

Summer Screen Time

SYNC-UP GUIDE

Summer is here. Before rushing into screen time rules, take a moment to reflect: What do you want to prioritize this summer? As a family, circle your top priorities from the words below or add your own. Start a conversation: How can technology support these priorities? How might it get in the way? In the coming weeks, revisit this list and reflect: How are we doing over the course of a week? On balance, does tech use feel in balance with the other things we want and need to do?

Sleep

Physical activity

Fun/Joy

Outside time

Household Chores

Reflection

Face to Face Friend Time

Friend Time

Work

Creating

Downtime

Reading

Community Contribution

Roaming

Family Time

Simple Summer Screen Time Agreements



Every family negotiates screen time differently in the summer months. The goal is to create a set of agreements that work for YOUR family and reflect YOUR priorities. Use the simple prompts below to start talking about summer media agreements. This doesn't have to be super formal and don't worry about covering every scenario - the goal is to get start communicating and make a plan you can revisit over time.

Here's how we plan to enjoy tech this summer:

Here is how we will keep media in balance:

Parents, this is a good time to share your non-negotiables. You might share boundaries around content, screen-free locations or times of day, spaces or activities you want to protect, expectations around monitoring, etc... Communicate why these are important based on your priorities from the previous page. Kids and teens, this is a good time to share your ideas and give your caregivers feedback! What tech agreements do you hope they abide by this summer? Parents and kids together, what additional agreements can you co-create based on your priorities?

When we hit a challenge or conflict we will:

This could include a logical consequence, revisting these agreements, or making a plan to build skills and trust.

Addressing Screen Time Challenges

TOGETHER

Clear boundaries and expectations around screen time are important during the summer months but even the best-laid plans can fall apart. If you find yourself stuck in a pattern of screen time battles, try to avoid escalating consequences or giving up entirely. Instead, shift toward problem-solving together.

Invite:

When things are calm and you aren't in active conflict, start a conversation by saying, "I've noticed that . . ."

Listen:

Share your perspective. Invite your kid to share theirs. "How has this been for you?" or "What have you noticed?"

Problem solve:

Work together to find a solution by asking, "How might we try this differently? What can we each agree to try for the next week?"

Check-in:

Make a plan to check in and talk about how things are going.

In action:

Invite: “I’ve noticed that because we have less structure in the summer, screens have just become the default mode when we are at home.”

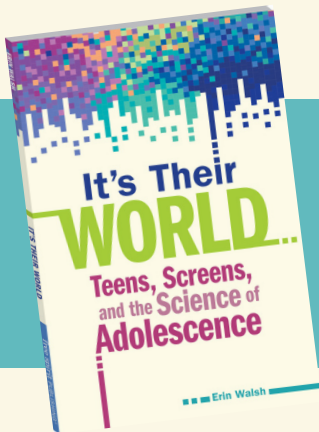
Listen: Share your perspective. Invite your kid to share theirs. For example: “This means I end up nagging you to get off screens more often. It doesn’t feel good to me, and I’m guessing it doesn’t feel good to you. Have you noticed this? How is it for you?”

Problem-solve: Work together to find a solution by asking, “How can we try this differently? What can we each agree to?” For example: “I care most about you getting outside, helping around the house, and getting some face time with our family. What matters most to you?”

“Okay, I’ll agree to be a little more flexible on days when you’ve done those things. You agree to do one chore and get outside every day. We both agree to put away devices in the morning and during meals.”

Check in: Make a plan to check in and talk about how things are going. For example: “Let’s try this for a few days and check in over the weekend.”

Creating space for shared problem-solving isn’t always going to be pretty. Sometimes it leads to meaningful conversation. Other times, kids may grumble, have little to offer, or ask, “Do we really have to talk about this?” Don’t let that stop you. In the long run, involving your child in the process is likely to have a deeper and more lasting impact than any specific rule in your family media agreements.



But what about body image, social media, over-use and more? For a compassionate and practical guide to all things tweens, teens, and screens, order "It's Their World" wherever you buy books including bookshop.org, Barnes & Noble, and Amazon.

What about first devices? There are as many strong opinions about kids and phones as there are kids and parents. The [Spark & Stitch First Device Guide](#) will help you:

- Move away from the idea that allowing any amount of technology is somehow "failing" as a parent.
- Slow down and think twice before delivering more technology than your kid is ready for.

Click on the links for more resources!

