

Managing screen time

Screen time refers to the amount of time spent using electronic devices such as phones, computers, televisions and tablets. Managing screen time is important for a child's overall wellbeing and development, both physically and mentally. It is important for children to establish healthy habits and boundaries around screen time use from the moment they are handed any electronic device. Developing healthy screen use habits will ensure your child also has plenty of time for other activities such as playing, reading, spending time with family and friends, and participating in physical activities. There are both benefits and drawbacks to screen time, learning how to make good decisions about when and how much to use their

Empower confidence. Start the conversation using these strategies:

- 1. Educate**
Explain why managing screen time is important for their overall health and wellbeing.
- 2. Set guidelines**
Set clear guidelines for screen time usage, such as time limits, device restrictions and time of the day restrictions.
- 3. Promote alternate activities**
Encourage other activities and hobbies, such as physical exercise, reading, playing outside and spending time with friends and family.
- 4. Physical effects**
Discuss the dangers of excessive screen time such as eye strain, poor posture, disrupted sleep patterns and decreased physical activity.
- 5. Time management**
Teach your child how to make informed decisions about their device usage, including evaluating the quality and purpose of the content they consume.
- 6. Mental effects**
Discuss the impact of social media and the pressure to constantly be connected to the internet.
- 7. Promote regular breaks**
Encourage children and adolescents to take breaks from screens regularly, and to engage in other activities that are mentally stimulating and relaxing.
- 8. Promote awareness**
Teach children and adolescents how to identify and control their own triggers for excessive screen time usage.
- 9. Open communication**
Encourage open communication and active participation in monitoring and managing screen time usage.
- 10. Prioritise balance**
Emphasise the importance of setting a good example by managing your own screen time and modelling healthy habits.