

# UNPLUGGED: EMBRACING FAMILY TIME THROUGH A DIGITAL DETOX

Embarking on a **digital detox** means pausing tech use to reconnect with yourself and your loved ones, discovering life's offline joys. And the benefits are significant. Less screen time can lead to improved sleep, less stress, more creativity, improved communication, and stronger family ties. For teens especially, stepping away from devices and smartphones can lessen the relentless influx of information and multitasking demands. This break fosters improved focus and attention, encouraging them to engage more fully with the present, undistracted by the digital world. But if the thought of unplugging feels both tempting and terrifying, don't worry!



## HOW TO START A FAMILY DETOX

- **Pray and reflect** Prayer instills intentionality and focus. Engaging in silent, meditative prayer fosters a serene space for you to seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit collectively.
- **Get everyone involved** It's likely that the idea of a digital detox originated with you, not your children. Discuss with your family the reasons and goals for the detox, emphasizing the importance of everyone's buy-in for success. Highlight the benefits tailored to their interests: more play and creativity for a 4-year-old, enhanced family time for teenagers. Be sure to lead by example!
- **Determine your timeline** Discuss and decide as a family what the timeline looks like for your digital detox. You might consider a monthly digital-free day. Perhaps the first Saturday of every month means no screens.
- **Celebrate your success** You'll likely find immense joy in unplugging and prioritizing what's most important: spending quality time with your family.





# BRING BOREDEM BACK CAMPAIGN



The thought of a digital detox might seem intimidating, especially with the anticipation of the dreaded "I'm bored" complaints in the absence of devices. But boredom has its virtues. Parents tend to rush in or feel they should find something for their child to do, but boredom is actually a crucial tool that helps children develop planning strategies, problem-solving skills, flexibility and organizational skills – key abilities that children whose lives are usually highly structured may lack. Boredom is normal, natural, and healthy! Before jumping to fill their discomfort with your own ideas, be proactive with your kids about their options.

When a child says, "I'm bored," it could be code for a number of different things. They might be hungry, lonely, curious about what you're doing, or looking for something to occupy their time. Psychiatrist Dr. Dan Siegal recommends a technique called 'Name it to tame it' as a means to help children identify their feelings.\*

<https://childmind.org/article/the-benefits-of-boredom/>



**"I'M A BIG BELIEVER IN BOREDOM. ... ALL THE [TECHNOLOGY] STUFF IS WONDERFUL, BUT HAVING NOTHING TO DO CAN BE WONDERFUL, TOO." STEVE JOBS, CO-FOUNDER, APPLE**

## WHAT TO SAY WHEN YOU HEAR "I'M BORED!"

**Try asking these questions when your child tells you that they're bored:**

- What other word other than bored are you feeling?
- What does your body feel like when you are bored?
- Should we brainstorm a bit? What does your mind say it wants to do?
- Tell me one thing you haven't done in a long time!

**and remember, "Boredom is...a vital problem for the moralist, since at least half the sins of mankind are caused by the fear of it." Bertrand Russell**

