



Eating right  
and being active...  
It's as easy as



54321 Go! ★

2

hours or less of screen time a day

### What is “screen time”?

- Watching TV
- Watching movies
- Surfing the web
- Playing video games
- Playing computer games
- Playing on handheld gaming devices

If it's electronic and it's got a screen, it counts as screen time.

### Why should we reduce screen time?

High levels of screen time have been associated with obesity, poor sleep, poor academic achievement, and behavioral problems. By limiting screen time, you can

- Decrease risk of obesity
- Help kids sleep better
- Decrease behavioral problems
- Boost academic performance
- Have more time for active and creative play
- Decrease exposure to junk food commercials
- Decrease exposure to violent behavior
- Improve your child's nutrition

### Tips for reducing screen time

- Set limits on children's screen time and enforce the limits
- Don't use TV to reward or punish a child - this only makes TV seem more important to children
- Provide alternatives to screen time - have activities or books available for kids to do
- Set a good example by reducing your own screen time
- Designate certain days as screen-free days where you won't even turn on the TV or computer
- Instead of using TV to wind down, try reading a book or listening to an audio book from the library
- Wait until the show comes on to turn on the TV - don't turn it on as soon as you get home
- Keep a screen time log of how much time you and your child spend in front of a screen
- Don't just have the TV on in the background - you might not be paying attention to it, but your child often is
- Make an effort to not eat in front of the TV - we often overeat as we “mindlessly much” in front of the screen
- Schedule regular family mealtimes and make mealtime talking time - a chance for family members to catch up on each others lives.
- Turn the TV off during mealtime.



Teach a Kid  
to Fish

Creating community solutions for children's health



Adapted from [www.clocc.net](http://www.clocc.net)

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## MAKE THE MOST OF SCREEN TIME

If you are spending time in front of the TV or computer, make sure you're getting the most benefit by following a few helpful tips:

- Don't "surf" the channels or the web-plan in advance what your child will be viewing
- Watch TV with your child-and talk about what you see.
- Choose video games that encourage physical activity.
- Get your family active while watching TV - take commercial breaks as activity breaks, a chance to get up and do jumping jacks, stretch, walk, etc.

## Alternatives to Screen Time:

- Bike riding
- Walking/hiking
- Swimming
- Frisbee
- Hide-and-go seek
- Building snowmen
- Exploring
- Soccer
- Board games
- Gardening
- Listen to books on tape or CD
- Arts and Crafts
- Reading
- Dancing
- Playing musical instruments
- Cooking family meals
- Dress-up or imaginative play
- Basketball
- Catch in the yard or at a park
- Drawing or writing
- Think of some of your favorite childhood games and share them with your child
- Involve your child in a favorite hobby: sewing, model building, etc.

## Where's the Screen?

Have you thought about the impact the location of the TVs or computers in your home can have on your kids?

- Studies show that children with computers or TVs in their rooms spend one and a half more hours in front of a screen than their peers who don't have a screen in their room. This puts those who have a screen in their room at even greater risk for obesity.
- Having a computer or TV in a child's room can lead to physical isolation and decreased interaction with family members.
- If computers and TVs are located in a child's bedroom, the parents can't monitor as easily to make sure children are viewing age-appropriate material and not being victims of cyber-bullying or cyber-stalking.

### Cyber-bullying:

Sending or posting harmful or cruel text or images using the internet or other digital communication devices.

### Cyber-stalking/ Harassment:

Online enticement of children; rude or threatening messages; slanderous information; or repeated unwanted messages.

5

servings of fruits and vegetables a day

4

servings of water a day

3

servings of low-fat dairy a day

2

hours or less of screen time a day

1

hour or more of physical activity a day

Go!