

Screen time guidelines

Technology has made our lives easier in so many ways, but it can also be harmful, especially for young people. To help set ground rules for using technology at home and limiting screen time, review the information below.

Recommendations for parents:

- Monitor/track how much time your children spend using screens.
- Monitor the type of content being used.
- Determine rules (and discuss those rules with your child).
- Have all account codes/passwords for monitoring purposes.
- Have designated screen-free time (like dinner, homework, and bedtime) that you as a parent follow as well when appropriate.
- No access to mobile devices until the child is 8 years old.

Some activities involving screens, like video games, TV and social media, can serve as **avoidance**. Consider the following guidelines and discuss the following with your child:

- **Set a reasonable time limit for the activity.**
Gradually work toward a reasonable time limit.
- **Wait to do the activity until specific goals are met.**
For example, they can play video games after they have showered, brushed their teeth, spent 30 minutes on homework, and called their mom.
- **Combine these strategies.**
Once specific goals have been met for the day, they may take part in an activity for the agreed upon time limit.
 - Example: Can play video games for 30 minutes after they have showered, brushed their teeth, spent 30 minutes on homework, and called their mom.
- **Consider cutting the activity altogether.**
Determine whether the activity is something they really enjoy or if it's something they only do to avoid other activities or painful feelings.

