

Social Media Guide: Tech-Free Zones Explained and Are They Right For You Family?

Tech-Free Zones are places in families' lives where technology is simply not permitted. While some of the examples of tech-free zones may seem obvious on paper, the reality is that many families have become so used to seeing smartphones and tablets at the dinner table, for example, that it's just not something that is seen as unusual or even something that needs to be removed. Parents all over the country are starting to take notice of the fact that technology has crept into their families' lives so slyly, that these little devices now have their own plate at the table.

So, if you find yourself considering creating tech-free zones, where do you allow digital devices, and where do you draw the line?

The Dinner Table: As mentioned, this is a very common place for technology to find its way to a place that it never would have been allowed just a generation ago. It may have started with eating dinner in front of the TV, but now meals include Facebook, texting, emails, and the whole gamut of technologically-infused interests.

Digital parenting can become a little easier if you have a set place and time to disconnect from the chargers and plug back into your family. The dinner table (or breakfast table or lunch counter) is the perfect place to start. If this is the route you're going, you don't want to just ask your family members to quiet their devices. You will want to ask that smartphones, tablets, and TVs not find their way into the room in which you're eating. It's a mere 30-60 minutes of unplugging that can mean huge communication in the long run, and it's easy to implement since the expectations are clearly defined.

The Car: You are not likely to be willing to eliminate the radio from the automobile, and some of the thoughts here may be up for debate if you're a member of the digital parenting age that doesn't know how you were raised without a TV in the car! We understand! We are not saying that this tech-free zone has to eliminate all forms of technology, but the car can be a great place to set an example and draw a line. Texting and emailing while driving, especially with the kids watching, is something you should definitely put on the "do not do" list.

The Living Room: It's easier to unwind and get everybody to sleep when they're not overstimulated. Maybe you don't unplug every night, but if you set aside an hour a week just before bed where devices aren't allowed, you might find that your family is more relaxed. Replace TV with board games and replace texting with actually talking.

Creating tech-free zones may not be right for every family. Many people that are conquering the challenges that come with digital parenting are beginning to hitting the "off" button on their electronic devices at specified times or in specified areas. This is helping to turn on the communication and personal interaction among family members.

Source: <http://resources.uknowkids.com/blog/what-are-tech-free-zones-and-are-they-right-for-my-family>