SCREEN TIME CLINIC®

Empowering
Parents to Protect
& Guide Children
In the Digital Age



A Comprehensive Family Media Guide for Sustained Digital Wellness

written by Nicole Rawson and STC digital wellness educators updated 10/2022

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Why This Guide Is Essential

A practical PLAN for action for the whole family based on VALUES, not just checklists with your children's best interest in mind

We realize every family dynamic is different and each child presents unique challenges. This guide is a tool to help you and your support team better understand your current situation, areas of conflict or challenge, and goals you have for your children and family. It will help you identify areas that need improvement and new life goals and priorities that should be considered.

This guide is best used with therapists and Screen Time Clinic® educators to guide you through a thoughtful measured process OR as a Do-It-Yourself tool to educate and refocus your own family; help parenting partners unite, or single parents become clear about what is necessary to help their children flourish in the digital age. A clear written plan is essential for long term success! With over 20 printable guides there is something to help everyone at any stage, prevention of overuse is best!

About Us Family Vision Referencing good family values Information about Screen Time Clinic and background about and support network guides your success coach & network responsible screen choices. **Current Climate & Goals** Myths, Misconceptions & Facts Get curious! Evaluate each What research says about why family member's current tech limiting is important and common use and long term goal setting myths about technology STC Rewirement Plans STC Family Tech Wellness Plan© Easy to reference, visual progress tracking -Guidelines & printable resources for the essential for building new habit for whole family to stay focused on priorities and meet new screen goals technology, sleep, and more routines Monitor & Adjust **Important Next Steps** Utilize professional services, special tools, Healthy digital habits are more than just a devices, and consistent methods to one time plan. Enlist the help of others and ensure screen time is being used build your support netowrk. responsibly & safely

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Family Vision

Support Network
Dynamics
Routines
Values

Family Vision

Let's talk about your values and vision for your family - and the people in your life who support these efforts for a happy and healthy family.

The following documents in *this section* will help you do just that!

As guardians of the family unit, parents are primarily responsible for the values and beliefs of the family. They are also ethically (and often legally) responsible for their children's well being and actions. A strong support network is essential to give all kids the best chance to achieve success that gives them as many options and opportunities as possible for their future. Children traditionally have access to mentors in school, but the most effective and consistent guidance comes from home. Your influence and structures at home are necessary when it comes to screens.

Referencing good family values guide responsible screen choices. Now is the time to use professional support and TAKE ACTION. Use this entire guide to clarify your understanding of the potential problems of screen time and build resolve to make change.

What are your family values? How are the different areas of your child's life reinforcing these values and contributing to the goals for your children? What actions are creating more opportunities? What bad habits are getting in the way of success? Chances are leisure screen time is taking the place of other essential skills & interactions that are important to learn while the brain is still developing.



Current Tech Climate & Goals

What are each family member's current technology habits and long term goals? Let's get curious not judgmental!

Your Family's Current Tech Attitude & Usage

What Role Is Technology Playing In Your Home?

Let's take an objective look at different perspectives about technology within your family and how much time is **really** being spent online and viewing media. What time, type, when, and where is essential information needed to evaluate risk & make improvements. Screen time effects many different areas of infant, childhood, adolescent, and young adult developmental milestones.

An Eyes Wide Open Assessment Is Essential

Dealing with peer pressure and societal influences are a normal part of navigating life, but having someone trusted to put those thoughts into perspective and protect from undue negative influences is essential. Digital media requires a high level of oversight from parents because there are no government protections yet in America as there are other countries. What young children and teenagers think they know about their own actions and possible consequences is very different than what adults can see as a potentially harmful decision. This is referred to as "low cognitive control" normal part of a developing brain. Everyone wants their children to be happy and healthy, but when it comes to digital media parents tend to step back and not take a closer look— especially since children can be so convincing about their "need" to be connected online or that they should be trusted. Regardless of the age, accurate info is essential since it's often difficult to tell just from daily observations and underestimated.

Preventative measures are best! If there is already overuse, a thoughtful measured plan is essential--this is not a quick fix and parents require the most support to make changes with children, teens, young adults that can not happen without proper structures for healthy digital media at home.

The following worksheets will help you start objective discussions and take a look at what CURRENTLY going on with tech in your home and identify the need for changes.

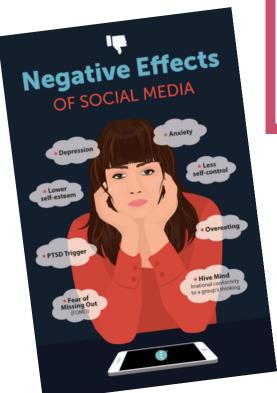






Digital Media Overuse







Digital Media Overuse Checklist











Video Games

Compulsive Spending

mation So

Pornograp

Do you struggle to control the time you spend on digital media?

What types of digital media do you struggle with?

Have you stopped engaging in other activities to use digital media?

Have you attempted to put limits on your digital media use and were unable to do so?

Do your grades and/or job performance suffer due to your time online?

Do you neglect life management responsibilities (chores, paying bills, etc.) due to your time on digital media?

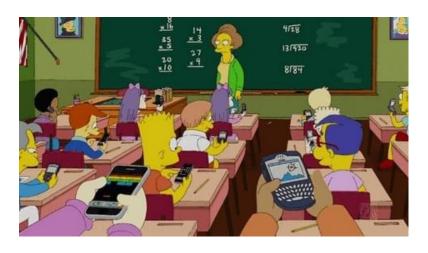
Are you secretive, or do you become defensive when anyone asks you what you do online?

Has your self-care (e.g., sleep, hygiene, eating habits, exercise) been impacted because of your time online? If so, how?

Do you yell or feel annoyed if someone tries to interfere while you are online?

Do you feel uncomfortable engaging in real-life interactions with others and prefer online friendships?

As a parent, do you struggle to set limits on your child's digital media use because they get aggressive when you attempt to do so?



The Latest Research

Speech therapist: Too much tech at an early age can lead to late talking, misdiagnosis of autism

<u>Rochester News, Kayla Green Apr 15, 2021</u>

Television addicts professionally treated in UK for first time

Britain has reported its first cases of people being treated by psychologists for television addiction.



[PDF] Association between screen time exposure, anxiety, and sleep quality in adolescents

FL Santiago, AO da Silva, RI de Souza Silva... - Salud Mental, 2022

... The aim of this study was to analyze the association between sedentary **screen time** and sleep quality, regardless of the symptoms of anxiety in adolescents of both genders. Among the main results, we can highlight: a) a low prevalence of exposure ...





Between-and within-person associations of total screen time and mobile gaming time with sleep problems in young adults: daily assessment study.

N Guo, TT Luk, Y Wu, AYK Lai, Y Li, DYT Cheung... - Addictive Behaviors, 2022

... The possibility of reverse causation between sleep problems and screen time remains understudied. Insomnia symptoms predicted ... total daily screen time without disrupting normal smartphone use during the 4-week daily assessment ...





IPDF) The relationship between screen time and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder in Chinese preschool children under the multi-child policy: a cross-sectional survey

Y Zhou, X Jiang, R Wang, B Guo, J Cai, Y Gu, J Pei - 2022

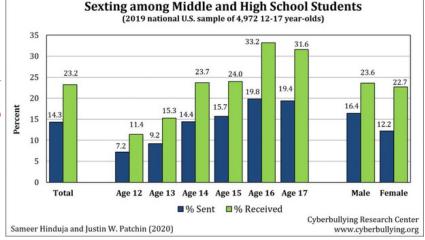
... The results showed that the average daily screen time of preschool children was more than 1 hour, of which the average screen time on weekends was 1.13±0.80 hours per day.

Screen time on weekends has a signi cant effect on ADHD symptoms



Teen Sexting A Real Risk with Smartphones

Top 10 Dangers of TikTok



- 1. Addictive nature of fast paced media and persuasive design of unregulated content to keep users engaged
- 2. It's a Chinese owned applications with clear privacy and personal information, collection violations
- 3. GLocal governments and organizations have banned the app or discouraged use due to privacy concerns. Including: US Navy, Army, Air Force, Coast Guard, and Marine Corps, US Department of Homeland Security, TSA (Transportation Security Administration), India, Amazon, Wells Fargo, US Democratic and Republican National Committees, Local governments in Japan, China itself does not allow access to the platform.
- 4. There have been instances of censorship of content that's considered sensitive to the Chinese Communist Party.
- 5. The app does not restrict explicit or inappropriate content by default, it's a feature that must be turned on using parental control settings.
- 6.It's a breeding ground for sex trafficking and pedophiles due to the lack of security on the platform.
- 7. Multiple experts refer to the platform as malware or spyware due to its similarities to surveillance tools.
- 8.hacker group called Anonymous has reportedly done extensive research on the app and warned users of its dangers:
- 9. Calling it an advertising platform is an understatement. TikTok is essentially malware that is targeting childrent
- 10. Don't use TikTok. Don't let your friends and family use it. Delete TikTok now or never sign up.



Electronic Screen Syndrome (ESS) and Virtual Autism

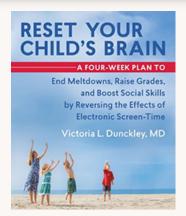
Eliminate Vs Moderate

Risk Factors

- Male gender: Boys' brains are more vulnerable in general* for many pediatric disorders like ADHD, autism, tics, dyslexia and other learning disorders, and sensori-motor difficulties; boys are more likely to become addicted to screen-time; and boys are more likely to become dysregulated from smaller amounts of screen-time.
- Younger age: Younger brains are still actively growing and developing, so they are more prone to dysregulation; infants and toddlers are most vulnerable of all, but consider age to be a separate risk factor if your child is twelve or younger.
- Any psychiatric disorder: This includes mood, attention, behavior, anxiety, and addiction disorders.
- Any neurological disorder: This includes tics, seizures, migraines, and genetic syndromes.
- Any developmental disorder: This includes autism and intellectual disabilities.
- Chronic medical conditions: This includes obesity, abnormal cholesterol levels, metabolic syndrome, diabetes, high blood pressure, musculoskeletal problems, pain conditions, allergies, and food sensitivities.
- Any learning disorder: This includes reading, math, and writing disabilities
- Any sensori-motor disorder: This includes sensory processing disorder and fine or gross motor issues ("clumsiness").
- Attention deficit issues: This includes attention difficulties for any reason, even if the child doesn't meet the full criteria for ADD/ADHD.
- Performing academically below potential: This includes academic underperformance compared to peers and/or below the potential for that individual child.
- Poor social skills: This includes social difficulties related to any condition, whether related to autism, shyness, a difficult disposition, sensory issues, and so on.
- Family history of addiction or major psychiatric illness: A family history of schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, suicide or severe depression, alcoholism, or drug abuse indicates your child may have a more vulnerable brain in general.

Screen Guidelines

- · The more symptoms your child has, the stricter you need to be.
- The more severe any given symptom is, the stricter you need to be.
- The more risk factors your child has, the stricter you need to be (see below).
- The younger your child is, the stricter you need to be.
- When "things aren't working" (your child struggles with learning, relationships, meltdowns, and so on), screen-time should be reduced or eliminated.
- You'll never go wrong with "too little" screen-time; when in doubt, pull back.
- A resurgence of symptoms or a regression in functioning often suggests that screens have "sneaked back in." Whenever you see signs of Electronic Screen Syndrome (dysregulation and hyperarousal), reduce or eliminate screen-time or do another fast.
- If dysregulation returns, before making other treatment decisions —
 especially medication-related or expensive ones try another fast
 first.
- If your child suffers a return of insomnia or non-restorative sleep, repeat the fast and consider elimination.
- Don't compare your child's screen-time allowance to that of other children — most children use screens much more than is recommended.
- Media multitasking worsens attention, efficiency, and accuracy even if total screen-time is low.



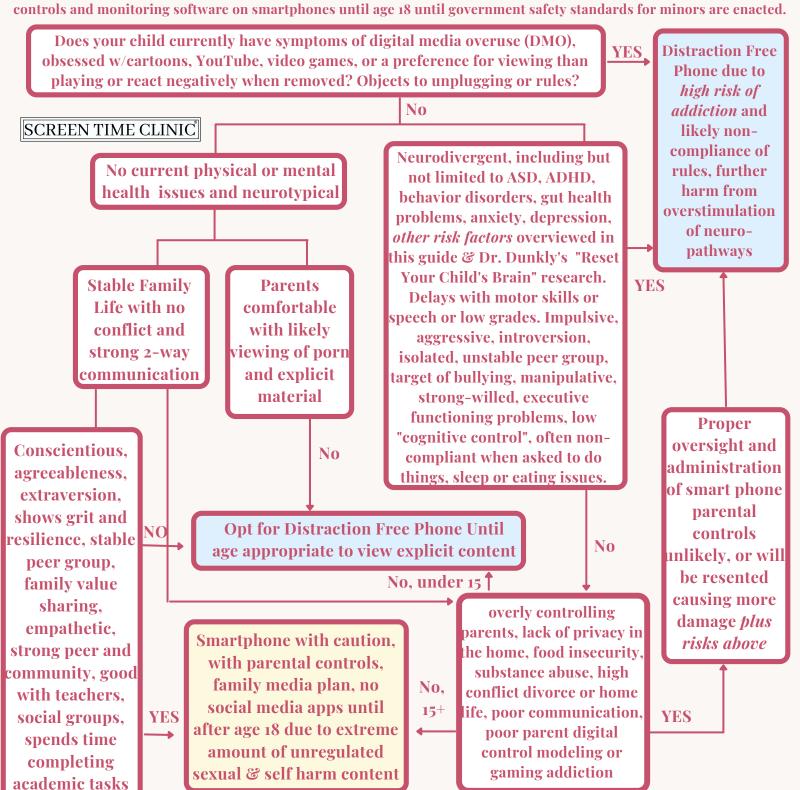
Recommendations based on research and methodology cited in Dr. Dunkley's book Reset Your Child's Brain

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Best Practices: "Smart Phone" or "Distraction Free" Phone?

An important decision parents should consider to protect from explicit content & DMO. Not only WHEN do you allow children to have a phone, but WHAT TYPE?

The best choice depends on not only the child but also family situation. Take a look at the STC Phone Type Decision Tree below for guidance. When in doubt, opt for "distraction free" phone with limited apps, since social media and gaming apps have unregulated explicit content and explosion of predators since 2020. The increasingly addictive design greatly impacts minors who are more sensitive to visual stimulation and more novelty seeking dopamine receptors. Always use parental controls and monitoring software on smartphones until age 18 until government safety standards for minors are enacted.



Must See Documentaries

"The Social Dilemma"

This film shows the cold hard facts of the technology industry, combined with a chilling dramatization of social media's impact on family life. It's not just a debate over what age a child should get a phone or whether to leave it out of the bedroom at night. It's a hard look at why we're in this position in the first place. It talks about how the harms from technology and how they often go unnoticed and are typically invisible until serious consequences arise after a prolonged period of overuse and changed behaviors. The business model of the tech industry — which is not designed to consider children's best interests — is sabotaging parents efforts to reduce and making it extra difficult for their children to put down their screens. This is a great cautionary tale that is good for children to watch as well.





Family Tech Wellness Plan

Guidelines & printable resources for the whole family to stay focused on priorities and meet goals. More than a list of rules these guides help formulate a sustainable plan.

STC Family Tech Wellness Plan

Let's put everyone's ideas, concerns, and goals together to formulate ONE plan for the family to focus everyone's efforts and set a common baseline standard.

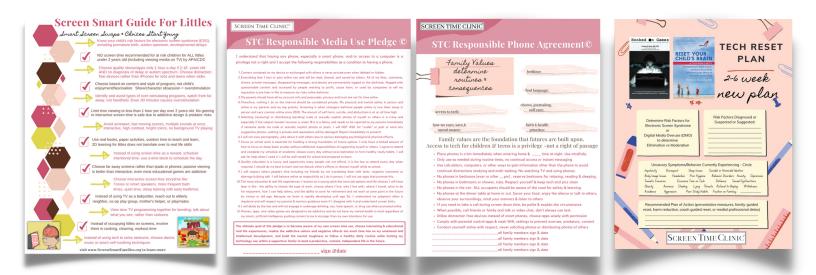
As with all progress ands stages of life, improvement in relationships with screens requires making adjustments like installing limiting and sharing software, having clocks in rooms or GoogleMini/Alexa/etc instead of relying on phones. Installing software to monitor and hold children responsible, paper visual tracking of progress, and having an ongoing conversation about the struggle and efforts that are being taken to meet low-usage goals. It takes a village and is not a quick fix but small steps are easy to begin making progress!

Set "approach" goals that focus on good outcomes that you want to reach. Approach goals are different from "avoidance" goals, which have to do with refraining from doing something negative. For example, rather than ONLY setting a goal to limit screen time (avoidance), set a goal & structure for outdoor play (approach), which would naturally take the place of time spent using screens and replace the anxiety around what to do instead. Remember, intentional quite/freeplay/bored time is okay too!

Remember, adolescent brains are extra sensitive and want more instant gratification of leisure screen time the more is consumed because it's designed to be addictive but we must resist overuse especially during the formative years before 24 years old.

Set aside previous misconceptions, judgments, and make a pact to move forward.

Utilize the printable guides in this section to define a plan for the whole family and individuals. Use for discussion purposes or to set parameters. Pick and choose what is best for your family based on each child's age & risk for Digital Media Overuse.



Re-wirement Tracking

Easy to reference, visual progress tracking - essential for building new habits. Based on current research & strategies from Yale University

Efficiently Monitor & Limit

Utilize professional services, special tools, devices, and consistent methods to ensure screen time is being used responsibly & safely

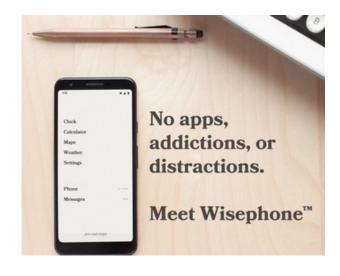
Best Practices: Delay Access to SmartPhones choose tools for a distraction free, safe for minors

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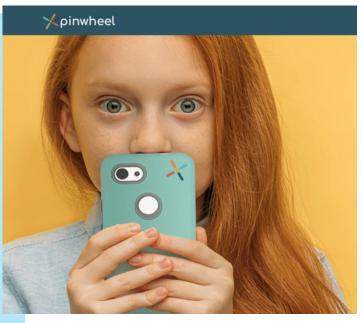
Check out the Screen Time Clinic Phone Decision Tree on page 31 -- chances are a distraction free phone is the best choice for your family for safe communication from predators and protect from addiction and overuse, teach kids how to be "indistractable"

- Gabb Wireless discount code SCREENSMART
- Cosmo Technologies
- Pinwheel discount code SCREENSMARTTEN
- Wisephone (adults)



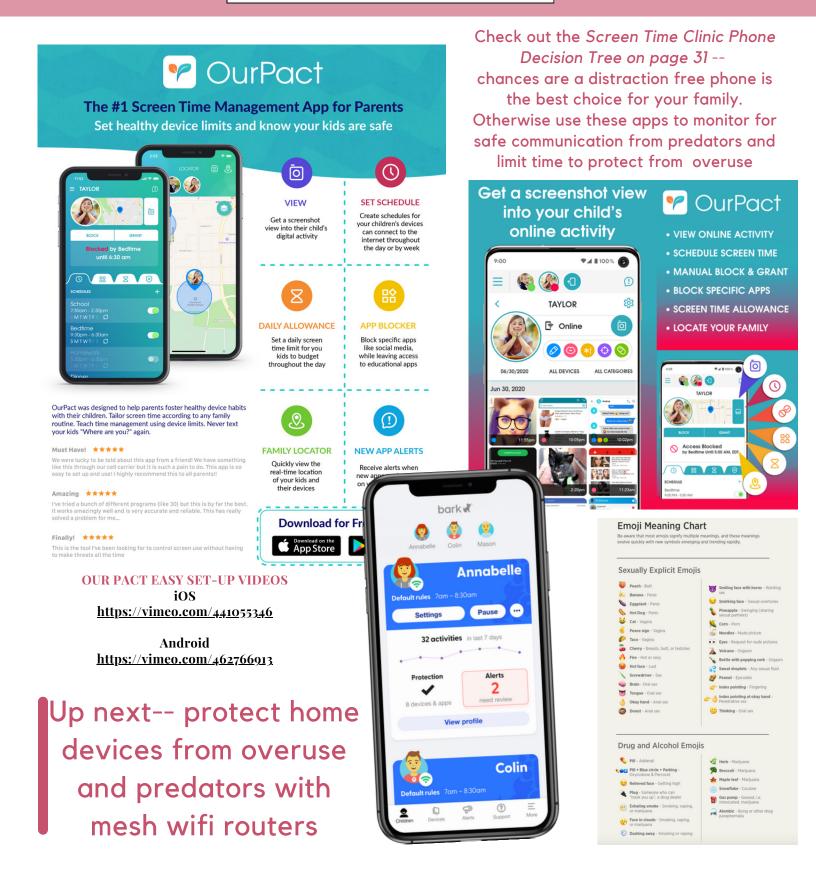






Protect with Professional "Parental Control" Subscriptions

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Next Steps! Interested in learning more?

Interested in learning more? Here are more ways to help you. reach your goals.

Keep Kids In Your Community Safe Schedule a School Seminar for Parents, Students, or Teachers

Schedule an inspiring and eye-opening presentation about cyber safety, brain development and media stimulation, and essential tools for parents to proactively guide tech use at home to maximize critical childhood developmental time.

- Prefrontal Cortex Development and Lack of Insight
 - Inability to control impulses
 - Inability to foresee future consequences
 - Dangers of multitasking and brain development
- Media Stimulation Sensitivity at Different Ages
 - Younger children are more sensitive to visual stimulation
 - Overstimulation of even 30 minutes causes disfunction
 - Reduces focus stamina for in-person learning and activities
- Addictive designs and contributors to risky behavior
 - Using for entertainment vs information
 - Apps and games are designed for continual use
 - Some children more susceptible to overuse & addiction
 - Male gender, autism spectrum, disabilities
- Overview of the main Apps & Platforms
 - Risks of gaming apps: predators and addictive design
 - Social Media and mental health, body image issues, predators
 - Culture of disrespect and violence online accessible to all age users
 - Basic privacy settings and policies IF apps are allowed
 - Delay access to apps and smart phones until high school
 - Risky behavior temptations: Sexting, Bullying, Porn
 - How to utilize parental control apps
- Protect Your Children: Setting up Systems for Success at Home
 - Set your children up for success with a clear family plan around media
 - Trust should not be developed online, too many areas of risk
 - Monitoring on a regular basis, establish boundaries for use
 - Continual reinforcement of healthy tech habits transfer to adult habits
- Attributes that Create Happiness and Success Aren't Found Online
 - Keep the focus on local community & family values, not online fantasy
 - Spend right amount of time studying, reading, and creative at home
 - Big benefits of volunteering, meditation, and exercise
 - Essential function of sleep, most children do not get enough
 - In person friendship management builds confidence
 - Humility, perseverance, trying new things builds sense of self

Find A Trusted Certified
Digital Wellness Educator In
Your Local Area:
https://screentimeclinic.com/stc-team



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Questions? Contact Us!

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