Making Family Screen Time Rules

Each family has unique needs regarding media, but all families benefit from clear guidelines around the use of their media devices. We have lots to think about, but it's worth taking the time to get clear so we can ditch the guilt, make choices we feel good about and help our kids have a healthy relationship with media in their life.

> *Tips:*
> - **Get clear.** *Use these questions to gain clarity for yourself, then talk with your family to make your own rules.*
> - **Change as needed.** *Screen time rules can be re-evaluated as your family perspectives shift and needs evolve.*
> - **Post 'em.** *Write down your rules and post where everyone can see them to help keep everyone accountable.*

Considerations:

1. When does it feel like screen time is most disruptive to our family? What are my kids like when they get too much media?

2. How much screen time are my kids getting now? *(school work, family together time, free time etc. You may wish to track a week to find out)*

3. How do I use Screens for work and play? What are my own limits and struggles?

4. When would it be convenient for the kids to do media?

5. What are my biggest fears or concerns about media usage?

6. When is media enriching? When is it replacing an activity I want my kids to be doing instead?

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Setting Clear Expectations:

Examples in parentheses are not prescriptions, just ideas to get you thinking – what works for your family?

1. What constitutes screen time in your family? Which devices are used, and which are off limits for kids? List each device, how it can be used *(i.e. - Tablet: for educational use only – no games. Mom's phone: totally at her discretion, only YouTube Kids, TV: PS3, Netflix...)*

2. When are absolute no-screen times of day or events? *(before school, at the table, when saying hello/goodbye etc. Use your answer above about 'when media is most disruptive' as well as you r family values to make choices about this.)*

3. When are screens allowed?

4. When will you make exceptions? *(travel, sickness, homework etc...)*

5. What must be completed before screen time? *(chores, homework, outside play etc.)*

6. Where can devices be used? How will I monitor this activity? *(devices in bedrooms? behind a closed door? age dependent? require password access? etc.)*

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7. When do kids have to ask permission from a parent? *(downloading games? YouTube? at friend's houses? when posting online? etc.)*

8. What are the rules about giving out personal information? *(name, address, contact info)*

9. How should kids interact with guests and screens? *(Greetings?Goodbyes?Is media allowed while friends are over?)*

10. What actions will take away screen time privileges?

11. What are the consequences if your trust is breached?

12. How should kids treat electronics? What are the consequences if people mistreat electronics?

Notes and Questions: