

4 Tips for Managing Screens

It is normal for parents to be concerned about their children's use of screens. Screen use entails certain risks and can have an impact on children's overall health. However, it is better to be open-minded about screens and build a climate of trust to avoid it becoming a constant source of conflict.

1. Guide screen use by fostering mutual understanding and dialogue. For example,

- Along with the children, establish rules and time and content limits for every member of the family.
- Find common ground with the children about using parental controls and safety settings.
- Look at the online content and discuss it with the whole family.

2. Encourage constructive screen use. For example,

- Ensure that daily activities (eating, sleeping, moving around, having social interactions) take priority over screens.
- Take an interest in video games and in what your child loves about them. Learn about the online interactions they have.
- Prioritize educational, interactive and social activities over ones that are passive or violent.

3. Be a model of safe screen use. For example,

- Examine your own media habits and plan time for leisure, play and outdoor activities.
- Encourage daily screen-free periods for the whole family, especially during meals and social contacts.
- Avoid screens from at least one hour before bed and do not use them in the bedroom.

4. Watch for signs of problem screen use. For example,

- Screen use that interferes with sleep, school or social relations.
- The young person loses interest in other activities that they used to enjoy.
- The young person withdraws into themselves and often lies to the people around them.

References:

- [Canadian Pediatric Society](#). **Adapté par la Direction de santé publique du CISSS des Laurentides.**
- Capsana. [Pause ton écran \(Pause your screen\)](#).

