

Raising healthy kids in a technological world!

A parent's guide to responsible
exposure to screen time



Employee & Family Resources

Community Partnerships for Protecting Children

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Nobody ever said that raising a child was going to be easy. With the ever increasing demands of "adulthood", it is easy to find ourselves reaching for the nearest remote, cell phone, or touch pad to escape the chaos that surrounds us. Often times, as parents, we pass these behaviors onto our children.

This resource has been created with you in mind. Research shows us that youth, over the age of 2, should not have more than two hours of screen time per day. Children under 2 should have NO screen time. We encourage you and your family to embrace the concept of good old fashion fun...with a little screen time on the side.

So - enjoy, read, relax, and PLAY!
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The Evolution of Video Games

It wasn't so long ago that people sat at their dining room table or living room floor to play board games. Today, several families find entertainment in the form of screen time. Technological games are a great thing and serve a role in our society today. However, the fast pace in which new games and consoles are being produced can be overwhelming to any parent and can take away from interactive fun. Take a quick look at how fast video games have evolved in a little over 30 years.

- 1972 – The birth of Pong
- 1973 – 101 BASIC computer games is available to the masses
- 1974 – Video games initial first person shooter game is created in Maze War
- 1975 – Atari introduces the home version of Pong
- 1976 - The video game Adventure is created. This is the first text-based game
- 1977 – Atari Video Computer System 2600 is released. This includes a joystick, interchangeable cartridges, games in color, and switches for selecting your perfect game.

- 1978 – Arcade game Space Invaders take over Japan and the US by storm
- 1979 - Mattel creates the Intellivision to compete with Atari 2600
- 1980 – Pac Man hits the arcade floor
- 1981 – Nintendo creates Donkey Kong
- 1982 – Disney releases the movie Tron. This movie appeals to the video game crowd.
- 1983 - Multiplayer games take hold with the creation of M.U.L.E.
- 1984 – Tetris is created
- 1985 – Nintendo (NES) is here!
- 1986 – The Learning Company’s Reader Rabbit is the first of many educational software to hit the shelves
- 1987 - Welcome fantasy role-play with Zelda
- 1988 – The first John Madden Football game is released
- 1989 – Nintendo releases the Game Boy
- 1990 - Microsoft includes Solitaire with Windows 3.0
- 1991 – Sega creates Sonic the Hedgehog
- 1992 – Real-time strategy games are here with Dune II
- 1993 – Mortal Kombat introduces bloodshed to the gaming world
- 1994 – Warcraft: Orcs and Humans is released
- 1995 – Hello Sony Playstation!
- 1996 – Lara Craft is introduced to the world in Tomb Raider
- 1997 – IBM’s super computer beats Gary Kasparov, the Chess world champion
- 1998 – Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time is here

- 1999 – Sony Online Entertainment releases Everquest
- 2000 – The best selling computer games is here...The Sims!
- 2001 – Microsoft creates the Xbox
- 2002 – The army creates American Army as a video game to recruit and communicate to the new generation of gamers
- 2003 – Steam is created which allows people to download, play or update games on the PC
- 2004 – Kids can’t wait to get the new Nintendo DS
- 2005 – Microsoft Xbox 360 takes personal gaming up a notch with better graphics
- 2006 – People get off the couch with the new Nintendo Wii. Don’t forget to put on the wrist strap!
- 2007 – People can’t get enough of Rock Band. Grab your closest friends and get ready to perform your own concert.
- 2008 – World of Warcraft is here. Over 10 million people subscribed online to play this multiplayer game.
- 2009 – Farmville and Angry Birds hit the screen, literally. A new group of people start playing games on Facebook and iPhones.
- 2010 – Minecraft is created
- 2011 – People enjoy a new fantasy world in Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim

Your Impact

Kids are like sponges and you are the water they are trying to soak up. Your actions tell your child what is appropriate and acceptable. It is important for you, as a parent, to set realistic limits so your children can find a healthy balance between screen-time and play time. Here are some helpful tips to get you started:

1. Model appropriate behavior | Balance your tech time!
2. Educate yourself | Know what is new
3. Create "no-screen" areas throughout the house
4. Set tech-limits | Allow 1 to 2 hours of screen time at home
5. Use parental controls
6. Talk to your kids about risks
7. Know your children's passwords
8. Play! Be active and engaging
9. Use screen-time as a reward
10. Bedrooms are off limits to technology



Gambling vs. Gaming

Gambling is defined as “risking money, or something of value, on the outcome of something involving chance.” This would include, but is not limited to: slot machines, bingo, raffle tickets, sports betting, online poker, dice games, and casino games. Gambling and gaming are different, but research is showing there may be a link between the two.

Did you know? This is the first generation of youth to be exposed to gambling every day of their life!?

Here is the connection! : many youth are fascinated with video games/gaming. The lights, noise, and instant gratification of achieving a level or obtaining a coin is appealing to many. Today’s video games mirror Video Lottery Terminal/slot machines.

According to the Responsible Gaming Council, “Compared to adults, young people are 2 to 3 times more likely to develop a gambling problem.”

- So how do I know if my child is having a problem with gambling? Here are a few of the signs that could indicate that gambling may be a problem in your child’s life:
- Knowing the point spread on games
- Organizing sports betting pools
- Showing off new clothes or merchandise
- Selling or pawning valuables
- Stealing money
- Skipping school
- Forgetting about homework
- Lying about where they are
- Mood swings and emotional withdrawal



"Children have never been very good at listening to their elders, but they have never failed to imitate them."

– James Baldwin

Family Activities

Homemade T-shirts:

Supplies: Plain white t-shirt, crayons, sandpaper

Directions: Draw on sandpaper with crayons. Iron on a t-shirt to create your own t-shirt design.

Gak :

Supplies- Two (4oz) bottles of Elmer's glue, 1 tsp. Borax, Water, Plastic cup, Bowl and Food coloring.

Directions - empty Elmer's glue into bowl, fill bottles with warm water, shake and empty into bowl with glue. Add 1/2 cup of warm water to cup then add Borax and mix until Borax dissolves. Add Borax mix and food coloring to glue/water in bowl. Start stirring until it becomes stringy then mix with your hands until well blended.

Safe Homemade Paint:

Supplies- 2c. Cold water, 1/2c. Cornstarch, 3 TBSP sugar and food coloring.

Directions - add all ingredients into a saucepan and whisk over medium heat until thickened.

Edible Play dough:

Supplies- 1 c. baby rice cereal, 3 TBSP vegetable oil, 1c. Cornstarch, 1/2c. unsweetened applesauce and food coloring

Directions - Mix rice cereal and cornstarch. Add applesauce, vegetable oil and food coloring. Knead with hands until smooth. If it is sticky, add more rice cereal. Dough will keep in the refrigerator for several days in a sealed container or bag



Conversation Starters

Did you know the number one reason youth say they don't engage in risky behaviors like drinking and drug use is because their parents have talked to them about their values. Most parents feel their kids don't hear them. You would be surprised at how much of what you say actually gets through. Be the parent who talks and opens the door for ongoing conversations. Use these tips to get you started!

How do you feel when you see other kids make bad choices? What do you do when faced with a hard choice?

Name four adults you trust and how you know them?

If you could go anywhere in the world where would it be and why?



Local Assistance

If you or a loved one is having a hard time with their gambling, there is help. Ask yourself these three questions:

1. During the past 12 months, have you become restless, irritable or anxious when trying to stop/cut down on gambling?
2. During the past 12 months, have you tried to keep your family or friends from knowing how much you gambled?
3. During the past 12 months did you have such financial trouble as a result of your gambling that you had to get help with living expenses from family, friends, or welfare?

If you answered yes to one of the three questions, you may have a problem with your gambling. We encourage you to contact 1-800- BETS OFF.



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