now available, it seems like children are always plugged in, zoned out, or wired for sound. They spend less time outside, have shorter attention spans, and are exposed to online dangers such as pornography. On the positive side, technology has expanded children's knowledge and opportunities. They learn teamwork, problem-solving, and communication skills. Technology has also boosted activism among today's young people.

Although children may seem like "experts" when it comes to technology and new media, parents are still responsible for supervising what their kids are exposed to—and for how long. Two keys are moderation and interaction. These tips can help you limit and monitor what your kids see and hear:



Strategically set up your equipment and schedules. Keep televisions out of children's bedrooms, and place the computer in an accessible family area. Make media time contingent on the completion of chores and homework. Plan alternate activities, including physical ones.

Establish digital-free zones. Agree on days and times (such as dinner, family night, Sundays, etc.) when no one—including adults—is allowed to check e-mail or use any form of media.

Watch and listen to TV shows, movies, and music together. Talk about the issues that come up. Tie them into faith and provide a biblical worldview for children to consider as they use technology.

What's Up in Our Wired World?

- The average young American spends nearly every waking minute in front of an electronic device. Kids ages 8 to 18 spend more than 7.5 hours a day using computers or smart phones or watching TV. And because they multitask, they pack almost 11 hours of media content into that time. (Kaiser Family Foundation)
- 87% of parents play video games with their kids at least occasionally. (Yahoo! Shine)
- 20% of young people admit they've engaged in "sexting"—emailing or receiving nude photos or videos. (Associated Press-MTV)



Ask God:

1. For wisdom as you oversee your children's media "diet."
2. To help your kids make good decisions about technology.
3. To show you ways to use technology in positive, family-building ways.

Parenting Insights

Online expert Tracy Carpenter explores some ways that technology is impacting young hearts and minds.

1. **Shifting relationships—**Although kids still belong to social groups, the emphasis is no longer on face-to-face gatherings. Preteens, wired for relationships, now think in terms of their "audience" rather than their peer group.
2. **Trying on identities—**Children express their developing personalities through social-networking sites and online role-playing. Preteens, emulating "cool," may try to outdo one another with suggestive images.
3. **Providing "TMI"—**Young people still forming judgment and boundaries are sharing too much private information in very public ways.

OpenTheBook

"Look! I stand at the door and knock. If you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in. ...Anyone with ears to hear must listen to the Spirit."

Revelation 3:20, 22

God may not be able to IM or text us, but he wants a relationship that goes beyond weekly worship. God is available 24/7 and—best of all—no special device is needed to talk to him!

Teachable Moments

1. **The Wired Word—**

Challenge children to think how the Bible would be different if technology had existed in Jesus' time. How would a Twitter version of your favorite Scripture verse read? How would you describe one of Jesus' miracles to a friend via text message? If Jesus had a TV ad campaign, what would it look and sound like?



2. **Tech Commandments—**

When you're establishing rules for media usage, involve children in the decisions. Ask them what "commandments" God might have set for online behavior and how we interact with others using technology. What would he have made off-limits, and what would he have encouraged? What age requirements or time constraints might he have established, and why?



"So commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these words of mine. Tie them to your hands and wear them on your forehead as reminders. Teach them to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are **ON THE ROAD, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up." Deuteronomy 11:18-19, NLT**

Open the lines of communication about media and technology by asking your children these discussion-starting questions:

1. How does technology make life easier for you? How does it make life harder or more complicated?
2. What's a good number of hours to spend in front of electronic devices each day? How can you tell when you've overdone it?
3. What's your favorite way to use technology, and how would you cope without it?
4. What are some ways we can honor God with our media habits?

Look, I'm Cooking...Snacks!

SIMPLE SNACK MIX

Prep Time: 5 minutes

Makes four 1/2 cup servings

- 1 cup whole grain cereal (squares or O's work best)
- 1/4 cup dried fruit of your choice
- 1/4 cup nuts, such as walnut pieces, slivered almonds, or pistachios
- 1/4 cup small, whole-grain snack crackers or pretzels

Measure out all ingredients and combine in large bowl



PERFECT PINEAPPLE POPS

Prep Time: 1-2 hours, serves 6

- 2 cups plain yogurt
- 1/2 cup canned crushed pineapple (packed in its own juice instead of syrup)
- 1 can frozen pineapple or orange-pineapple juice concentrate, thawed

1. Drain the can of crushed pineapple so all the juice runs out.
2. Put all the ingredients in a bowl and mix together.
3. Spoon the mixture evenly into 6 small paper cups, filling them almost to the top
4. Stretch a small piece of plastic wrap across the top of each cup.
5. Using a popsicle stick, poke a hole in the plastic wrap and stand the stick straight up in the center of the cup.
6. Put the cups in the freezer until the mixture is frozen solid.
7. Remove the plastic wrap and peel away the paper cup & ENJOY!



What's Playing at the Movies

Movie: *Alice in Wonderland* (March 5)

Genre: Fantasy/adventure

Rating: Not yet rated

Cast: Mia Wasikowska, Johnny Depp, Anne Hathaway

Synopsis: In director Tim Burton's sequel to Lewis Carroll's stories, 19-year-old Alice revisits Wonderland and reunites with her childhood friends. They need her help to overthrow the evil Red Queen and the Jabberwock dragon. As Alice discovers her voice, she becomes an empowered heroine—evident through how she grows in size throughout the film.



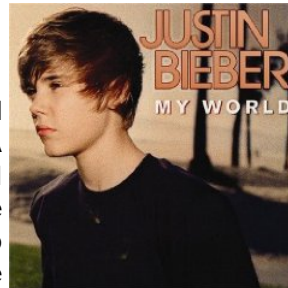
Discussion Questions: What are the best things about being a child? What are you most looking forward to about growing up, and why? Read 1 Samuel 17:32-50. Think of a time when you've felt like David. What kind of "giants" have you faced? Where do you get power and strength?

What Music Is Releasing

Artist: Justin Bieber

Album: *My World*

Artist Info: Bieber, an R&B phenom who just turned 16, was named one of the hottest stars of 2009. A self-taught musician from Canada, Bieber gained fame through YouTube. He's the first artist to have four singles from a debut album reach *Billboard's* Top 40 before the album's release. Bieber also sings the first line in the new "We Are the World" video.



Summary: The first part of Bieber's debut album, *My World*, released in November. The hit single "One Time" features guest vocals from hip-hop star Usher. In "One Less Lonely Girl," Bieber sings: "I'm gonna put you first, I'll show you what you're worth if you let me inside your world."

Discussion Questions: Where does your "worth" come from? What are some situations that make you feel lonely? Read aloud Hebrews 13:5b. How can God's promise of never abandoning you change your life?

What Games Are Out

Title	Content	Rating & Platform
<i>Playmobil Pirates</i>	This adventure game features 70 tricky missions on 16 islands. Players have to sink enemy soldiers and rescue a mermaid.	E; Nintendo DS
<i>Fast Food Panic</i>	Players step behind the grill to cook for a room of hungry customers. Much of the gameplay is a high-speed juggling act.	E; Wii, Nintendo DS
<i>Lunar: Silver Star Harmony</i>	Young Alex dreams of becoming the next Dragonmaster. In his adventures, the entire world is at stake.	T; PlayStation Portable

RATINGS: EC=Early Childhood, E=Everyone (ages 6+), E10+ (ages 10+), T=Teen (ages 13+)



Culture & Trends

What's happening right now that may affect your children and family:

- Parents are toning down children's birthday parties, due to the recession. Instead of hosting lavish events, more parents are letting their kids choose a special outing or meal. (msnbc.com)
- Children are more likely to get bullied when they struggle with nonverbal communication, reading nonverbal cues, and coming up with options for resolving social conflict, researchers say. (livescience.com)

Quick Stats

- Children as young as 3 have negative bias against older people. Preschoolers who aren't biased have regular contact with senior citizens. (University of Alberta)



- About 1.3 million children under the age of 18 live with their grandparents.

March 2010

March 5-6

Challenge Weekend * 6th graders only * \$20

This weekend has been designed to help your child be prepared for their coming adolescence. *The topics for discussion will be: 1. How to handle feelings of inferiority, 2. Ways to avoid the pressure to conform, 3. Keeping the lines of communication open with your parents, 4. Puberty - the physical changes that come with adolescence, and 5. Finding your own unique identity.* This is a very important weekend so don't let the cost be a reason your child doesn't attend!

March 15

First Kids Funday: Spring Break Edition * \$21

1st - 6th grade * Incredible Pizza Co. * 9:00a - 5:00p

Pizza buffet, indoor bumper cars, mini-bowling, go-carts, laser tag, ice skating, and more! Paid reservation & 2010 medical release required.

Preschool Adventure Day Camp * \$20

4years - Kindergarten * at FBC * 9:00a - 5:00p

Crafts, cooking, and games. Bring a sack lunch! Paid reservation & 2010 medical release required.

Mar 21 - Apr 17

VBS Volunteer Sign Up

Check the VBS Coral across from the church office for the sign up sheets. VBS is a huge outreach opportunity for FBC and we need tons of help from classrooms to snack rooms!

March 28

Creath-Brazos Association Drill

Held here at FBCCS. Information available through Wednesday night Bible Drill.

COMING SOON

April 3

Community Easter Egg Hunt * FREE for toddlers - 6th grade * 10:00a

Candy donations accepted through the week prior. Bring a basket with you! If you are interested in volunteering please contact Bronwyn Stanley at 764-1353 or send an email to bronwyn@fbccollegestation.com.

April 9

Parents' Night Out * \$8/child or \$24 sibling max babies - 6th grade * CRAZY NIGHT!

Wear a silly hat, crazy socks, or make up your own crazy combo! Dinner included.

April 18

VBS Teacher Training for all VBS teachers and directors * 3:30-6:00p

Receive your materials, forms, and helpful teaching tools. Door prizes, snacks and great ideas provided.

April 23-24

State Bible Drill Trip: Arlington 1:00p Friday - 11:00p Saturday

For drillers who advanced at the Association Drill and their families.