



What to Know about Recreational Screen Time



What is Recreational Screen Time?

- For example: social media use, most movie and TV watching, and most electronic gaming that does not promote activity or learning.
- Screen time includes time spent on smartphones, tablets, gaming consoles, computers and TVs.
- Screen time that is not recreational is time spent on a screen that is educational or activity-based that includes homework and school activities.

Why Limit Recreational Screen Time?

- Screens can teach and entertain when content is planned and supervised; too much use may lead to problems. In the United States:
 - 8-12 year olds: spend 4-6 hours a day watching or using screens
 - Teens spend up to 9 hours a day watching or using screens
- Too much screen time may lead to:
 - sleep problems
 - lower grades in school
 - reading fewer books
 - spending less time with family and friends
 - not getting enough physical activity
 - weight problems
 - mood problems
 - poor self-image and body image issues
 - fear of missing out
 - learning other ways to relax and have fun

Ways to Manage Recreational Screen Time

- Have a [media use plan](#) for all members of the family based on each child's age, health, personality, and abilities. Let children share their ideas and worries.
- Share media use plans with other caregivers, such as babysitters or grandparents, so the rules are followed consistently.
- Suggest that children and teens to do other activities such as book reading, sports, music, art, and hobbies that do not involve screens.
- Keep bedrooms as screen-free zones. Set firm limits that all family members follow, including children and adults.
- When your child is using screens to complete homework, make it clear they are not to check social media or play games in another window or device.
- Avoid using screen time as a reward for good behavior.

