

Encouraging Healthy Screen Habits for Kids

In a world filled with apps, games, and nonstop streaming, tweens and teens are spending more time on screens than ever before. While technology can be a great tool for learning and fun, it's important to develop healthy screen habits. As parents, we can guide our kids through the digital world in ways that support their well-being, happiness, and personal growth. By following a few simple practices, families can help teens balance their online lives while encouraging creativity, learning, and meaningful connections.

Here are 5 easy tips to get started!



Create screen-free times and zones.

Encourage screen breaks by limiting screen time in bedrooms, while kids are studying and at mealtimes. Consider carving out regular family time when screens are either put away or enjoyed together.



Use built-in digital well-being tools.

Together with your kids, explore available features on their devices and in apps that can help them use tech more intentionally. Consider turning off autoplay functions, limiting notifications from certain apps, using settings that turn off devices at a certain time each night, and privacy settings.



Model healthy behaviors.

Lead by example. Tweens and teens learn more from watching adult behavior than listening to lectures. Practice healthy screen habits yourself, such as limiting your screen time, taking breaks, and setting aside time for offline activities and social interactions.



Help kids identify healthy behaviors.

Ask kids what feelings they notice, both physical and emotional, during screen and non-screen activities. Does their heart rate increase when their phone vibrates? Does their self-esteem dip after viewing a friend's Instagram post? Do they feel a rush of satisfaction or validation when they get a lot of likes and comments on a post? Help kids recognize how social media can create unhealthy habits by tying their self-worth to external approval, and guide them toward building confidence through meaningful, offline experiences instead.



Understand how tech companies profit from you.

Along with your tween and teen, research how digital devices, social media platforms, and apps and games use algorithms to profit from users spending more time on their platforms and what tricks they use to keep their attention.

