



Competing with Your Child's Electronics

I know a mother and father who eat a lot of cold food - all thanks to certain electronics corporations and their child's single-minded obsession with the darn things.

Yes! Nearly every night, these parents beg him to turn off the computer, turn off (or pause) the television, put down the video game controller, or unplug from the music. Their pleas fall on deaf (or earbud-filled) ears.

It's not so much that the young man is blatantly defiant. He acknowledges them, at least with a grunt or the universal "just a second." But he's so engrossed in electronics land, that he truly has a hard time ripping his mind away from the device to join the family at the table. Of course, his parents get more and more frustrated as they experience less and less success wooing him from his high-tech goodies. Obviously, this trend is not healthy for the young man or for the evening family meal.

Some parents have discovered a magical Love and Logic enforceable statement to help with this type of electronics abuse:

"We provide _____ for kids who _____."

- "We provide computer time for kids who shut it down the first time they are asked."
- "We provide television time for kids who have chores and homework done."
- "We provide cell phones for kids who refrain from texting during the sermon at church."

As parents, we do provide these things, don't we? And when is a good time to remind kids of all the things that we provide? In a long-winded lecture when we are frustrated? How about before the item or privilege is abused, or with lots of empathy when it has been removed?

The key to success with this phrase is our willingness to follow-through and the empathy in our voices, and on our faces, when kids lose the use of the device when it is abused.