



“You are not only responsible for what you say, but also for what you do not say.”
 – Martin Luther

First Cell Phone Milestone Moment

Milestones Ministry brings an awareness of the presence of God to individuals of all generations by recognizing the home as church, too. A Milestone Moment brings family and friends together to mark a special time in their lives and to acknowledge and affirm God’s presence in their midst. Milestone Moments provide a model for connecting significant occasions in people’s lives with the ongoing journey of faith.

Being given a cell phone to use for the first time is on the mind of many youth as parents struggle to make a decision about what age is most appropriate for their child to have a cell phone. A cell phone signals independence and provides youth with many ways to communicate in today’s world. From conversations to texts to social media, the world arrives at one’s fingertips and this step in the life of a family can be a stressful one for both parents and children. The cost adds concerns and questions about the need for a cell phone. Talking about how a phone will be used is an important conversation for parents to have with their children. This Milestone Moment provides the opportunity for families to address questions, establish guidelines, and connect this new way of communicating with the life of faith.

Milestones Ministry uses a simple structure that includes naming, equipping, blessing, gifting, and reinforcing so that the Milestone Moment will have a greater chance to take deeper root in one’s lifelong faith formation.

Moments that cause us to pause and shift gears like parents deciding it is time for their child to have a cell phone happen in our daily lives. Providing opportunities to find God’s presence in these moments is important. This First Cell Phone Milestone Moment incorporates a simple structure that includes:

Naming – It is important to recognize the changes that take place in relationships and ways to communicate when one gets a cell phone. It is good to acknowledge how God is part of this new means to connect to the world.

Equipping – This Milestone Moment uses the Four Key Faith Practices outline (see page 2) to connect getting a first cell phone with the life of faith.

Blessing – Praying for youth and families and including a blessing after this decision has been made is a great way to affirm God’s presence.

Gifting – Giving a tangible gift like a special sticker for the phone or a customized case for the phone is a good way to help participants be reminded of this Milestone.

Reinforcing – It is beneficial to meet again a couple of weeks after the initial use of the cell phone has begun. Check in and see how it is being used and how life may be different. Encourage honest talk about whether or not guidelines are being followed. It is also helpful to check in with one another throughout the year.

 Caring Conversations
  Devotions
  Four Key Faith Practices
  Service
  Rituals and Traditions





First Cell Phone Milestone Moment

For a Small Group or Family Gathering



Growing People in Faith when at Home and Away

"and talk about them when you are at home and when away, when you lie down and when you rise."

– Deuteronomy 6:7b

A follow up for the First Cell Phone Milestone Moment can be done with caring conversations and prayers about how the phone is being used, whether or not guidelines have been met, and how having a phone has changed relationships. It also gives others in the family the opportunity to share their own stories and be present to guide and support one another along the way. This follow up is best done periodically throughout the year as a check-in.

An important step after experiencing the Four Key Faith Practices in a small group or home setting is to bless and equip friends and families by using faith practices daily as an intentional step to encourage faith traditions in the home.

A suggested resource for continued caring conversations:

[Taking Faith Home](#)
[Taking Faith Home Cards](#)

Additional Milestones Modules and Moments can be found at:
www.milestonesministry.org



At the heart of equipping people for their lifelong faith formation are the Four Key Faith Practices: Caring Conversations, Devotions, Service, and Rituals and Traditions. They provide an opportunity for people to learn, experience, and grow in their faith together. The next page is a discussion guide handout to assist with the conversations.



As you gather together, begin by sharing a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your lives and then use the outline below to discuss use and responsibilities when getting a cell phone.



Caring Conversations

Discuss the following questions:

- Parents: What are your concerns about getting a first phone for this young person? Youth: Why is it important to have a cell phone?
- Talk about what would happen if the phone is lost. What steps will be taken by both parents and youth?
- Take time as a family to establish a list of guidelines for using the cell phone. Make a copy of the list and post on the refrigerator or other visible place to be revisited during a follow-up conversation.



Devotions

Read the following: *Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable to you, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.*
Psalm 19:14 (NRSV)

What we say and how we respond to others makes a difference. In what ways do we reflect God's love through our conversations and thoughts? How can a cell phone be used in a way that is acceptable to the Lord?



Service

Many organizations now collect and recycle old cell phones. As a family, collect cell phones not in use from family and friends and deliver to a recycle location.



Rituals and Traditions

Pray together: *Dear God, help us to trust one another and be honest in our conversations so that our words and thoughts may be pleasing to you. In Jesus' name. Amen.*

Gather as a family and bless one another:

May the Lord bless you with the wisdom to speak acceptable words and show God's love in all the ways you connect with others.



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First Cell Phone Discussion Guide



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