

How to use technology to limit kids' screen time

In today's culture of 'getting things done' the screen may seem like a simple solution for parents. But too much screen time isn't great for kids for a lot of reasons – and when your little angel turns into a zombie TV child, it is time to unplug!

So how can we, as parents, manage our kid's screen time and avoid the [negative effects of overconsumption?](#) Ironically, technology is the answer!

Setting limits with technology

It may seem odd to use technology to limit usage, but many parental control programs and apps exist to do just that (and they are more sophisticated than the old "hide the remote control" trick – although that one may still work) by allowing parents to block websites, enforce time limits, monitor websites, and online conversations, and more.

Setting controls on computers

Parental control software can keep a close watch on your kids' screen time usage on the computer, recording activities and blocking materials that are unsafe for kids, while still allowing them to make use of the online world. Here's a [review of 10 programs](#) that do just that.

Setting controls on mobile devices and tablets

You can download parental control apps that let parents manage the time kids spend on tablets and phones. These apps can include setting daily limits, blocking games at bedtime or during school hours, and blocking websites and app downloads. Here are a few to check out:

- [Screen Time](#)
- [My Mobile Watchdog](#)
- [ParentKit](#)
- [Funamo](#)
- [Qustodio Parental Control](#)

How much is too much?

The [Canadian Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines](#) suggest limiting recreational screen time to no more than 2 hours per day for kids 5-17 years (screen time is not recommended for kids under 2 years and for children 2-4 years, screen time should be limited to less than one hour per day).

Of course, the ultimate decision about how much time your kids spend in front of screens is up to you, and the answer will probably be different for each child and each situation.

Not sure how much time your child spends in front of screens? Track it for a week with our new [ParticipACTION Screen Time Log](#) and find out.

If you need some convincing to limit your kids' screen time, let us move you: check out our [newest Make Room for Play video here](#).

ParticipACTION and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador are working together, with support from Recreation Newfoundland and Labrador, to inspire families to make physical activity a higher priority in daily life.

