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**CELL PHONE AGREEMENT**

(Parent Review Page)

**Dear Parent or Guardian,**

This contract is designed to create an open line of communication between you and your kid regarding their cell phone. The hope is that this contract can be used as an initial discussion between you and your child ideally before they get their first cell phone, however this may also help you set rules and consequences that are clear for your child who already has a phone but has no clear rules in place.

**You probably find yourself in one of two situations:**

**1. They already have a cell phone, however no clear rules or consequences.**

This will be more difficult, as they have already had, more or less, free use of their cell phone. Expect the conversation to be a bit tougher here. Your child will feel you are setting the ground rules after the fact and will likely put up some resistance. I recommend owning the fact that we as parents/guardians are not perfect and will make mistakes. However, we all are able to correct our mistakes and that is what you are doing. You care about your child and their safety, which is why you are doing this. Additionally, you do not want them being caught off guard by a “surprise” consequence for breaking an “unknown” rule.

**2. You're about to give them a cell phone.**

Many parents/guardians struggle with the idea of giving their child a cell phone, some wait until their child can buy their own (more rare these days) and others will get their child a phone before they can walk (hopefully rare these days). Most however find themselves in the middle. This is the perfect time to start your child’s cell phone use in the best way possible, by having a respectful and calm discussion about the rules and consequences of breaking those rules. I recommend that you go over this contract right before handing your child their new phone and stress the trust you have in them to even be able to have a phone in the first place. Go over the whole contract with them and have them initial and sign where appropriate so that they understand they are agreeing to the terms you as their parent are setting for their development, safety, and to have fun as well! Encourage them to ask questions throughout this process and enjoy this time with your child, as stressful as it can be for parents/guardians!

-Joseph Prather M.S., LMHC, CCMHC

Owner and Primary Clinician at: [Prather Behavioral Health and Counseling LLC](http://www.pratherbhc.com/)

**Edit the contract on the next page as needed to make it fit your child and family.**

Adapted From: Josh Shipp, Founder: OneCaringAdult.com

Dear (CHILD’S NAME),

**Congratulations**! You’ve proven yourself mature and responsible enough for your own cell phone. Given that you will soon have a new cell phone in your hands, we obviously trust you to make good decisions—however, we do have a few rules and guidelines for your health and safety that you need to agree with to get your new phone.

A cell phone is more than a piece of technology. If used incorrectly, it can be a weapon that puts your safety, and/or others, at risk. You are an amazing kid, we love you, and we want to make sure that you continue making smart choices.

The goal of this contract is to make sure that you’re always safe, as well as to teach you about our expectations, rules, and the consequences for breaking those rules regarding cell phone use. We are asking you to always use your phone appropriately and to ask for help from us or a trusted adult when a situation leaves you feeling scared, unclear, or unsure.

Love,

*Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Name*

1. **Cell Phone Agreement - RULES**

1) I understand that the rules below are for my safety and that my parents/guardians love me more than anything in the world. I understand that my parents/guardians want to give me freedom, while also giving me enough security to make smart choices. **Initial here: \_\_\_\_\_\_**

2) I promise that my parents/guardians will always know my phone passwords. I understand that my parents/guardians have a right to look at my phone whenever there’s a need for them to do so, even without my permission. **Initial here: \_\_\_\_\_\_**

3) I will hand the phone to one of my parents/guardians promptly at \_\_\_\_\_ pm every school night and every weekend night at \_\_\_\_\_ pm. I will get it back at \_\_\_\_\_ am. **Initial here: \_\_\_\_\_\_**

4) I will not send or receive naked, suggestive, or generally inappropriate photos or videos. EVER. I understand that there could be serious legal consequences that could put me and my parents/guardians’ at-risk.

**Initial here: \_\_\_\_\_\_**

5) I will never search for pornography or anything else inappropriate knowingly. If I see something inappropriate, I will immediately tell my parents/guardians. **Initial here: \_\_\_\_\_\_**

6) I understand that my behavior on my phone can impact my future reputation—even in ways that I am not able to predict or see. **Initial here: \_\_\_\_\_\_**

7) I will tell my parents/guardians when I receive suspicious or alarming phone calls or text messages from people I don't know. I will also tell my parents/guardians if I am being harassed or bullied by someone via my cell phone. **Initial here: \_\_\_\_\_\_**

8) When I’m old enough, I won’t text and drive. I understand it’s dangerous and not a smart thing to do.

**Initial here: \_\_\_\_\_\_**

9) I will turn off, silence, and/or put my phone away in public places, especially in a restaurant, at the movies, or while speaking with another human being. I will not be a rude person. I will not allow the phone to change who I am or my family’s values. **Initial here: \_\_\_\_\_\_**

10) I will NEVER use my phone to bully, harass, or tease anyone, even if others think it’s funny to pick on others. **Initial here: \_\_\_\_\_\_**

\*I have read and initialed all of the above rules. I have asked any questions I had at this time and will ask if other questions come up later. I agree with the rules above:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

***Child Sign Here***

1. **Cell Phone Agreement - CONSEQUENCES**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Times I Broke A Rule** | **Consequence** |
| 1st time | * Loss of the phone for 3 days
* Sit-down discussion
 |
| 2nd time | * Loss of the phone for 1 week
* Sit-down discussion
 |
| 3rd time | * Loss of the phone for 2 weeks
* Sit-down discussion
 |
| 4th time(or if violation is unlawful or serious) | * Loss of the phone until parents/guardians and I have come up with a timeline to earn back my phone and my parent/guardian’s trust.
* In order to have my phone again I will write or communicate what went wrong, why this issue occurred, and how it will be different, if I get my phone back.
* Consider the help of a professional counselor to help get to the underlying cause of disregard for the rules or unlawful/serious behavior issues.
 |

I understand that having this phone is not a right–it is a privilege that can be taken away. I have read this entire document and agree to the above rules and consequences. **Initial here: \_\_\_\_\_\_**

I understand that if I currently have any questions, I should ask.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

***Child Sign Here***