

Teens and Screens: Finding the Balance

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Solutions: Specific guidelines for Screen Use

- ▶ Limit *entertainment* screen time to 1 to 2 hours per day (all devices)
- ▶ Use time-tracking apps for all family members
- ▶ Avoid interactive screen time within one hour of bedtime
- ▶ Keep screens out of the bedrooms, have a family cell phone zone

Solutions: Specific guidelines for Screen Use

- ▶ No pornography. Use Blocking software, talk to your kids about what they see
- ▶ Avoid first person shooter games or media violence for children
- ▶ Hold off on social media and smartphones until 8th or 9th grade; until your child has demonstrated maturity and self-control
- ▶ Negotiate social media and smartphone contracts with your teen

Solutions: Parenting

- ▶ Understand the teen brain and how stress affects behavior
- ▶ Parents should examine their own screen time and model a well-balanced life
- ▶ Avoid using technology as a reward or incentive for anything including grades
- ▶ Set reasonable rules; if a child of any age can't follow the rules without complaint they are not ready for the privilege and removing it is an appropriate natural consequence
- ▶ Know the warning signs of internet addiction and get professional help if a child's screen use seems problematic
- ▶ Seek out other families who share your values regarding screen time

Solutions: A Healthy Balanced Life

- ▶ Exercise on average 60 minutes per day
- ▶ Sleep recommendation for 12 to 18 year olds is 8 to 11 hours per night
- ▶ Avoid multi-tasking with technology, particularly with homework. Single Task!
- ▶ Try screen-free conversations, family meals and carpools
- ▶ Make a list for each family member of fun and alternative activities to media use
- ▶ The teen brain needs downtime to recover from stress: Make sure everyone spends time each day in true relaxation or daydreaming *without the use of electronics*
- ▶ Foster a healthy family culture: Exercise, religious services, reading print material and spending time in person with friends protects against unhappiness

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- ▶ Warning Signs of Problematic Use
- ▶ Some children may be more at risk for negative consequences of screen use
- ▶ When to get professional help
- ▶ 228 Things to Do Without Screens

Twenty Technology Tips for Tweens and Teens

- Try “single-tasking” instead of multi-tasking when doing homework
- No screens and electronic devices in your bedroom
- Avoid interactive screen use within 1 -2 hours of bedtime
- Get a minimum of 8 hours of restful sleep per night
- Try to avoid screen use first thing in the morning
- Average less than 2 hours a day of all entertainment screen time
- No first-person shooter video games, avoid media violence
- No online pornography. Ask your parents to use Blocking Software
- Use a flip phone until you have demonstrated you can follow the rules
- Ask your parents to model healthy technology use too!
- Limit video game play to an average of one hour per day
- Take vacations without using gaming or social media
- Establish screen-free activities: meals, conversations and commuting to school
- Ask your friends to join you in screen-free activities
- Exercise 60 minutes per day
- Practice at least one non-electronic hobby every week
- Try the one in/one out rule: For every hour of screen time, participate in an hour of exercise, time in nature, or a spiritual practice
- Make sure you spend time each day in down-time, true relaxation or daydreaming *without the use of electronics*
- Learn about how screen time affects your brain and emotional health
- Try a whole family experiment: take a 30 day “Technology Fast”