

SCREEN TIME AND YOUR CHILD

Kids are spending more time on screens than ever before. Screens are everywhere and are often used by teachers and students for school-related work. As with most things in life, there should always be a balance!

Too much screen time in children has been linked with:

- ◆ Sleep problems
- ◆ Reduced attention span and learning challenges
- ◆ Increased anxiety and depression
- ◆ Increased risk of overweight and obesity

The Canadian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for Children and Youth (ages 5-17 years) recommend:

- ◆ Limit recreational screen time to less than 2 hours per day
- ◆ Aim for at least 60 minutes per day of moderate to vigorous physical activity

The **4Ms** for Balancing Screen Time:

Minimize screen time: Maintain daily “screen-free” times, especially for family meals. Get outside and be active as a family, read together, and enroll your child in recreational programs in your community.

Model healthy screen use: Remember that your child watches and copies you. Limit the amount of time you spend on the phone, on the computer, watching TV or on other electronic devices.

Be **mindful** about screen time: Monitor your family’s digital use and set limits. Keep TVs and computers in a central place where the whole family can see and use them and out of your child’s bedroom.

Mitigate (reduce) the risks associated with screen time: Be present and engaged when screens are used and co-view when possible. Choose programs that are educational.

For more ideas and information including tips for parents, children and youth to navigate the digital world:

- ◆ Your local [Public Health Unit](#)
- ◆ [Media Smarts](#)
- ◆ [Common Sense Media](#)
- ◆ [24-Hour Movement Guidelines for Children and Youth](#)
- ◆ Your local recreation centre