

Screen time - how to strike a balance

A resource for parents

Young Australians make use of five different social media services and spend on average 7.5 hours on screens per day across multiple devices including computers, tablets and TV.

Common concerns with screen time

1. Health – eye strain, bad posture, lack of exercise
2. Mental wellbeing – isolation, bullying, missing out on school
3. Safety – privacy, digital footprint, meeting strangers online and anonymity
4. Access to violent or damaging content – including gambling content and features
5. Balancing other life activities such as sport, school, friends, family
6. Financial – spending real money on games, shopping and apps

Wellbeing

There is no magic formula of how much screen time is the right amount to reduce risk. Rather it's looking at the broader wellbeing factors and ensuring that they are getting:

- Enough sleep and exercise
- Maintaining positive relationships and engaged in learning

Strategies for parents

Parents are an essential part of managing screen time and ensuring young people are not impacted negatively. It is important to:

- Initiate conversations around the relationship between gaming and gambling.
- Work with your child to set boundaries
- Be clear on the consequences of not 'switching off'
- Set device free zones and times at home
- Ask your child to explain their screen time usage
- Use tools on devices to manage access
- Be a role model and lead by example

More information and resources:

<https://www.esafety.gov.au/parents/big-issues/time-online>

<https://responsiblegambling.vic.gov.au>

**For more information, contact
Gambler's Help at Bethany**

Bethany Community Support 5278 8122 www.bethany.org.au
Gamblers Help 1800 858 858 www.gamblershelp.com.au

