

Quick Tips for parents



Digital Use at home

1 Set clear time limits for home use

TIP: Establish daily or weekly screen time limits to ensure children have a balanced routine. [The Australian Government Department of Health](#) recommends no more than 2 hours of recreational screen time* per day for children aged 5-17 years.

IMPLEMENTATION: Combined with a home user agreement, use built-in parental controls to set time limits during at home hours for app usage and overall screen time.

• Recreational screen time refers to non-educational based engagement. Time restrictions should not be applied during school hours when the device will be used educationally and purposefully.

2 Create Screen-Free Zones

TIP: Designate certain areas of the house, such as the dining room and bedrooms, as screen-free zones to encourage face-to-face interactions and better sleep hygiene.

IMPLEMENTATION: Make it a family rule that iPads and other devices are not allowed in these areas.

3 Encourage Active Screen Time

TIP: Differentiate between passive screen time (e.g., watching videos) and active screen time (e.g., educational apps, creative activities). Encourage more active screen time that promotes learning and creativity.

IMPLEMENTATION: Select and approve apps that are educational and interactive, and set specific times for their use.

4 Model Good Behaviour

TIP: Children often mimic their parents' behaviour. Model healthy screen habits by limiting your own screen time and engaging in offline activities.

IMPLEMENTATION: Share your screen time goals with your children and involve them in activities that do not involve screens, such as reading, playing outside, or doing crafts.

5 Discuss Online Safety

TIP: Have regular conversations about online safety, including the importance of not sharing personal information, recognising inappropriate content, and understanding the risks of interacting with strangers online.

IMPLEMENTATION: Use resources from the eSafety Commissioner to guide these discussions and set up parental controls to monitor online activity.

6 Establish a Routine

TIP: Incorporate screen time into a daily routine that includes homework, chores, physical activity, and family time. Consistency helps children understand and adhere to the rules.

IMPLEMENTATION: Create a visual schedule that outlines when screen time is allowed and what other activities should be completed first.

7 Monitor Content and Usage

TIP: Regularly check the content your child is accessing and the amount of time they spend on different apps. Be aware of the games, videos, and social media platforms they are using.

IMPLEMENTATION: Use parental control apps and settings on the iPad to monitor and restrict content as needed.

8 Encourage Open Communication

TIP: Foster an environment where your child feels comfortable discussing their online experiences with you. This helps you stay informed about their digital life and address any concerns promptly.

IMPLEMENTATION: Ask open-ended questions about what they enjoy doing online and if they have encountered anything that made them uncomfortable.

9 Create a Screen Time Agreement

TIP: Establish a written agreement or contract with your child that outlines the rules and expectations for screen time. This helps to set clear boundaries and ensures that both parents and children are on the same page.

IMPLEMENTATION: Sit down with your child to discuss and agree on the terms of the contract. Include aspects such as time limits, acceptable content, screen-free zones, and consequences for breaking the rules. Both parties should sign the agreement and keep it in a visible place as a reminder.

10 Enforce Age-Appropriate Social Media Use

TIP: Ensure that your child only uses social media platforms and messaging apps that are appropriate for their age. Many social media platforms have age restrictions (typically 13 years and older) to protect younger users from inappropriate content and interactions.

IMPLEMENTATION: Regularly review the social media accounts and messaging apps your child is using. Set up parental controls to restrict access to age-inappropriate platforms. Have open discussions with your child about why these age restrictions are in place and the potential risks of using social media at a young age. Encourage them to use child-friendly communication tools that are designed with safety features for younger users.