

Online Safety Newsletter



Each month I'm going to be sending a newsletter with updated information about Online Safety to help you and your children keep safe. A year in lockdown has meant that we have spent much more of our time looking at screens, hopefully this guide will help you to think about ways that we can approach screen time differently. Mr. Stilwell

March 2021

Focus: Screen Time

Screen time

The time children spend online nearly doubles from 7 hours per week between the ages of 3 - 7 to 13 hours by the time they're 8.

Although most parents and children believe that they have a good balance of time on and offline, research from UK Safer Internet Centre found that there was a clear link between the amount of time children spend online and their exposure to upset, risk and issues related to well-being.

It's not just about time but also what they are doing online that matters. Assessing children's online activities to minimise risks and maximise the opportunities they bring is key at this stage.



Ages 3-7
hours spent
online



Ages 8+
hours spent
online

WHAT'S THE IMPACT OF TOO MUCH SCREEN TIME?

Spending too much time in front of the screen can lead to:^{iv}

NEGATIVELY AFFECTED SLEEP PATTERNS



INCREASED RISK OF:

ATTENTION PROBLEMS

ANXIETY

DEPRESSION

OBESITY



WATCH YOUR OWN SCREEN HABITS

Kids learn from the adults around them, and if you show restraint, it will make more sense when you ask the same from them.



STORE ELECTRONICS OUT OF SIGHT

Hide your TV in a cabinet and computer consoles in storage units. If they're out of sight it'll break the habit of automatically turning them on.



REDUCE SCREEN TIME GRADUALLY

Going cold turkey is hard, and it can be easier to start with some smaller changes. It could be no phones at the table or all electronics to go off 2 hours before bed.



HELP THEM FIND A HOBBY

There are loads of opportunities for children to find other interests such as learning an instrument or joining a club at school. Perhaps there's something you can learn together.



GET OUTSIDE AND EXERCISE

Sport or outdoor activities are a great way to help youngsters stay fit and learn about the world. Encourage them to find a club or a sport they enjoy.



PLAY NON-COMPUTER-BASED GAMES

An evening board games or a puzzle with the whole family can help kids stay off the tablet before bed, so they can sleep better. It's also a great bonding experience.



What can you do to help?

- Give them opportunities to **think about how what they do online** can affect their well-being, i.e. sleep, feelings, learning
- Talk about ways to combine what they love online, offline, i.e. using apps that **encourage you to move and play outdoors**
- **Put in place a family agreement** and agree an appropriate length of time that they can use their devices for
- **Use tech tools and parental controls** to help them to manage the time they spend online and the apps they use
- For younger children find ways to **combine touch screen use with creative and active play**
- **Get the whole family to unplug** and create 'screen free' zones at home