



Be Healthy

Family Screen Time



Learn as a Family

What is Screen Time?

"Screen time" refers to the amount of time spent doing any activity in front of a screen, such as watching TV, working on a computer, playing video games or texting on a smartphone. Time on screen can add up quickly!

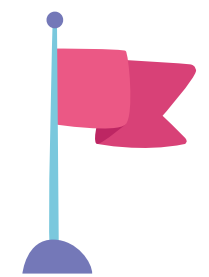
Why is it important?

While technology offers benefits for learning and exploration, too much screen time can interfere with our physical and mental health and lead to poor social skills. The recommended limits (according to the Canadian Paediatric Society) is less than 1h a day for 2-4 years old and less than 2h a day of recreational screen time for 5-17 years old. Learn more about the effect of screen time on our brain and body for [kids](#) and [teens](#)!

How much time do we actually spend in front of screens and what are we doing there? Starting a family screen time audit is a great way to begin an informed discussion about time limits and guidelines to manage screen time.

Goal

Perform a family screen time audit to discover how much time family members spend in front of screens.



Action Plan

- Ask every family member to document, for one week, their daily screen time activities. Get everyone involve!
- Decide as a family how you will record your screen time: using a logbook, a chart, or an online spreadsheet...
- Determine who will record the screen time (depending on the family members' age).
- Don't forget to include screen time on all your devices; for example you might be using your phone, computer, iPad, or TV, all in the same day.
- Generally, we all underestimate how much time we spend on screens, so finding a method that will allow you to be accurate and provide concrete data is important. If you all use Apple devices, consider using [Screen Time](#). Android users can try [Digital Wellbeing](#).



Consider

- Recording also **what** you and your family are doing online.
- Taking into account the time of year, for example, you might spend more time online in winter.
- Keeping an open mind!



Debrief as a family

- ➔ What went well?
- ➔ What was tricky?
- ➔ What are our next steps?

Go further

Plan out strategies to **manage** screen time and make screen time **meaningful**:

- Create a [Family Media Plan](#) that outlines each family member's goals for managing screen time based on their needs and preferences
- Find out what [Tech Tools can be used to Manage Screen Time](#)
- Encourage screen time that serves a purpose