



# Tech Free Challenge

## A Break from Technology

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Today is Tech Tuesday and this week we present a challenge to parents, students, and our teachers. The challenge is to go "Tech Free." This may sound like a simple challenge, but first we have to determine what this means in our daily lives.

For students, this may be putting away the smart phone, tablet or turning off the video games. For us, as parents, it may be putting away the smart phone, taking off the smart watch, closing the door to our home office or closing the laptop.

For teachers, this could mean leaving the Chromebooks on the cart and planning lessons and activities using only books, writing with pen and paper, and engaging in discussions with one another.

Try to put in the hearts of your children a love for home. Make them long to be with their families. So much sin could be avoided if only people really loved as a family.

-St. Teresa of Calcutta

No matter what this looks like in your daily life, we encourage you and your family to take a break from technology this week. Whether you choose a short technology break or a long one, enjoy the time and pay close attention to the benefits this break provides your family.

Need ideas on how to do this? Read on for tips and advice.

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## Plan Ahead

In order to be successful with any challenge or sacrifice it is important to plan ahead. Talk with your family about ways to take a break from technology. Discuss which devices need to be turned off and where to store them to avoid distraction. Think of activities to do in place of the technology and allow your children to share ideas too. Try to plan activities for the family and for individuals.

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## Ideas for Short Tech Breaks

- Take a break from devices and television during meals and sit at the table as a family.
  - When traveling in the car, have everyone keep their devices packed away. Talk or listen to music instead.
  - On weekday evenings, put all devices in a designated space after 6:00 p.m. or another time that works for your family. Read books, play games, or go outside for alternative activities.
  - On the weekend, do not check devices until after noon to give you a morning of relaxation with your family. You could also take this break in the afternoon or evening - whichever works best for you.
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## It May Not Be Easy

Just like our Lenten sacrifices, giving up something we have become reliant on can be very difficult at first. Children (or adults) may be irritable and frustrated without their devices so it's important to stay positive and encourage one another to be successful. Once everyone is involved in a new activity most will forget about the smart phone sitting in the other room.

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## Ideas for Long Tech Breaks

- Plan a technology free weekend. Instead of using devices, plan some outdoor activities or time with family or friends. Make sure your children have ideas about what to do without their device - especially during down-times when they may feel "bored." You may also need to teach your children how to do this and make it fun!
  - Go tech free during the school/work week. When everyone gets home from work and school, keep the devices off and spend time preparing dinner or a snack together. You can replace the technology by going for a walk, reading, playing basketball in the driveway, or making a card for a relative.
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Next Week: How to Moderate Our Use of Technology Everyday