

parent tips

Help Your Kids Reduce Screen Time and Move More

Here are some tips to help your children spend less time in front of a TV, computer, or video games—and *more* time being active.



Get started:

- First, track your family's screen time.
- Use the **We Can!** Screen Time Chart to write down all of your family's screen time. Screen time is any seated time in front of:
 - > The TV or a DVD.
 - > Video games.
 - > Cell phones and other hand-held video devices.
 - > Computer or Internet (except for schoolwork).
- Then, track your family's physical activity.

Share goals and set limits:

- The goal for screen time is no more than 2 hours each day.
- Try to be more active over time. The goal for physical activity for children is at least 60 minutes each day.

My goal:

- ☐ I will limit my children to no more than _____ hours of screen time each day.

Suggest active fun instead of screen time:

- Don't let watching TV or playing video games get to be a habit for your family.
- Give your family ideas for other activities, like:
 - > Playing outside with friends.
 - > Learning an active hobby.

My goals:

- ☐ I will suggest that my children do these activities instead of screen time:

- ☐ I will give my family the following ideas for things to do instead of screen time:

Make mealtime family time:

- Turn off the TV during family meals, instead talk with your children. (You could talk about a new physical activity to try!)
- Try to have family meals at least two or three times a week. Families who eat together tend to eat healthier.

My goal:

- ☐ My family will eat together _____ times each week.

Be a good role model:

- Studies show that children and teens really listen to their parents.
- Children follow their parents' actions. If you reduce your screen time and move more, your children will too.

My goals:

- ☐ I will do _____ instead of screen time.

- ☐ I will be active _____ minutes a day for _____ days per week.

The link between TV and food choices:

- Many ads on TV are for foods like sugar-sweetened cereal, candy, and fast food.
- Ads may use cartoon or movie characters to make those foods look "fun" or "exciting."
- Children who watch a lot of television may make less healthy food choices.



We Can! is a program from the National Institutes of Health that offers resources for parents, caregivers and communities to help children 8-13 years old stay at a healthy weight through eating right, increasing physical activity, and reducing screen time.

To learn more, go to <http://wecan.nhlbi.nih.gov> or call 1-866-35-WE CAN.

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