



Digital Wellbeing for Families - Tip Sheet

“Children have never been very good at listening to their elders, but they have never failed to imitate them.” - James Baldwin

What can I do FOR my family?

PERSONAL REFLECTION

- Review your Digital Wellbeing:
 - Amount of screen time - **When and which apps are used the most?**
 - Number of device unlocks - **How many times do you check your device?**



Set App timers and a screen time goal.



Explore Bedtime mode and Focus mode.



Turn unnecessary notifications off and remove social media apps from the homescreen.

LOOK UP



- If your child enters the room you're in, device down and initiate communication. This can simply be a smile and eye contact, or a question.
- If you wear a Smartwatch, keep it on **'do not disturb'** when you're with your kids.
- If your child asks you a question or engages with you, put your device down and out of arm's reach.
- Make yourself available to give kids device-free space to think and say what's on their mind. It's not always going to be at a time convenient for you.

EDUCATE YOURSELF

- Familiarise yourself and your family with the eSafety Website, resources and Guide <https://www.esafety.gov.au/>
- Know what apps your children are using, and what features they include like the ability to chat to strangers.
- If your child wants a new app, make it a conversation and discuss with curiosity and empathy.

COMMENTATE PHONE USE

- Include your kids in your device usage. For example: search together for a recipe, reply to a family member's message and let them add some emojis.
- Verbalise your active screen time to model beneficial use of technology, and keep passive scrolling and consuming to when kids aren't around. For example: *I'm trying to find those school camp permission forms, or, I'm checking what the weather will be like for the zoo tomorrow.*
- Talk to your kids about your own struggles with balancing technology use and screen time. Share what works for you and where you can improve.



CONNECTION TIME

- Putting your phone down for 1 hour a day regains 15 days per year of time for you to connect with your family.
- Schedule a set amount of time to dedicate to each of your children completely device free. Start with 5 minutes a day.
- Find out what each of your children would like you to do during this time. Discuss current interests, choose to learn something new together or simply be present with them device-free.

What can I do WITH my family?

We recommend having a **fun family meeting** about screen time and device usage. This works best when everyone is seen as bringing equal value no matter their age, and **has the chance to speak, challenge ideas, and offer suggestions**. Approach the conversation as a family who are all trying to make some positive changes to improve overall digital wellbeing rather than parents/carers telling kids what to do or stop doing. Bring snacks, have a laugh, and make it a time to **connect over a common struggle** in the house.

FAMILY TECH AGREEMENT

- Make the tech agreement an open and regular conversation, for example revisited monthly.
- Show you know the complexities of screens, you're aware, and you can be their safe space if something goes wrong online.
- Templates available on the Esafety Website.
- Parental controls are great, maintaining they are discussed rather than simply enforced.



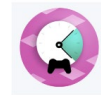
Apple
Screen Time



Google Family
Link



Microsoft
Family Safety



Playstation
Safety



Nintendo
Switch Safety

TRANSITIONING FROM SCREEN TIME

- Michael Fuller (Clinical Psychologist) Article: [Wean Your Teen off the Screen](#)
- Plan and discuss an agreed upon amount and time.
- Reduce the element of surprise, use timers and multiple reminders.
- Make a list of alternative non-screen activities and keep visible.
- Connect with a mood boosting activity directly after screen time, not homework or chores.
- Cortisol and adrenaline can be high during gaming. Before change can occur these need to lower. Offer a snack and water, positive feedback and give choices for post screen activity.

DEVICE FREE TIME OR ZONE

- Make yourself available, but it's also ok (a good thing) for kids to experience boredom.
- Choose a common area in the house for a device free zone.
- Buy, find or create a family phone box to keep at the entrance of the room.
- Sit at a communal table for dinner with the TV off.
- Devices set to 'do not disturb' and out of sight for meal times.
- Replace device absence with a positive family ritual. For example: 2 minute timer for Mindful Eating, sharing each person's biggest success and biggest failure of the day, sharing 3 things that went well for each person that day.

PASSIVE VS. ACTIVE

- Instead of focussing on screen time, focus on screen content.
- As a family look at digital wellbeing settings of each device and discuss the difference between active and passive use.
- Are your family members using devices to create, or consume?
- For passive use, set limits for family members, and give multiple timed warnings before they have to be turned off.

KEY TAKEAWAYS



1. Stay curious
2. Get informed
3. Be present
4. Stand united
5. Remain kind

For more Resilience Project information & wellbeing resources please head to our website.

<https://theresilienceproject.com.au/>