



Unit 6 Screen Time: Parent Extension

Hi, this is Shanita with the Montgomery County Office of Public Health.

In unit 6 of the 123 a Healthy Me series, we introduce kids to the concept of screen time and why it should be limited. We recognize that it can be extremely difficult to limit screen time especially today when everything is virtual including our children's learning. I also recognize the irony in me talking about limiting screen time, when in fact, you have to look at a screen to even view this message.

The times have changed and while it may seem nearly impossible to reduce screens in our life, there are some ways that we can limit our time spent staring at them. We don't have as much control when it comes to the virtual education and the time we may have to spend on the computer for our jobs. So we should focus on our free time.

Too much screen time is linked to obesity, poor sleep, loss of social skills and less time for play.

Here are some simple ways to reduce screen time in your household.

1. Turn the TV off during meal times
2. Turn off electronics 1 hour before bedtime to start winding down
3. Have a family night without screens. Instead of family movie night, switch it up with family game night or have a night where the whole family is involved in cooking dinner.

When your kids do use screens for entertainment, these are a few things you may want to consider doing:

- 1) Research the video or computer game before purchasing it for your child
- 2) Preview the TV shows your kids are choosing to watch. This gives you an opportunity to screen out what is and what is not appropriate for your child to be viewing.
- 3) When possible, watch TV shows with them. This gives you a chance to be involved with their learning and play experience.

To get some ideas on how you can replace screen time with other fun activities, check out the sheet we have provided as well the link.

Thanks for watching and always remember- be healthy, have fun and stay safe.