

## Screen Time Dos and Don'ts

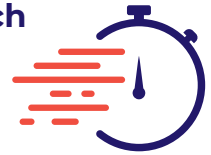
Time spent on TV, smartphones, computers, and tablets can be harmful to students' learning and mental and physical health. Following are tips on how to develop reasonable limits and healthier habits around screen time.

### Is all screen time equal?



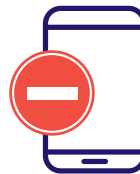
Experts say that quality and context matters. Watching content that is educational, age-appropriate, and promotes critical thinking, creativity, and connection is best. So, too, is when adults are engaged in discussing with kids what they are seeing and taking away from their media.

### How much is too much screen time?



A good rule of thumb is that screen time is generally negative if it's replacing something positive in a child's life, experts say. Here are four red flags to look out for:

- Is the screen time isolating a child?
- Is screen time displacing socializing in person with peers and family?
- Is screen time replacing exercise and time outside?
- Is screen time disturbing sleep?



### When should kids (and adults) put smartphones away?

Some emerging research is finding that in school settings it's best for students to leave their phones locked away in a pouch or locker—or at home—to improve classroom focus. But it's important to remember that most research around cellphones in schools is still preliminary.

In the home, research from the University of California, San Francisco found that allowing kids to view screens during mealtimes and bedtimes led to higher and more problematic screen use. Experts say it's very important for adults to put away their screens and model healthy habits for kids.



### What resources are there for educators and families to establish healthy habits?

The nonprofit Common Sense Media offers a guide for educators to find the right balance of tech use in the classroom here: <https://www.commonsense.org/education/articles/screen-time-in-school-finding-the-right-balance>

The American Academy of Pediatrics and Common Sense Media both offer free guides for families here:

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/fmp/Pages/MediaPlan.aspx>

<https://www.commonsensemedia.org/family-tech-planners>