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# Screen Time Getting the Balance Right

*Parents' Meeting - Thursday 16th October 2025*



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- **Minecraft** – Still a top choice for creativity and building.
  - **Pokémon Go** – Combines exploration with puzzle-solving.
  - **Angry Birds 2** – Classic physics-based puzzle game with humorous elements.
  - **Cooking Fever** – Time-management game where kids run a virtual kitchen.
  - **Mario Kart Tour** – Racing game with familiar characters and multiplayer options.
  - **Sonic Dash** – Fast-paced platform runner featuring Sonic the Hedgehog.
  - **Townscaper** – Relaxing building game with no goals—just creativity.
  - **PBS Kids Games** – Mini-games featuring characters like Daniel Tiger and Wild Kratts.
  - **MentalUP** – Brain-training games for cognitive development.
  - **Roblox** – Popular sandbox platform (with parental controls) for creating and playing games.



# Screen time is complicated

- The term 'screen time' generally refers to the amount of time that someone spends using a screen. This includes television, phone and tablets.
- However, research has found that how children use devices is often more important than how much time is spent with devices. As such, there isn't any official guidance when it



# Benefits of Screen time



Online games and activities can enhance teamwork and creativity.

The internet gives children access to a wealth of information to help build their knowledge.

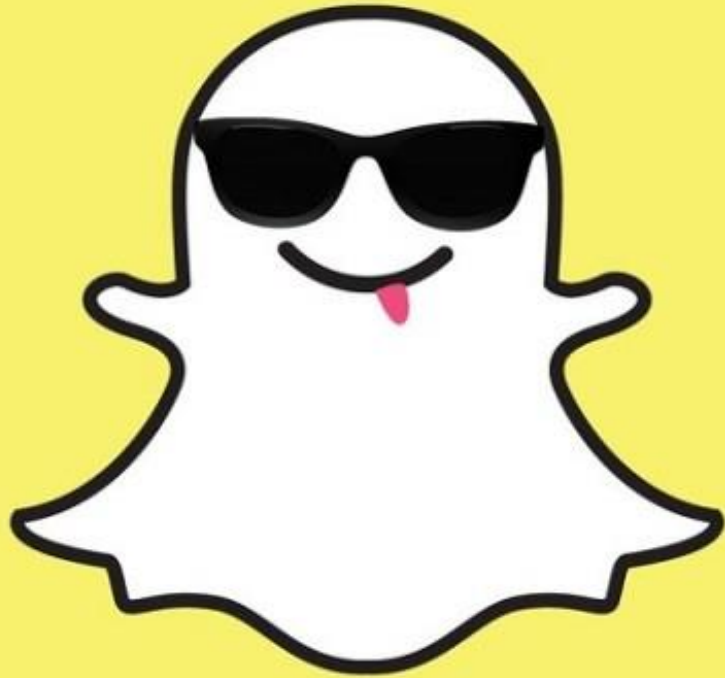
Interacting with computers can improve visual intelligence and hand-eye coordination.

Technology takes away physical barriers to social connections, which can support children who struggle to make friends or communicate offline.

Children in households with computers perform better academically than peers

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# Risks of Screen time



Using devices while sitting in one place reduces physical activity needed for a healthy lifestyle.

Sleep cycles are affected by blue light from screens, tricking our brain into thinking it is still daylight, making it difficult to sleep.

Too much passive screen time could weaken communication and social skills. Some research found that children who spent more than two hours a day on screen-time activities scored lower on language and thinking tests.

Screen-based entertainment increases central nervous system arousal, which can impact on mental health.

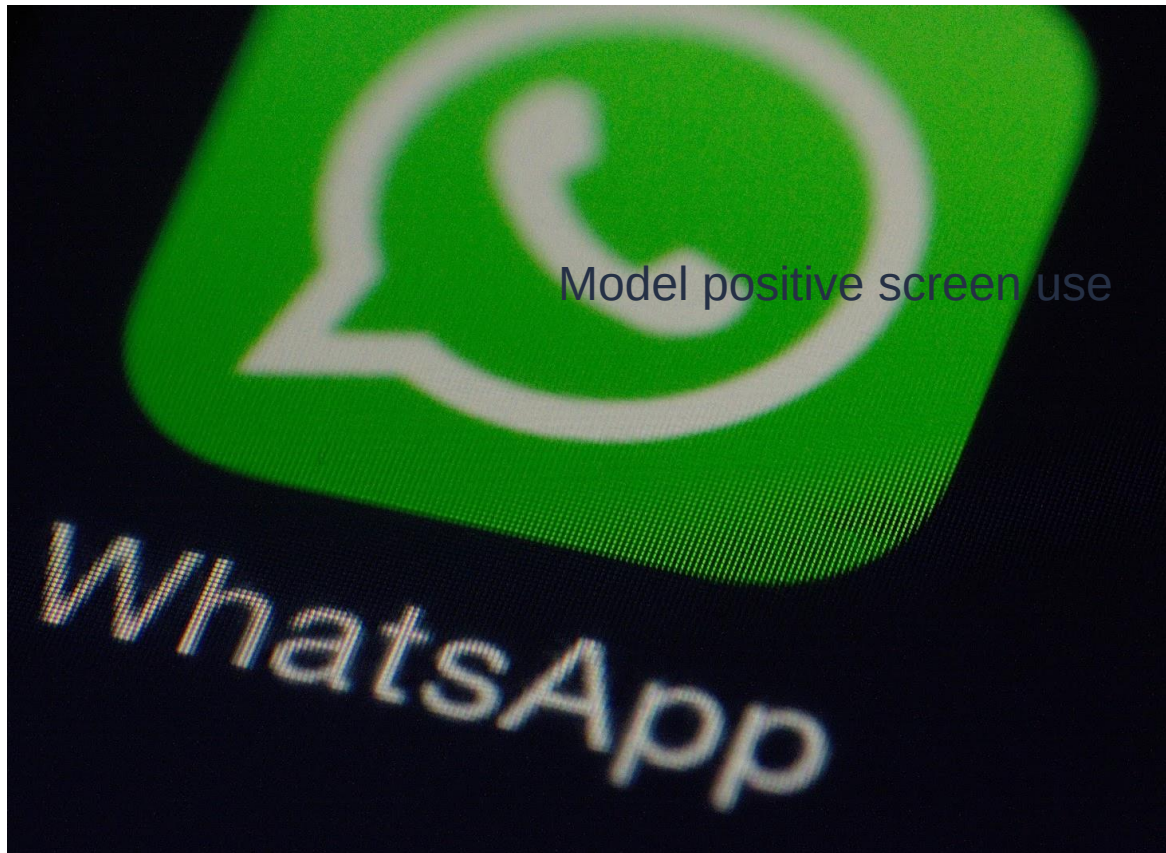


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# How can I spot when my child has had 'too much' screen time?

- The best way to look at is: is it getting in the way of day to day activities?
- If your child's screen time interferes with them seeing friends, doing their homework or having an interrupted family meal, it's too much screen time.
- As a family, you may have rules, but it's a great idea to discuss with your child their thoughts on what screen time is appropriate – when and where.
- If it's appropriate to have their device for an hour in the evening, encourage them to use the monitoring tools to look at their own screen time and help them interrupt themselves.
- Look at having the wellbeing discussions and also look at a practical discussions around the amount of time they should spend on devices.
- This will help encourage a varied diet of family time, exercise, socialising and school work.

# Model positive screen use



- Show children how to use devices. Children tend to do what you do, not necessarily what you say, so model the behaviour you'd like to see in them. It's not always easy to switch off, and this might take some practise. However, your children will benefit most from the effort you put in here.

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# Agree on boundaries together

- Create a family agreement
- Every child's screen time needs is different. Do they need their device to complete school work? Is Roblox the only place they connect with others? Does their time online negatively affect their mood?
- With your child and whole family, [create a Family Agreement](#) that outlines when, where and for how long you all can use devices. And make sure everyone in the family gets on board — including older siblings, parents and anyone else living in the home.





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Stay engaged in their screen use

Get engaged and stay engaged in their digital life as they grow. The more you get involved and understand the things your children do online, the easier it is to gain their respect and influence what they do in their digital world. Ensure they have a healthy mix of screen activities that encourage creativity, learning & education, connecting with family & friends, as well as using devices for downtime.





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# Have regular conversations

Make sure they have a good balance of screen activities that encourage creativity, learning & education, connecting with family & friends, as well as using devices for passively engaging with content.

## Avoid using screen time as a reward

This will elevate the status of screen time above other activities and like using food as a reward may encourage children to simply want more.



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# Set boundaries WITH your children

- Get them involved in the process of setting age appropriate limits on how long they can spend online, at what times and on which platforms. Set up screen-free times or rooms where screens are out of sight and therefore more likely to be out of mind. Review these as they get older and give them the space to take greater responsibility for their screen use.

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# Help them use devices in a range of ways



- Create a balanced digital diet. Find apps, sites and games to play together or that can support a balanced digital diet. From [managing wellbeing](#) to [building skills](#), there are so many things children can use devices for. Give them the space to explore their passions, enhance their skills and discover their identity in a safe way.

# Creating a balanced digital diet

Like a healthy meal, a healthy digital diet can help children **to develop good online habits**.  
Use our **digital diet tips** to help children prioritise screen time activities in a balanced way.





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Discuss online risks and strategies to tackle them

Take time to help them understand the risks and benefits of using the internet, whether it be discussing what steps to take if they see something that upsets them or guiding them towards apps and platforms that will help them explore their passions and enhance their skills.



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# Any questions?

