

A great example of a Cell Phone Contract with a teen

By Jan Hoffman

1. It is my phone. I bought it. I pay for it. I am loaning it to you. Aren't I the greatest? I will always know the password. Do not use this technology to lie, fool, or deceive another human being. Do not involve yourself in conversations that are hurtful to others. Be a good friend first or stay out of the crossfire.
2. If it rings, answer it. It is a phone. Say hello, use your manners. Do not ever ignore a phone call if the screen reads "Mom" or "Dad". Not ever.
3. Hand the phone to one of your parents promptly at 7:30pm every school night & every weekend night at 9:00pm. It will be shut off for the night and turned on again at 7:30am.
4. If it falls into the toilet, smashes on the ground, or vanishes into thin air, you are responsible for the replacement costs or repairs. Mow a lawn, babysit or stash some birthday money. It will happen, you should be prepared.
5. Do not text, email, or say anything through this device you would not say in person. Do not text, email, or say anything to someone that you would not say out loud with their parents in the room. Censor yourself.
6. No porn. Search the web for information you would openly share with me. If you have a question about anything, ask a person, preferably me or your father.
7. Turn it off, silence it, put it away in public, especially in a restaurant, at the movies, or while speaking with another human being. You are not a rude person; do not allow the cell to change that.
8. Do not send or receive pictures of your private parts or anyone else's private parts. Don't laugh. Someday you will be tempted to do this despite your high intelligence. It is risky and could ruin your teenage/college/adult life. It is always a bad idea. Cyberspace is vast and more powerful than you. And it is hard to make anything of this magnitude disappear — including a bad reputation.
9. Don't take a zillion pictures and videos. There is no need to document everything. Live your experiences. They will be stored in your memory for eternity. Keep your eyes up. See the world happening around you. Stare out a window. Listen to the birds. Take a walk. Talk to a peer you don't normally talk to. Wonder without googling.
10. You will mess up. I will take away your phone. We will sit down and talk about it. We will start over again. You & I, we are always learning. I am on your team. We are in this together.