

## LCMS YOUTH GATHERING SOCIAL MEDIA/PHONE/SCREEN TIME APPROACH

The extent to which participants can use their phones and other devices during the Gathering is at the discretion of their Adult Leaders. The use of cell phones and social media is meant to enhance the Gathering experience, not distract from it. Key points from the Gathering will be understood regardless of participants' use of these devices.



1. You may need to pay for access to WIFI, such as planes and hotels. Due to the overwhelming number of users, prepare for free WIFI networks to be slow.
2. Consider downloading content (music, movies and shows) before traveling.
3. The Gathering is a good place to demonstrate and teach social interaction. Consider setting the following boundaries for your group...
  - No phones once the group is back at the hotel after Mass Event/Mass Event Plus.
  - Phones stay in pockets during meal times allowing participants to be fully present with their group.
  - Make a daily connection with parents/guardians at home and share a key moment in the day.

*It's important to remember that current studies are showing this generation to be addicted to their phones. With any addiction, when you make restrictions, it will stir different emotions in different youth.*

4. Be fully present with your group. Use discernment or refer to your cell phone covenant to know the appropriate times to use your phone.
  - Keep your phone in your pocket/bag during meals.
  - Focus on the people who are in front of you, not those at home.
  - Share photos and videos of your Gathering experience by using #NYG2019 on social media. (You might even see yourself on the big screen!)
5. Utilize the Gathering app to help personalize your Gathering experience. Build your schedule, check out Sessions and Speaker information and play the Gathering scavenger hunt. Take time during a Gathering planning meeting to download the app and have youth navigate it. *\*Please note the Gathering App will be made available for free in app stores in late spring 2019\**
  - Consider making a challenge out of it.
    - i. Click 2 speakers you want to see at the Gathering.
    - ii. Click 2 places in the Interactive Center you want to visit.
    - iii. Add others that are applicable to your group needs.