

10 Screen-Smart Parenting Tips

Screen time is the time spent using TVs, computers, videos, DVDs, video games, and hand-held electronic devices. For children to be physically active, avoid being overweight, and be generally healthy, their screen time must be managed.

- Limit screen time to two hours or less each day for children over two years old. (No screen time is recommended for children under two).
- Remove TVs and computers from your children's bedrooms. Put them out in the open where you can monitor their use.
- Provide your children with more active things to do, such as sports. Also, replace screen time with unstructured outdoor play time if the weather allows.
- Shut off the TV and other media during meals. Talk to each other instead.
- If your children enjoy video games, invest in a system with dance and fitness options. To keep some games going, players must constantly move.
- Turn the TV off when no one is watching it; don't use it as background noise.
- Combine TV viewing with physical activity. As a family, do push-ups, jumping jacks, and other exercises during commercial breaks.
- Avoid using extra screen time as a reward.
- Discuss advertisements with your children. Explain that a food or drink being featured on TV or the Internet doesn't mean it is good for you.
- Set a positive example; limit your own screen time.