

## Why device use matters so much to teens

Most use technology to meet real needs:

- **Stimulation:** Fun, novelty, excitement
- **Connection:** Belonging, friendship, feeling included
- **Escape:** Stress, boredom, overwhelm
- **Identity:** Creativity, self-expression, curiosity

*It's important to respond to their need, not the behaviour.*

Instead of: "You've had too much screen time!" Try: "You seem overwhelmed. What would help you wind down besides a screen?"

## Setting boundaries on screen time

Create a family tech plan\* together:

1. **Frame it positively** – "We're not anti-tech. We're pro-sleep and pro-connection."
2. **Make it a plan, not a rule list** – See example on Page 2.
3. **Model what you expect** – Stick to the plan yourself.
4. **Build it together** – Ask questions, plan around their needs.
5. **Review regularly** - Place a recurring monthly reminder in your calendar to review as a family and improve your plan over time.

## Building self-awareness on device use

It's not setting limits; it's building lifelong habits.

- **Intentional use:** Name the purpose by asking: "What are you going on for?" (Fun, boredom, chatting?)
- **Track screen time:** Review weekly screen reports to build awareness, not judge.
- **Start with one small shift:** One screen-free night, or no phones at dinner.

*Remember, the goal isn't less tech; it's better balance.*

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### Sample Family Tech Plan

- 🌞 **Morning:** Tech-free until ready for school.
- 🕒 **After school:** One hour free use, then homework.
- 🌙 **Evenings:** No devices after 9 pm (charging station in kitchen.)
- 📖 Family reading time: 9:00–9:30 pm.
- 📱 Use tools like Apple Screen Time / Google Family Link.

### Notes

Blank area for notes.