

**A Model Letter Drafted by Katie Singer
To Teenagers Wanting Wireless Devices
To Be Revised As Parents Deem Fit**

Dear _____,

First things first. Thank you for living. Thank you for your _____ (honesty, impatience, passion, questions and tolerance of my flaws).

I know you want a _____ (smartphone, iPad, wearable device). I know that most of your friends have them. I notice that not having one limits your entire life.

I know that we live in a society that cares more about technology and corporate profits than our health.

I see that when anyone (including me) depends on electronic devices, their abilities to ask penetrating questions, to reason and make decisions get weaker. China now estimates that 24 million of its children under 18 are addicted to the Internet. It has 250 military-style boot camps to help youth quit their addiction.

Unlike AT&T, T-Mobile and Verizon, I don't have trillions of dollars to seduce you into "buying " my ideas: I want you to live as long as possible. I want you thinking on your own, not by Google's ideas of what matters.

Digital cell phone users who begin using a cell phone as teenagers or younger increase their risk of brain cancer by 420%.¹ For every one hundred hours of cell phone use, the risk of brain cancer increases by 5%. For every year of cell phone use, the risk of brain cancer increases by 8%.²

In 2006, schools in Simcoe County, Ontario installed Wi-Fi. At least fourteen students became ill with speeding heart rate, fatigue and headaches. Two teenagers had cardiac arrests and went on heart medication. Now, every school in Simcoe County has its own defibrillator, as though teenage heart attacks are normal.

What are our opportunities? I, for one, need to reduce my own use of electronics. I need to keep calm and respectful to the best of my ability. I need to improve my negotiating skills with electric companies, landlords and school administrators to create a healthier environment.

I'm not sure how to respect people who will not discuss how technology impacts health.

Would you tell me your ideas about all of this so that we could learn these things together?

Love,

Mom and/or Dad

1. H. Divan et al, "Prenatal and postnatal exposure to cell phone use and behavioral problems in children," *Epidemiology*, vol. 19, no. 4 [2008].

2. Mild et al, "Pooled analysis of two Swedish case-control studies on the use of mobile and cordless telephones and the risk of brain tumours diagnosed during 1997-2003," *Intern'l J. of Occupational Safety and Ergonomics*, {JOSE} 13 (1) (2007) 63-71.3.