FAMILY LIFE

How to Make a Family Media Use Plan

From TV to smartphones to social media, our lives are dominated by 24/7 media exposure. Despite this, many children and teens have few rules around their media use.

Parents, help your children balance their online and off-line lives!

Create Your Personalized Family Media Use Plan:

Visit HealthyChildren.org/MediaUsePlan (http://www.healthychildren.org/MediaUsePlan) to create a personalized Family Media Use Plan that works within your family's values and busy lifestyles.

This interactive tool developed by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) includes a Media Time Ca can give you a snapshot of how much time each child is spending on daily activities, such as sleeping, eat homework, physical activity, and media use. It also includes AAP recommendations on screen-free zone manners, and much more.

Create Your Family's Media Use Plan Today!
(http://www.healthychildren.org/MediaUsePlan)

Media Use Plan Tips:

- Screens should be kept out of kids' bedrooms. Put in place a "media curfew" at mealtime and bedtin devices away or plugging them into a charging station for the night.

- Excessive media use has been associated with obesity (/english/health-issues/conditions/obesity/Pages/default.aspx), lack of sleep, school problems, aggression (/English life/family-dynamics/communication-discipline/Pages/Aggressive-Behavior.aspx) and other behav (/English/family-life/family-dynamics/communication-discipline/Pages/Evaluating-Behavioral-Pr Limit entertainment screen time to less than one or two hours per day.

- For children under 2, substitute unstructured play and human interaction for screen time. The opp think creatively, problem solve and develop reasoning and motor skills is more valuable for the dev brain than passive media intake.

- Take an active role in your children's media education by co-viewing programs with them and discu (/English/family-life/family-dynamics/communication-discipline/Pages/Share-Your-Values.aspx).

- Look for media choices that are educational, or teach good values -- such as empathy, racial and eth tolerance. Choose programming that models good interpersonal skills for children to emulate.

- Be firm about not viewing content that is not age appropriate: sex, drugs, violence, etc. Movie (/Eng
  life/Media/Pages/Movie-Ratings-and-What-They-Mean.aspx) and TV ratings (/English/family-
  life/Media/Pages/TV-Ratings-A-Guide-for-Parents.aspx)exist for a reason, and online movie review
  help parents to stick to their rules.

- The Internet can be a wonderful place for learning. But it also is a place where kids can run into trou
  computer in a public part of your home, so you can check on what your kids are doing online and ho
  they are spending there.

- Discuss with your children that every place they go on the Internet may be "remembered," and com
  make will stay there indefinitely. Impress upon them that they are leaving behind a "digital footprin
  should not take actions online that they would not want to be on the record for a very long time.

- Become familiar with popular social media sites like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. You may con
  your own profile on the social media sites your children use. By "friending" your kids, you can moni
  online presence. Pre-teens should not have accounts on social media sites. If you have young childr
  create accounts on sites that are designed specifically for kids their age.

- Talk to them about being good "digital citizens," and discuss the serious consequences of online bul
  child is the victim of cyberbullying (/English/family-life/Media/Pages/Cyberbullying.aspx), it is imp
  take action with the other parents and the school if appropriate. Attend to children's and teens' men
  (/English/ages-stages/teen/Pages/Mental-Health-and-Teens-Watch-for-Danger-Signs.aspx) needs
  they are being bullied online, and consider separating them from the social media platforms where
  occurs.

- Make sure kids of all ages know that it is not appropriate or smart to send or receive pictures of peo
  clothing, or sexy text messages (/English/family-life/Media/Pages/The-New-Problem-of-Sexting.as
  whether they are texting friends or strangers.

- Check out a sample "Media Time Family Pledge (/English/family-life/Media/Pages/Media-Time-Fa
  Pledge.aspx)" for online media use.

- If you're unsure of the quality of the "media diet" in your household, consult with your children's pe what your kids are viewing, how much time they are spending with media, and privacy and safety is associated with social media and Internet use.

Additional Information & Resources:

- Kids & Tech: Tips for Parents in the Digital Age (/English/family-life/Media/Pages/Tips-for-Parents Age.aspx)

- Why to Limit Your Child's Media Use (/English/family-life/Media/Pages/The-Benefits-of-Limiting-

- Healthy Digital Media Use Habits for Babies, Toddlers & Preschoolers (/English/family-life/Media/Pages/Healthy-Digital-Media-Use-Habits-for-Babies-Toddlers-Preschoolers.aspx)

- Constantly Connected: Adverse Effects of Media on Children & Teens (/English/family-life/Media/Pages/Adverse-Effects-of-Television-Commercials.aspx)

- Media Use in School-Aged Children and Adolescents (http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/doi/10.1542/peds.2016-2592) (AAP Policy Statement)

- Media and Young Minds (http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/doi/10.1542/peds.2016-2591) (AA Statement)

- Children and Adolescents and Digital Media (http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/doi/10.1542/ 2593) (AAP Technical Report)

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