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Top tips for a healthier Screen Time

How much is too much screen time for children?

There are a clear links between **excessive screen time** and wider development problems such as **delayed speech** and **language development, communication difficulties, reduced concentration spans, poor sleep** and **poor mental health**.

This guide is split by ages 0-5, 6 - 10 and 11 -17. Each has 5 top tips for supporting a reduction and to help work towards healthy screen time.




HEALTH PROFESSIONALS FOR SAFER SCREENS



healthprofessionalsforsaferscreens.org

Birth to 5 years



Bedtime stories are the best way to settle your child.

Watching a lot of short videos can make it harder for young children to learn how to concentrate.

Too much screen time can cause babies and toddlers to **learn fewer words** and have **slower language development**.

Too much screen time is also being linked to **behavioural difficulties** in children.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1 NO screen time between birth - 24 months except for video chatting with family and friends.

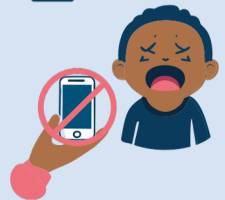
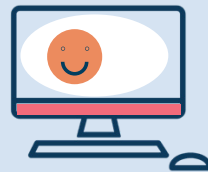
2 30 MINS screen time. Children aged 2 - 5 years old should not be on screens for more than 30 min per day.

3 BIGGER screens. If your child is ready to play a short game then using a larger screen like a laptop or large tablet can help prevent eye strain.

4 Avoid using devices to settle your child down. This can lead to stronger feelings of anger and frustration later in life.

Reading a book, playing a relaxing game or having a cuddle be much more useful.

5 To support a good night's sleep screens should not be used **2 hours before bedtime**. Keep **online devices outside of the bedroom**.





Walk, run, and move more. Help children stay active and have screen free time.

6 to 10 years

Ditch screens at mealtimes. Eating in front of screens leads to higher obesity risk.

Excessive screen use has links with difficulties with **concentration, sleep** and **mental health**. There may also be distinct physical changes in the developing brain.

Watching lots of short videos is linked to **concentration difficulties** in children.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1

Waking up without screens. It is recommended that social media/screens are not used for the first hour of the day.



2

1 - 2 hours per day is the suggested screen time in the week and not more than 2 hours on weekends.

M T W T F S S						
not more than 1-2hrs/day					up to 2hrs/day	

3

Stay active. Move more for 1 - 2 hours a day. Connecting with nature is a great way to do this.



4

Screen-free time together. Children can mimic behaviours of adults around them. Be mindful of your own device usage.



5

To support a good night's sleep screens should not be used **1 hour before bedtime**. Keep **online devices outside of the bedroom**.





Encourage connection with friends in person, wherever possible.

Be careful of violent or frightening content especially before bed.

11 to 17 years

Excessive screen use has links with difficulties with **concentration, sleep and mental health**. There may also be distinct physical **changes** in the **developing brain**.

Watching lots of short videos is being linked to **concentration difficulties** in children.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1 **Waking up without screens.** It is recommended that social media/screens are not used for the first hour of the day.



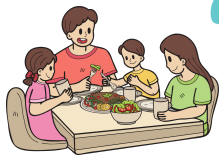
2 **Screen time** should not exceed 1 - 2 hours per day in the week and not over 3 hours at the weekend.

MTWTFSS						
Up to 2hrs/day				Up to 2-3 hrs /day		

3 **Stay active** and encourage physical movement for at least 1 hour per day. Connecting with nature is a great way to do this. More green time, less screen time.



4 **Screen-free time together.** Children can mimic behaviours of adults around them. Be mindful of your own device usage.



5 To support a good night's sleep screens should not be used **1 hour before bedtime**. Keep **online devices outside of the bedroom**.

