

How You Can Help Your Family Move From Phone Obsession to Personal Connection

“If your 11-year-old came up to you and said, ‘Hey Dad, can I have keys to the SUV?’ You wouldn’t say, ‘Sure, here you go,’ and you wouldn’t toss him the keys,” says youth culture expert Jonathan McKee on a recent episode of the *Family Matters* series on the Charisma Podcast Network. “First of all, you’d say, ‘Well, I want to wait till you’re (this age).’

“And guess what? With phones, there is an age. For social media, you’ve got to be 13 years old,” McKee adds. “All these 10- and 11-year-olds that are on Snapchat, Instagram, Tick Tock ... they lied about their age, because you have to be 13 years old.

“And then, to get a car and to be able to drive, you actually have to study and find out about being safe and what that looks like,” he says. “You have to spend 50 hours sitting next to an adult in the car, saying, ‘Be careful as you merge. Watch out for that guy’ ... then you have to test on it. And the funny thing is, we just throw our kids a phone.”

And that, McKee says, has caused issues ranging from social ineptness due to fixation on phones to emotional damage from our “Insta-perfect” world to porn use and more. Families are struggling in this area, he says. So what’s a concerned Christian parent to do?

McKee and his daughter, Alyssa McKee, explore all these concerns and more in their new book, *Teen’s Guide to Face-to-Face Communication in a Screen-to-Screen World*. Alternating chapters as they share personal experiences, key truths they call “realizations,” questions to ask and summary statements, the McKees help families discuss the ins and outs, ups and

downs of screen use.

“Our tendency as parents is sometimes to overreact,” McKee says. “And we need to turn our overreaction into interaction. ... We need to open up these doors of dialogue in our home.”

For more about how to engage your tween or teen in meaningful conversation and help guide your family’s use of screens in a healthy way, listen to the entire podcast [here](#), and be sure to check out the McKees’ new book at [. {eo}](#)