



# parenting CHRISTIAN kids

Winter 2017



*Teaching children to...recognize God's voice, desire obedience to Him, and depend on His Holy Spirit.*



LOVE



SERVE



GROW

## How to Navigate Media & Technology

### POWERSOURCE

#### ASK GOD:

1. To give you wisdom as you oversee your kids' media "diet."
2. To help your children make good decisions about technology.
3. To help you to remind your family to unplug.

### QUICK STAT

#### Value of Church Attendance

Researchers say there is a correlation between low church attendance and growing despair among young people. On the other hand, a strong relationship exists between regular church attendance and higher life satisfaction, stronger marriages, and better overall health. ([lifezette.com](http://lifezette.com))

Researchers say the average young American spends nearly every waking minute in front of an electronic device. That means kids are usually plugged in, zoned out, or wired for sound.

Increased screen time leads to physical inactivity, shorter attention spans, and exposure to dangers such as porn. On the positive side, technology has expanded children's knowledge, problem-solving abilities, and communication skills. It has also boosted awareness and activism among young citizens. Here are other surprising ways technology is impacting young hearts and minds.

**Shifting relationships** Although children 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.

**Identity development** 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.

**TMI missteps** Because kids are still forming judgment and boundaries, they may share too much private info in very public ways. This can have negative long-term consequences.

Read on for practical ideas about harnessing media and technology in your family.



## TEACHABLE MOMENTS

### “Rogue One” - A Review

The latest installment in the Star Wars universe made its way to the big screen shortly before Christmas and it did not disappoint. But, before you see this film a second or even a third time, why not take an opportunity to practice some theological reflection with your family.

The story follows a lonely heroine, Jyn Erso. At an early age, she watched the death of her mother and the abduction of her father. What we later learn is that her father is the Imperial Scientist who just happens to be the primary designer of the planet-killing Death Star.

When we meet an older Jyn, she is held captive in a cell that represents both a physical and emotional prison. She seems to be resolved to a lonely, self-sustained existence. However, when she is discovered, her life suddenly becomes valuable to both empire and rebel alike, but not for the reasons she would have preferred. As she moves forward, she must make several choices; to trust those who have rescued her or to go it alone. To see the good in her father or assume the worst. To do everything she can do to survive or sacrifice her life for the sake of others.

Jyn decides to trust that there is a bigger plan at work here and decides to give herself fully to it. Her self-image takes a back seat to her desire to better her world and the hope she has adopted takes precedence over despair.

When you talk to your kids about *Rogue One*, start with questions about trust, sacrifice and the importance of seeing the best in people (not only others, but also yourself.) And talk to them about the importance of good choices both big and small. And maybe finish with reminding them that one person's selfless choice not only shaped the fate of an entire galaxy far far away, but also the fate of the entire universe.

## Becoming Masters of Media

If you aren't very tech-savvy, you may defer to your children as experts when it comes to media. But parents are ultimately responsible for supervising what their kids are exposed to—and for how long. Two keys are moderation and interaction. Experts advise: Keep screens out of bedrooms, and place computers in open areas. Make media time contingent on the completion of chores and homework. Plan alternate activities, including physical ones. Agree on days and times (such as dinner, family night, and Sundays) that are digital-free zones—for adults too. Watch shows and listen to music together. Talk about issues that come up, tying them into faith and a biblical worldview.

**The Tech Commandments** When you're establishing rules for media usage, involve children in some of the decisions. Ask them what “commandments” God might have set for online behavior and how we interact with other people using technology. What would God have made off-limits? What would he have encouraged? What age requirements or time limits might he have established, and why?

**The Wired Word** Challenge kids 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 to recruit followers, what might it look and sound like?

**Who's That?** Talk about ways we get other people's attention these days and how it feels to fail to “connect” with someone. Then play this game to help you think about God's voice. Have family members each think up a line from a movie or TV show. Then take turns saying the line using the same voice as the character. See who can guess the movie or show, as well as the character. Afterward, ask: “How did you recognize the voices and programs?” Read 1 Samuel 3:1-10.

Ask: “Why did it take Samuel awhile to figure out who was talking? What are some ways God gets our attention? How can we recognize God's voice?”

**Say What?** Set out crayons, tape, and three pieces of paper. Say: “Let's try to make the tallest telephone pole we can. But each of us can say only one word to communicate as we work.” Assign each person a nonsense word, such as *booga-booga*, *grunky*, or *yowsa*. Spend five minutes working and using the new language. Afterward, discuss: “What was easy or difficult about this project? What was it like to have language limits while we worked? How is communication a gift from God? How can we make sure we communicate wisely?”

**God Is Listening** Have family members close their eyes and try to identify objects you drop (paper clip, pencil, coin, silverware, plastic cup, ping-pong ball, jingle bell, etc.). Afterward, ask how people knew what the items were. Say: “It's very important to listen closely.” Read aloud Proverbs 2:2. Ask: “What are some ways you can ‘tune your ears to wisdom’ as you make choices about what to watch, play, and listen to?”

“Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise.”  
—Philippians 4:8, NLT

## SAVE THE DATES!

### **February 4th - Grapekids Impact**

GRACE Service Project, 2:00-4:00pm  
More details to come!

### **April 15th - Easter Egg Hunt**

Pickering Park in Grapevine, 11:00am

### **April 16th - Easter Sunday!**

9:00am Bible Class, 10:00am Worship

### **April 30th - Fellowship at the Park**

Rockledge Park in Grapevine, 10:00am Worship

### **May 27-29th - "Ignite" Family Retreat**

Registration opens February 1

### **June 4th- Summer Bash!**

Come prepared to get wet! 5:00-6:30pm

### **June 19-21 - Art Camp**

Registration opens May 1

### **July 23-26th - VBS**

Registration opens May 1

## GRAPEKIDS LIVE!

**Beginning Sunday night, January 8th**, our kids will have the opportunity to participate in an interactive worship event that will be fun for all ages. We will have a blast worshipping God together and we will even be visited each week by some special guests. Imagine a mini version of VBS each Sunday night! Make plans for your kids to meet us in the Fellowship Hall on Sunday nights at 5:00pm. It's going to be FUN! Children under the age of 3 must be accompanied by a parent.

## GRAPEKIDS CLUB

**Kids are involved in many activities during the week.** Why not make faith formation one of those activities? In Grapekids Club we learn about spiritual practices that are important to a long lasting faith. Through meaningful experiences, the kids learn what it means to live a Christian life in the world. I can't think of a better way for my own children to spend their time! We would love for you to join us on Wednesday nights at 7:00 upstairs in the the Grapekids Zone.

## Games, Sites & Apps

### **Pokémon Sun and Pokémon Moon**

These role-playing adventure games are the first seventh-generation Pokémon titles. Players engage in battles and non-combat challenges such as scavenger hunts and quizzes. A highlight is the Island Challenge in the new setting of Alola.

### **ZimmerTwins.com**

At this site, kids can watch short animations, create their own ending to each story, save their work for others to see, and watch and rate movies made by other kids. Free and paid accounts are available, allowing young animators to flex their creativity and storytelling skills.

### **iPARENT.TV**

iPARENT.TV is an online resource that features hundreds of videos and posts from a parent's perspective to keep parents in the loop on all the latest tech fads that your kids might or might not be into. If it's online, it's on iPARENT.TV.

This page is designed to help educate parents and isn't meant to endorse any movie, music, or product. Our prayer is that you'll make informed decisions about what your children watch, read, listen to, and play.



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