

Have a family plan

Set goals and rules for screen time that everyone agrees on. Include:

- ✓ Daily or weekly time limits.
- ✓ Limits on when and where screens can be used. For example, no use of devices or screens one hour before bedtime.
- ✓ A place to keep devices outside of the bedroom.
- ✓ Activities kids must do before they have screen time. For example, finish homework, do a chore, play outside for at least 30 minutes, or read for 20 minutes.
- ✓ Consequences if someone breaks the rules.



Be a role model

It starts with you. How many times a day do you turn to your phone? Check your own habits so you can be a better role model. Don't take your phone to bed. Don't check email whenever you have a few minutes of extra time. Instead, read, exercise, write in a journal, or do a family activity.

Did you know?

Kids who spend less time watching TV or playing video games:

- Are more active and have more time for play.
- Do better in school.
- Eat less junk food.
- Sleep better.
- Have better social skills.

Healthy habits learned as a child lead to healthy habits as an adult.

To learn more about how to help your child unplug, talk with a member of the health care team. Also check with your child's school or other local organizations for free or low-cost activities for children.

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Healthy Kids: Limit Screen Time

Limit screen time to less
than **2** hours a day!

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BARBARA WOODWARD LIPS
PATIENT EDUCATION CENTER

Turn Off the Screens!

It's easy to spend hours in front of a TV, computer, cell phone, or tablet. Too much screen time may lead to extra weight gain, lower reading scores, and sleep, attention and behavior problems. It also may increase the risk for depression.

Kids who rely on social media to connect with others actually feel more lonely than kids who interact in person.

Keep recreational screen time to **2** hours or less a day. That's time spent using a screen for something besides school.



What You Can Do

Set limits

Take steps to lessen screen time:

- ✓ Turn off the TV and other devices during meals.
- ✓ Keep TVs and computers out of the bedroom.
- ✓ Use apps to control how long your child can use a device.
- ✓ Watch screens with your child. Talk about the messages on TV and other media. Help your child choose programs of good quality.

Limits for younger children:

- ✓ Under age 2: NO screen time.
- ✓ Between ages 2 and 5: Limit screen time to 1 hour a day of educational programming.

Fill the device gap

Simply spending less time in front of screens isn't helpful all by itself. Help your child use time away from electronic devices to connect with friends and family in person. Help your child just enjoy time alone.

Choices are limited only by your imagination! Here are some ideas to help you start:

- 💡 Cook together as a family.
- 💡 Play games or do puzzles.
- 💡 Read.
- 💡 Take a walk.
- 💡 Play music.
- 💡 Color, do crafts or make a scrapbook.
- 💡 Volunteer as a family.



Remember: It's okay to be bored.

Boredom can foster creativity, resiliency, imagination, and problem solving. All are skills your child needs.

