



# FIND A HEALTHY BALANCE

Check out the Canadian screen time guidelines to help power-off

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## Healthy Kids Community Challenge: ***Power Off and Play!***

**Screen time** is the time spent using a screen-based device, such as a smartphone, tablet, computer or television. Not all screen time is unhealthy. Screens can offer an important way to learn and communicate at school and at work. *All children should have less than two hours/day.*

Most often, kids use screens for recreational purposes such as watching movies and playing games. They may be sitting, reclining or lying down the whole time they are on their screens. This sedentary screen time could interfere with and take time away from healthy activities and could affect children's health.

**Why it matters:** Screen time affects many health aspects:

- Early Development - Higher screen time is linked to poor brain development, language development and attention skills in early years.
- Physical Health - Higher screen time is linked to lower levels of physical fitness, unhealthy weights and higher risks of cardio-metabolic disease.
- Psychosocial Health - Higher screen time is linked to behavioural issues, lower self-esteem and lower psychological well-being.

Screen time is also a concern because it can take time away from healthy activities in a child's day.

How to minimize screen time as part of a balanced day:

1. Stay within recommended screen time limits
2. Put screens away during important times of day. In particular, it's vital to power off screens for sleep time and meal time.
3. Replace some screen time with other activities.

When children spend time in front of screens, they have less time for other healthy activities. A balanced day should be filled with learning, physical activity, social interaction and fun activities.

**How families can shape screen time:** Parents' use of screens can influence children's screen time. You have an important role in limiting children's screen time. Consider changing your behaviour together that aligns with your own family values. Plan to unplug from digital entertainment and spend time together playing and exploring with friends and family.

For information including screen time targets and downloadable activity sheets visit our website at [www.HealthyKidsPTBO.ca](http://www.HealthyKidsPTBO.ca) and click on **Power Off and Play**.