

SUMMER GUIDE

to balance screen-time



MAKING THE MOST OF SUMMER

Summer break is a time for children and youth to relax, recharge, and enjoy a break from the routines of school. While screens can be a fun way to learn, connect, and be entertained, summer is also the perfect opportunity to help children experience the many benefits of outdoor play, family connection, creativity, and active living.

Many Everyday Summer Experiences Develop Important Life Skills

Helping prepare meals teaches math, reading and planning

Gardening encourages curiosity about science and nature

Family walks support observation and conversation

Reading for pleasure strengthens literacy skills

Board games build critical thinking and problem-solving skills

Community activities help children develop social confidence

Time spent on screens often replaces time for other important activities like active play, family connection, creativity, and healthy sleep. Finding a balance helps children get the benefits of all of these experiences.

SCREENS & SLEEP

Sleep is extremely important for healthy growth and development. Summer often brings later bedtimes and more screen use. Screens before bed can make it harder for children and teens to get the sleep they need.

- ✓ Keep screens out of bedrooms → Charge all devices in a central location.
- ✓ Keep a consistent bedtime and wake-up time.
- ✓ Create a screen-free bedtime routine → Encourage reading, conversation, music, or quiet activities before bed.



A device curfew with overnight charging outside bedrooms helps children get the rest they need, and protects them from the risks of late-night, unsupervised device use.

HOT TIPS

Balance unstructured activities (free time) with structured activities (organized).

In our home, devices will be turned off at _____ (agreed upon time)
and charged here: _____

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IDEAS FOR SCREEN FREE ACTIVITIES

Get ACTIVE

Dance, sport games, bike rides, backyard play, playgrounds, jump rope

BUILD Something

Lego, forts, bird feeders, bug hotels, clay or playdough

be CREATIVE

Crafts, art, sidewalk chalk, make music, beads, puppets

DO helpful tasks

Clean your room, household chore, fold laundry, outdoor chores

EXPLORE!

Experiments (volcanos, slime), nature activities, collect rocks, scavenger hunts

FOCUS activities

Read a book or comic, write in a journal, puzzles, board games

Tips for Healthy Summer Screen Balance

- **Try 3 screen-free activities before reaching for a device** - set this as a basic rule in your home
- **Create a daily rhythm** - kids do better when they know what to expect - get dressed, personal hygiene, chores, read, play outside before screens are allowed
- **Make time for family connection** - family walks, bike rides, family games, cooking together
- **Outdoor, active play** - create daily opportunities for outdoor play
- **Socialization & community connection** - plan opportunities to connect with friends and community

Remember: Screens do not need to be the enemy. The goal is to ensure they are one part of a well-rounded summer filled with movement, creativity, learning, connection, and fun!

SUMMER SCREEN RULES

SCREEN-FREE ZONES (ie: bedroom, bathroom)

Create your own!

SCREEN-FREE TIMES (ie: sleep hours, meals)

Everyone initials here