Real Feelings in Real Time?

Cinthia Chiquez

I was 18 years old when I got my first cellphone. Before my mom and dad decided to give me my first phone, I had to do a lot of things. I had to take care of my little sister, and I had to get good grades in school.

My sister got her first cellphone when she was 13 years old. She didn’t have to do anything to get it. She just said, “Mom and Dad, I need a cellphone because almost all my friends have one.”

We use our phones in lots of ways—to make calls and to check Facebook and Twitter. But it feels like communication in our family is almost broken. We can’t find time to talk because someone’s phone rings and interrupts us. Sometimes we are together at lunch, but we are not really together because either my brother or sister is using the computer. It is hard to have a conversation because the cellphone and computer are between us. My brother and sister don’t pay attention when I talk.

I don’t want to imagine if one day cellphones replace face-to-face communication. People are beginning to be addicted to their technology. We are forgetting how to express our real feelings in real time.

Sometimes we are together, but we are not really together.

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What about You?

At what age should parents get cell phones for their children? Why? Explain your answer.

How often do you check? Think about your own habits around technology. Do you check your devices frequently? Why or why not?

Do you agree that people are beginning to be addicted to their technology? Why or why not? Explore further by reading the story on pp. 14-15, “Notes from an Internet Addict.”