

## Tips and Tricks for Limiting Screen Time

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- **Monkey see, monkey do!** Try to mind your own screen time. It is hard to expect your child to put away their device if you have yours out. Keeping track of your own screen time will help you become more aware of how much we all use devices!
- **Gradual changes:** start small, try cutting back 1 hour a week or 10 minutes a day.
- **Making a schedule:** After determining the screen time limit, have your children help determine a schedule of when they get to use their screen time. This gives them a sense of control and makes them feel like they have a say in this new change.
- **Consistency is key!** There will likely be conflicts when cutting back on screen time. Try to remain consistent with the schedule you set as this will make it become routine and cause less conflict in the future.
- **Make it a family change:** You are more likely to see your kids participate if you come up with the screen time rules together. When thinking of the rules, be sure to include the whole family! Here are some examples:
  - Schoolwork needs to be completed first
  - All screens get put on the counter during mealtimes
  - Screens turn off at 8:00 every night
- **Try to incorporate more active activities:** Try some activities that get everyone moving! Movement activities are good for the mind and body and provide a fun opportunity to try something new. Go rollerblading, on a nature walk, or try a new recipe with the whole family involved!
- **Out of sight, out of mind:** when something is not seen, it is less likely to be thought about. Find a place to put away phones that is not easily visible (e.g. kitchen cupboard, dresser drawer etc.)

- **Use devices together:** While your kids are playing a game, or watching something on a screen, play the game with them. It is important to interact with your kids even when screens are turned on.
- **Quality exposure:** With new ways of distance learning and telemedicine, children are being exposed even more to electronics. Try to focus on the quality of what they are exposed to. For example, *passive* screen time such as watching movies or playing video games provides instant feedback of information providing constant stimulation. On the other hand, video chatting with a friend or reading a book on a screen are more interactive and can be less stimulating.

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