

Family Digital Plan - Senior School



Screens have become a big part of our daily lives, and managing their presence in family time can sometimes feel overwhelming. It's important to balance enjoying screen time and engaging in activities without them. One way to navigate this is to create a family agreement encouraging everyone to share their thoughts on when and how we use screens together. This approach can help us better understand each other and cultivate a healthier relationship with technology, ensuring we prioritise meaningful moments as a family.

This plan is for you and anyone else in your home or caring for your child to discuss, agree on, and plan with your children how your family will approach screens. We have given you some suggestions and tips.

Top Tips from the Health Professionals for Safer Screens

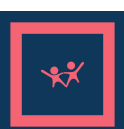
Children should ideally wait until they are at least 16 before using social media, though 13 is the minimum age. The risk of long-term harm grows with earlier exposure to social platforms. If you already use social media, disable autoplay to prevent doom scrolling and turn off notifications. Agree on limits and how to ensure parents can access the accounts and have account protections in place.

Consider using apps or settings to restrict use - maybe around homework or revision time.




Consider using a dumb phone or dumbing down your phone - or take away particularly time-consuming apps. You can grayscale the screen to make it less appealing.

Think about how everyone in the family behaves around screens.


Do not allow devices in the bedroom overnight; it not only keeps them awake, but according to research, when children have unrestricted access to screens, particularly in the privacy of their bedrooms, it opens the door to unchecked exposure to age-inappropriate content.



1. What devices do we use?

What devices do we use? 	What do we like about them? 	What don't we like about them? 

2. What would you do differently?

What would you like the adults in your family to do differently?	What would you like the children in your family to do differently?
 <p><i>Reports suggest adults touch their phones over 2000 times a day.</i></p>	<p><i>Not always having a head in a screen</i></p>

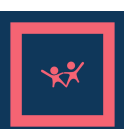
It is really important as a family to spend time together without screens. Research tells us that children (and adults) really benefit from making sure they chat, eat, sleep and play together without screens in the way.



3. Where should it be screen-free?



Making zones that are screen-free is a great way of ensuring everyone sticks to the agreement. Devices should never be in bedrooms - they disturb sleep, and adults should always be able to see what their children are up to online.



	Could this be screen-free?	What could we do instead?
Bedrooms		<i>Read a book and have an alarm clock</i>
Bathrooms		
Car		<i>Listen to a book or a podcast</i>
Outdoors		
Playground		

4. When should it be screen-free?



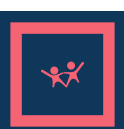
Screen-free time together

Mealtimes are great to keep screen-free - it's a chance to chat and the evidence shows that adults and children who eat in front of screens are more likely to eat too much food. It has also been proven that stopping the use of a screen at least an hour before bedtime makes children much more likely to sleep.



No Screens 1 hour before bedtime

When can we agree not to use screens?			What could we do instead?
Bedtime			
Mealtimes			
Getting ready			
Journey to and from school			
Other			
Other			



6. What can we do to make our screen time work better for us?

What are we going to do differently?

5. We often reach for screens automatically or when we are a bit bored. What can we do either as a family or with friends instead of using screens?

What could we do instead of screens?

6. As a family, what do we pledge to do?

Our pledge:

