

Limit Your Child's Screen Time and Promote Positive Technology Use



What Parents Can Do:

- **Make a schedule.** Planning designated screen time into your family's day or week can make it easier to limit children's device usage. Including children in the creation of this schedule will also help them to feel empowered.²
- **No devices at the dinner table!** Putting away all devices and engaging in conversation during a meal is a great way for the whole family to unplug.⁴
- **No TV in the bedroom.** Children with access to a television or screen-based device in their bedroom tend to spend more time on devices.³
- **But why?** Asking a child about why they are using a device can help parents figure out if device use is a problem for their child. Using a device as a cure for boredom is very different from using a device to learn a new skill.²
- **Look at the settings.** Changing the settings on apps so that the next video or episode doesn't play automatically can help reduce overall screen time.² Parental controls can also allow you to block certain TV programs which are not age appropriate for your child. Being informed about how the rating scale works can help limit your child's exposure to inappropriate content.³
- **Be their role model.** Research has shown that children develop technology use patterns by watching their parents.⁵ Make an effort to reduce your own screen time as it could impact your child's habits as well.

What Is Positive Technology Use?

In today's world, simply taking a screen-based device away is not always an option. With many schools assigning more technology-based homework and projects, devices are becoming an integral part of our education system.¹ For this reason, it is important to help kids understand that technology was designed to be addictive and needs to be handled responsibly.¹

Try These Fun Offline Activities:

- Ride a bike
- Take a walk
- Learn to play a new instrument
- Play a board game
- Read a book
- Cook a new recipe
- Volunteer
- Draw or color
- Go out to a device-free dinner
- Write a story
- Build a fort
- Play dress up
- Water War
- Sing and dance
- Tell your favorite jokes
- Decorate your room
- Create an obstacle course
- Science experiments
- Learn to knit or sew

References

1. <https://www.paloaltoonline.com/news/2018/08/24/parenting-in-the-digital-age>
2. <https://www.todaysparent.com/family/parenting/parent-tested-systems-you-can-use-to-limit-screen-time/>
3. <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/107/2/423.full>
4. <http://www.screenfree.org/basics/>
5. <https://www.healthline.com/health-news/children-now-stare-at-screens-6-hours-a-day#5>

Additional Resources:

<http://www.pamf.org/preteen/growingup/choices/media.html>

<http://www.pamf.org/preteen/mybody/fitness/toomuchtv.html>

<http://www.pamf.org/teen/life/bodyimage/media.html>