

WHAT'S TRENDING

A Resource Sheet

SCREEN BALANCE RESOLUTIONS

Interview with Genie Godule, January 11, 2018

Many parents are setting resolutions for the New Year and screen time on devices may be a concern.

What do we know about screen time and screen balance today?

- addictive behaviour
- impacts on emotional health and well-being
- inability to cultivate real life social skills
- Advice from the American Academy of Pediatricians advice: children 2 to 5 years of age screen time should be limited to one hour per day; children 6 and up, parents can determine the restrictions for time spent and types of media using screen; babies are most vulnerable

How can families monitor their screen time in 2018? How will parents know if there is balance in their households?

- Oxford Internet Institute: screen limits may not be useful, research on over 120,000 teenagers, Goldilocks effect (not too much, not too little)
- London School of Economics: is your child physically healthy and sleeping enough? connecting socially with family / friend, engaged with and achieving in school? pursuing interests and hobbies? having fun and learning while using digital media?
- If yes, then probably not a question of "addiction"
- Learn to be responsible digital citizens and not avoid the online world altogether

If parents are having trouble with screen balance, what would a New Year's resolution look like for those parents?

There are three easy things that parents can do and continue doing to provide balance and boundaries.



- Parents can:
- create a family media agreement
- set up parental controls : parental controls are and where to find help setting them up (UK Safe Internet Centre, SIP Bench reviews (40 languages, free and paid tools), interactive tool of Internet Matters where you choose the type of device or gadget you wish to set up parental controls for and then you receive step by step guidance by email on how to set it up
- schedule offline activities for all the family to connect offline, to bond: Plan family time like plan family meals; Research in Iceland that battled a very serious alcohol addiction among teenagers showed that increasing family bonding and engagement in social activities in the real world eg sports had a hugely significant impact in reducing this addictive behaviour among the young.
- We are talking about a different addiction here but the message is "give kids a sense of belonging and a sense of purpose in the real world and they won't have to spend hours trying to find it online"

What do you think the 2018 will bring for digital parenting?

- Increased government regulation industry regulation in favour of our children
- focus on artificial intelligence and connected toys
- focus on younger kids 0-8
- more support for parents (as started by Apple)