

SMART WAYS TO REDUCE YOUR CHILD'S SCREEN TIME...



Gadgets have become a regular part of our lives, and that of our children's lives too. But what if we take steps to promote an appropriate relationship with these gadgets, while still participating in other things?

Technology has changed how communication is perceived in the present. The "wonder of technology" has been regarded as more valuable than family members, regardless of age. The most affected group is younger generations.

Everywhere we go, children are staring at mobile phones, or tablets. In light of the growing dependence on screens and gadgets and screens, it's not surprising that kids are spending more time on devices. As parents the growing dependence on technology is a source of concern, prompting us to look for alternatives and methods to help their children get off devices. The question is: How can you as parents restrict or keep children from devices?

It's not possible to reduce children's time with technology in one day. However, there are ways technology-related time could be turned into more enjoyable time for play. Here are some ideas.

Simple strategies to reduce screens for kids

1. **Controlling and monitoring the time spent on screens**

As a parent, it is our responsibility to foster healthy behaviours and reduce undesirable ones in our children. This could mean making difficult decisions for your children.

- **Set a time limit for screen usage:**

If you wish to stop the child's dependence on devices, the most important thing to be accomplished is setting a limit on time for screen usage. Making sure that children are informed when deciding on a time limit allows them to have a say that is likely to be adhered to. Limits should be set, and you must allow liberty within those boundaries.

- **Changes gradually:**

Don't restrict the children from using the gadgets for a single time. Be mindful and gradually make changes. Introduce new activities and get your children more involved and interested to ensure that they spend less time spent with devices.

- **Act as an example to your children:**

It is advised to cut down on your time on the screen because children imitate their parents. Children are drawn to the actions and behaviour of parents. If a child observes the parent reading in a book, they're likely to read. If they are able to see them using an electronic device, so will they.

- **Beware of buying electronic gadgets:**

Parents should not purchase gadgets or devices for their children simply because their friends in their circle might have them. There is nothing to lose when children don't have access to smart phones or other gadgets. It is highly likely that the child is likely to be more smarter without smart phones. If your child has temper tantrums, remain at peace, and remain steady. The tantrum will pass soon.

2. **Introduce more engaging alternatives**

Keep in mind the child's interests as well as capabilities, then begin to look for other options to keep them engaged.

- **Introduce new hobbies:**

Inspire your children to take up new hobbies, or to pursue their hobby as hobbies aid in keeping children off of screens. Also, find new activities that your children may be interest in doing, such as dancing or painting.

- **Playing games:**

Toys, games, and sports play a crucial part in the development and learning of children. Physical games and sports like jumping hoops or hopping stimulate the children. Playing with toys and games is one of the most effective methods to get your youngster away from the screen, to learn something new and to improve their cognitive abilities. Alongside taking your child away from screens, there is another benefit to enhancing the child's emotional development. Find your child toys that are engaging, challenging and allow the child to "learn through play". Through playing, children begin to make choices and resolve issues. Some of the popular toys / games to engage the children are:

- **Sand pendulum:** This science toy provides a great opportunity for kids to play around and observe how they did with their experiments. Children can move the cup in the way they want and in different directions. They can alter how long the string is, rotate the cup, and regulate how much sand is used to create interesting patterns using different combinations. It helps improve the visual tracking abilities of children through the motion of pendulum.
- **Hopping number line:** Kids are fascinated by making the frog jump by using their hands to get to that desired branch. Every point on the line is an actual number. The Frog helps children understand that moving forward is adding and moving backwards is subtraction. This helps the child comprehend the number sequence with ease. The toys were made with the intention of engaging children in a constructive way. They not only help keep children away from screens but also aid to development.
- **Spend time with your children:** Family time can have an enormous influence on screen time and the mind of children. Going for walks, or short trips can

be a catalyst for conversations. Conversations are a chance to connect with your child and allow your child to discuss their experiences with you. There is nothing better than having an enjoyable discussion with your children. For children parents are probably the only people who truly care about what children have to say and how they feel.

As parent one need to be aware of the pros and cons of screen time on gadgets to be able to understand the children's need for the right gadget and to be able to help the children monitor the device usage and screen time. Get your children involved in games and toys that help them develop their independence and also aid in their development as an individual. At CGR International School, we promote health screen time among students and create their curriculum with a health mix of studies, games and play time.