

Limiting Recreational Screen Time

Why Limit Screen Time?

Recreational screen time refers to time spent on TVs, computers, gaming consoles and handheld devices, tablets, and smartphones. It's important to limit the use of all screens. Increased screen time is associated with more snacking and higher rates of obesity. It has also been linked with lower reading scores and attention problems in children.

Tips and Ideas to Reduce Screen Time

- Set some basic rules, such as no TV or computer time before homework or chores are done
- Do not watch TV during mealtimes
- Use a timer, and when the bell rings, it's time to turn off the TV and do a different activity
- Eliminate TV time during the weekdays
- Make a list of fun activities to do instead of being in front of a screen
- Keep books, magazines, and board games in the family room

Healthy Screen Time Suggestions:

- No TV or computer in the room where children sleep
- No TV or computer for children under the age of 2
- One hour of educational TV or computer time between ages 2 and 5
- After the age of 5, a maximum of two hours of total, recreational screen time per day, including TV, video games, computer time, tablets, and smartphones
- Don't watch TV while doing homework
- Don't snack while watching TV, as this can lead to overeating, especially with unhealthy foods
- Don't surf the TV. Watch favorite shows only, or pick a new show to start and stick with it
- Set family guidelines for age-appropriate shows

Final Considerations

For more information about healthy eating and active living resources, please email 5210healthywashoe@nnph.org.