

YOUR TECHNOLOGICAL LEGACY TO YOUR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN

You might imagine since I am knowledgeable about technology that at least one of my three daughters might share that gift. Sadly, that is not so. It's not because I didn't try to make it so. I consistently provided them with above average technology (usually my hand-me-downs, but still). Often referred to as Techno Dad, I was available to answer any and all questions about technology they had. Once again, few questions arose. Perhaps technological ability skips a generation because two of my three granddaughters have picked up technology and have done things with it that I could never have dreamed about when I was 4 or 7 years old.

Every year before school starts, many law enforcement agencies put out a list of 15 or so apps you should be concerned about that your kids might be using. Google it, it's easy to find that list. I bet you may recognize five of those. The other 10 you've probably never heard of at all. The list probably scares you into checking their devices just to see.

The real question is, how much are you paying attention to what your children and grandchildren are doing with the advanced technology they have at their disposal literally from birth? Do they have limits about when, where and how often they can use the technology? I'm no medical doctor, but I hear reputable people talk about the addictive effects this technology has on children. I see it with my own eyes, and I can't help but wonder what that will mean for them as they grow older. We've had the opioid crisis and I'm afraid a techno crisis is coming soon.

I'm convinced I bought my teenage daughters smartphones so they could text me from their rooms 10 feet away. I know technology is not evil unto itself. It's a tool. But like any tool, it can be misused, so you need to keep tabs on

when, how and for what purpose it's being used. I heard Simon Sinek in a video recently say, "They are children, you can take it away." Talk about starting World War III. So, as parents or grandparents, what are we to do? Here are three things to consider.

First, set limits when the phone can be used. There are technological solutions to this (setting up systems that permit use during certain time frames, etc.) or there is the Sinek method and just take the phone away. However, allowing children unfettered access to technology is not the best idea even if it seems to make your life easier now.

Secondly, determine where those devices can be used. At the dinner table? Never. School? Limited usage. In their rooms overnight? NO. Teach your children and grandchildren proper use etiquette, but realize you'll have to adhere to that, too. No "do as I say not as I do" with this stuff.

Lastly, see what they are doing on their devices. The best way I could do that was have all the devices funneled through one account. If my kids or grandkids wanted some app, they had to ask me to get it for them. Did I track their website usage? You bet I did. I knew when and where they went on the web. I know all the bad stuff out there. I know the horror stories of people trying to get to our kids through technology. Occasionally, I physically inspect all their devices. I pay for it, so I can have access at any time. They knew this when I entrusted them with it. I'm the parent and I have the responsibility to do my best to protect them.

Our children are too precious to imagine that Google, Facebook, Snapchat or whatever is next will look out for their best interests. That's our job, and it's time we start doing it. 🌞



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