

Family Matters

Technology and the Family

The evolution of technology in the last 20 years is mind boggling. The benefit of having limitless amounts of information at our fingertips is very powerful, but costly. That cost includes not just the price of our gadgets, but the additional spending that may occur as a result of all the marketing we receive through them. The financial burden of technology (often requiring parents to work longer hours or take on a second job) and the distractions our “screens” cause can lead to the greatest cost of all: the decay of relationships within the family. If you went inside a typical American home on any given evening, it would not be unusual to find each family member in their own space on their own electronic device. Is this the legacy we want to leave our children?

Low Tech Responses to a High Tech World

How can we reverse this trend in favor of a more relational approach to family life? Below are a few ideas that may help:

1. **Declare a “tech-fast”.** Pick a time (an evening, a day, a weekend) in which no technology is allowed. Turn off the phones, the computers, unplug the TV...get off the grid. Use the time to grow closer as a family; lead family devotions, go for a family walk, play a board game. You may find it becomes the highlight of your week.
2. **Create intentional family memories.** You don’t need to take your kids to Disneyworld if that is going to put a financial strain on your household. Family camping trips have been a national pastime for generations. Why? Because kids love the adventure of getting into nature, and they crave the relationships that seem to blossom around a campfire and a bag of marshmallows!
3. **Watch what you’re watching.** Are the TV shows your kids watch modeling the family life you desire? Many modern “kid’s shows” portray sassy teens with disrespectful, sarcastic attitudes. Replacing your cable or satellite service with an online subscription like Netflix will save a ton of money, and open a whole world of wholesome family entertainment. You might be surprised that your kids are entertained by shows that captivated you as a child!

When our kids grow old and reflect on their childhood, they will probably not remember the iPhone they had as a 13 year old, or other cool gadgets. What they will cherish most is the relationships and memories that were created during those years. Our culture has created an expectation that more stuff is better, but your kid, and even your spouse, doesn’t want more *stuff*...they want more *you*!

Create Memories: Summer Kickoff Campout: June 20 –21

Enjoy a tech-free overnight under the stars on the “back 40” of the FCF campus. Tell your friends; this event has become an annual tradition!