

GET UNPLUGGED – PARENT TIP SHEET

Finding balance with devices, internet use and real life.

Recommended Screen Time:

- 0-2 years:** No screen time at all
- 2-4 years:** Less than 1 hour per day; only quality educational screen time and learning games with a parent present
- 5+ years:** No more than 2 hours per day of screen time on school days
- All ages:** Avoid all screens one hour before bedtime

Quick Facts:

- The average person checks their phone 200 times a day - that's once every six and a half minutes
- One in four people spend more time online than they do asleep
- 70% of 16-24-year-olds say they prefer texting to talking
- 73% say they'd struggle to go a day without checking their phone or computer
- The average teenager sends 3,400 electronic messages a month from their bed

Set Limits & Boundaries:

- Set limits on 'tech time' when your children are young
- No computers or digital devices in bedrooms. Place these in common areas like living room
- Bedtime Limits: All digital devices and screens should be turned off 1 hour before bedtime, regardless of age
- Mealtime Limits: Ensure that no devices are allowed during family meals
- Homework time: Older children may need the computer for homework and research but TV, Facebook, Twitter or Instagram applications are distracting and should not be running when doing homework
- Charging Station: Portable devices should be charged in a common area not in bedrooms
- Balance Activities and Tech-Free Time: Examples play a board game, attend cultural activities, cook or clean up together, get active outdoors, get creative with music, arts and crafts, encourage fitness activities

Use Technology Wisely:

- Educate yourself about technology, social and new media
- Set up your own accounts to learn more about how these media work
- Set a good example
- Show your children and teens how to balance technology use with other activities

- Create rather than just view content. Encourage children and teens to be creative and create, such as creating websites, graphics, art, stories or short films allows children and youth to be 'active' users, exercising their imaginations and developing other skills
- Talk about social media, internet, gaming and gambling online
- Let your kids know that you want and need to know about their Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram or other social media use.
- Discuss the risks of posting or uploading photos or sharing personal information on social media and set out consequences for taking risks
- Ask your child or teen to 'friend' you on Facebook and regularly check in
- If you don't like something you see on your child's social media do not comment online, talk to your child face to face
- Set ground rules for cell phones. It's always better to come to an agreement by discussing things with your teen, rather than imposing rules
- Disable instant features on phones and tablets like chat heads and instant messaging advisories
- Although you want your child or teen to be safe, please do your best to respect privacy

GETTING HELP:

If you are concerned that your child's screen time, gaming or other online activities may be getting out of hand or has caused difficulties confidential help is available. For more information and support contact a Métis Nation of Ontario Healing and Wellness Worker or our G-GAP Provincial Coordinator.

For more information:

Gaming-Gambling Awareness Program (G-GAP)
 Métis Nation of Ontario
ggap@metisnation.org
www.metisgaming.com

Métis Nation
 of Ontario 