



Notes from research on the effects of

# screen time



There are many articles and research studies surrounding the topic of screen time - the effects and how much is too much.

The information on this leaflet was sourced from:

<http://www.vodafone.com/content/digital-parenting/expert-views/screen-time.html>

<http://www.nightingalehospital.co.uk/condition/technology-addiction/>

[https://www.huffingtonpost.com/cris-rowan/technology-children-negative-impact\\_b\\_3343245.html](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/cris-rowan/technology-children-negative-impact_b_3343245.html)

<http://home.bt.com/tech-gadgets/internet/tablet-smartphone-screen-time-advice-parents-kids-11364191314228>

<https://www.common sense media.org/screen-time/how-much-screen-time-is-ok-for-my-kids><https://expert hometips.com/screen-time-reduce-tips-professionals-consequences>

We thought you would find it useful if we shared some of the key findings with you

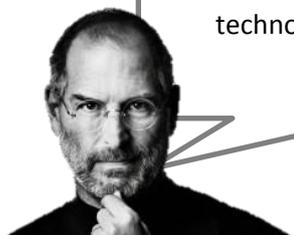
## Possible effects of 'too much' screen time:

- Excessive screen time can neurologically damage a young person's developing brain
- Children can struggle with their attention skills and managing their behaviour because of the speed at which content can be reached, and over stimulation.
- Children can have a limited ability to be creative and imaginative.
- The blue light emitted from device screens can prevent the sleep hormone (melatonin) being released, leading to difficulty sleeping.
- Device usage can be addictive.

In 2010 when a reporter suggested his children must love the just-released iPad, Steve Jobs replied:

"They haven't used it. We limit how much technology our kids use at home."

New York Times, Sept 10<sup>th</sup>, 2014



## How much screen time is 'too much'?

### Research recommends that...

- ✓ Before the age of **18 months**, time with mobile phones, tablets etc. should be minimal
- ✓ **2-5yr olds** – no more than one hour a day
- ✓ **School age** children and teenagers should have a balance between using devices and a range of other activities. Some studies suggest spending time outside and taking part in physical activities. Activities that use all senses minimise the effects of withdrawal symptoms.

## Ways to reduce screen time:

- Discuss as a family and agree on an appropriate amount of screen time for each person.
- Create screen-free zones in the house. E.g. no screens upstairs (This can also help with online safety)
- As a family, set each other the challenge of a screen free afternoon or day each week.
- Have a 'digital sunset' where there are no screens for an hour before bed. (If you try this yourself you might be surprised how much better you sleep!)

# Alternatives to screen time

Sometimes it can be tricky to think up quick and easy-to-manage alternatives so, as a school, we have pulled together some practical ideas of activities you could try. Of course, these are just suggestions and there are many more online, particularly on Pinterest.

## Outdoor activities

- Go on a bug hunt
- Go on a bike ride; for older children use a map to plan the route
- Climb a tree
- Make an outside fairy dwelling or a den for your friends
- Have a treasure hunt
- Go pond dipping
- Play hopscotch
- Teach some skipping rhymes
- Go on a picnic – make it first!
- Learn to roller-skate
- Do some weeding or plant a vegetable garden
- Stargaze
- Collect leaves – how many different sorts can you collect?
- Roll down a hill
- Draw on the patio with chalk
- Have a toy car wash
- Fly a kite

## Educational activities

- Do a science investigation (the Royal Institution has some suggestions to get you started <http://www.rigb.org/families/experimental> )
- Play 20 questions
- Complete a jigsaw
- Solve some brainteasers as a family
- Find out five facts about a country
- Play I-spy
- Write a family newsletter
- Play the guessing game 'Who am I?'
- Read each other a story

## Creative activities

- Make a flower necklace
- Make a printed picture using different household items as stamps
- Turn newspaper into a pirate's hat
- Make just about anything from a tissue inner roll
- Get creative with lollipop sticks
- Build something out of Lego
- Create a family flag or coat of arms
- Learn origami
- Make a sock puppet
- Make friendship bracelets

## Family fun activities

- Try out some face painting on each other
- Make a fort
- Draw a picture blindfolded
- Plan an indoor picnic – give the children a budget, go shopping and make it!
- Plan and carry out a random act of kindness
- Cook or bake together
- Draw a family portrait
- Invent a new language
- Interview a family member and create a family history
- Invent your own board game
- Make an obstacle course
- Play hide and seek
- Put together a time capsule
- Take fun family photos and create an album