



one
school

Family Media Use Agreement

Online Version can be found at:

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/media/Pages/default.aspx>

Please note, once you have made an account, you can email yourself a copy.

Please spend some time tonight filling out the following agreement together.

Device Locations

Mobile devices & TVs are not allowed in the following screen-free zones in our home:

Bedroom

Recharge devices overnight – outside your child's bedroom

- Incoming messages and calls can interfere with your child's sleep
- Help children avoid the temptation to use or check devices when they should be sleeping
- Emitted light from devices charging may still affect the quality of your child's sleep

Kitchen

- Keep family mealtimes & other family & social gatherings tech-free

Other

Device Curfews

All families are different but deciding when all devices are turned off for the night is a great addition to a Family Media Use Plan.

Devices will charge overnight in:

- Parent's bedroom
- kitchen
- Other

Screen Free Times

As part of the daily routine, make devices like TVs, phones, computers, games or other electronics off limits at specific times. Dinnertime & before bedtime are important ones, but more extended breaks from technology each day may also be needed.

We will not use mobile devices or other screens during the following times:

- While walking across the street
- While doing homework
- While at school
- While in the car, except for long trips
- Family time
 - Family time may be whenever the family is together, or it may be during specific times such as when in the car together or when walking to school together
- Meal times
 - do not watch TV or use mobile devices at meal time
 - It is associated with obesity & weight gain in children
 - It discourages from family interaction

- One hour before bed
 - Using a mobile device or watching TV before bed can interfere with a child's sleep. When using screens in the evening:
 - Turn down the brightness on the screen
 - Don't play or watch media that are intense or scary in the evening
- Other:

Choose & Diversify Your Media

Choose Media that is Worth Your Time:

More than 80,000 apps are labelled as educational, but little research has demonstrated their actual quality. Products pitched as 'interactive' should require more than 'pushing and swiping'. Look to organisations like Common Sense Media for reviews about age-appropriate apps, games & programs to guide you in making the best choices for your children.

Diversify Your Media:

Use media in a way that promotes interaction, connection & creativity. Different types of media may each have benefits, so media use is best diversified so that not all of one's time is spent doing one particular activity.

When we have recreational screen time, we will:

- co-view (watching media with a parent or adult)
 - Co-viewing allows for interaction and discussion
 - Younger children learn better from media, education shows & videos when they are co-viewed & there is parent-child interaction
- co-play (playing video games & using apps with a parent or adult)
 - Younger children learn better from media when they share the experiences with an adult
 - Helps parents to stay connected with their children & teens
 - Allows parents to have a better sense of how their child is spending his or her time

When we have recreational screen time, we will:

- Video chat with friends or relatives

- Play learning apps
- Play apps that are creative, educational & promote healthy interactions with others
- NOT play video games that are against our family's rules both at home & at someone else's house
- Watch age appropriate & educational shows & videos
- Play videos, shows & apps with adults
- co-playing (playing games together) & co-viewing (watching videos together) are great ways to share media with young children
- NOT download apps, movies, games without permission & asking an adult if they are appropriate for my age
- NOT visit new websites or videos sites without asking permission
- Watch 'educational' shows & use apps that have been reviewed & visited by trusted sources to actually be educational such as PBS or Common Sense Media
- Other

Balancing Online & Off-line Time

Media & digital devices are an integral part of our world today. The benefits of these devices, if used moderately & appropriately, can be great. But research has shown that face time with family, friends & teachers, plays a pivotal & even more important role in promoting children's learning & healthy development. Keep the face to face up front & don't let it get lost behind a stream of media & technology.

By decreasing screen time, we will have more time for:

- Reading
- Sleeping
- Being with friends

- Doing hobbies I like
- Playing board game, having creative time
- Playing outside
- Joining a team or playing a sport
- Other

Manners Matter

Being polite & having good manners are just as important as they have always been. Having a mobile device is not an excuse to forget our manners.

We will show good manners by:

- Not looking at the phone or texting while talking with someone, or during mealtime
 - If it's truly urgent, we will say 'excuse me'
- Not keeping the phone on (or under) the table during meals
 - Devices will not be brought to the table
- Other

Digital Citizenship

Talk to your children about being good 'digital citizens' & discuss the serious consequences of online bullying. If your child is the victim of cyberbullying, it is important to take action. Attend to children's & teens mental health needs promptly if they are being bullied & consider separating them from social media platforms where bullying occurs.

We will be good digital citizens by:

- respecting the privacy of others
- We will never forward a text or photo without asking permission
- Not being rude or bullying anyone online

- Sticking up for others online
- Telling a parent or other trusted adult if we or others are being bullied, disrespected, attacked or treated badly online
- Telling a parent or other trusted adult if we get messages or photos that make us uncomfortable
- Other:

Safety First

Keep your child safe by treating media as you would any other environment in your child's life.

We will follow these digital safety rules:

- Do not give out personal information online
- Do not use a phone or text while crossing the street
- Do not share private photos
- Review Privacy Settings on all sites with your children
- Do not befriend, chat with or virtually game with someone without a parent's permission
 - Meeting & chatting or gaming with strangers online can be dangerous. Discuss these concerns with your child.
- Other

Sleep and Exercise

All children need plenty of sleep & exercise each day.

We will get enough sleep & exercise by doing the following:

- Exercise
 - All kids (and adults too!) need at least 1 hour of exercise each day
- Get 9-12 hours of sleep
- Turn off the TV or mobile device one hour before bedtime
 - The blue light from the TV or mobile screen can interfere with sleep
 - Vibrating & audio alerts can wake children & teens from sleep
 - Children and teens may wake up to use devices in the middle of the night or early in the morning
- Other

Congratulations on making your family plan. Put it where everyone in the family can see it. Come back to revise your family plan as often as you need to such as at the beginning of each school year or during the summer and holiday breaks.

Source: American Academy of Pediatrics (Copyright 2016) – Council on Communications and Media

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