

How to manage your child's screen time

Supporting children aged 5 & under

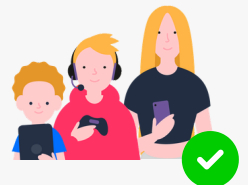
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Quick top tips

1

Create a digital family agreement. This is a written set of rules that the whole family follows such as where and when device use is allowed. Adults and older siblings following this sets an example that's **easier for a young child to follow**.



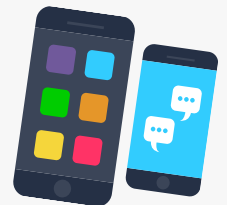
2

Put family time first. As a part of your agreement, decide on device-free zones or moments. This could be at the kitchen/dining table or just during meal times. This **shows your child boundaries and lets you focus on each other**.



3

Play, watch and discover together. Play video games, watch videos and discover new apps together while asking them what they think. This starts the **foundation for chats as they grow, which are key to online safety**.



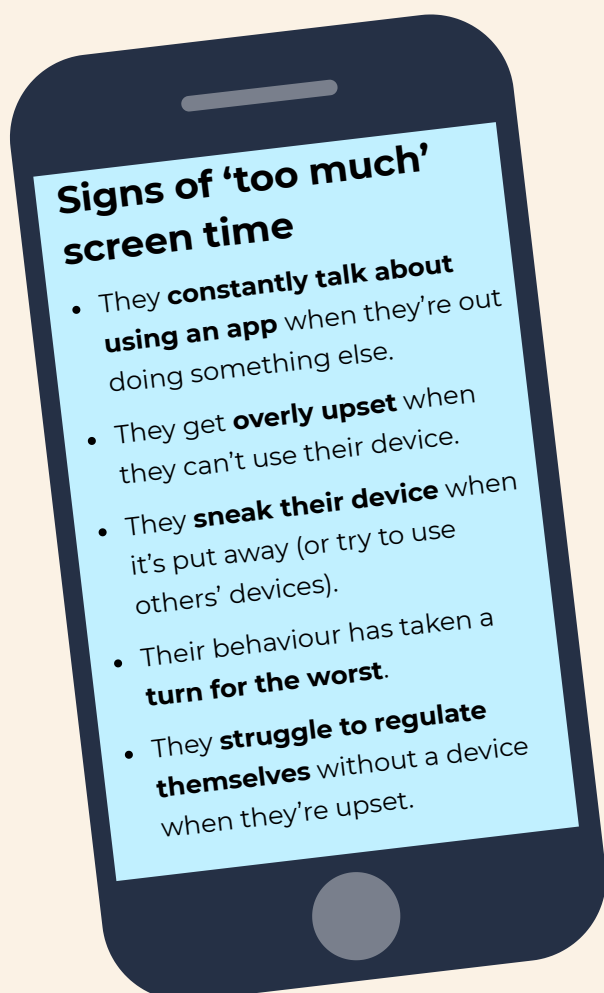
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Choose the right content for them. Take the lead on finding appropriate channels on YouTube Kids or streaming services along with apps and games. Focus on **education and skill-building**, not just entertainment, to **support their development**.



5

Check-in on how screen time makes them feel. What did they like about the video? Are they excited or sleepy? Is there anything you didn't like? These check-ins can help them become **more mindful users of tech, supporting their overall wellbeing**.



Signs of 'too much' screen time

- They **constantly talk about using an app** when they're out doing something else.
- They get **overly upset** when they can't use their device.
- They **sneak their device** when it's put away (or try to use others' devices).
- Their behaviour has taken a **turn for the worst**.
- They **struggle to regulate themselves** without a device when they're upset.

Government guidance

The UK government has guidance, created alongside experts, which outlines the appropriate amount and type of screen time for children aged 5 and under.

This guidance includes:

- Children **under 2** should **avoid all independent screen time**.
- Children **aged 2-5** should only have **1 hour maximum per day**. Less if possible.
- Prioritise **slow-paced content**.
- Use **parental controls** to block inappropriate content.
- Keep young children **off social media** (including your own account).
- Don't let young children use **AI chatbots, smart speakers or AI apps**.
- Try to **avoid background watching** (such as playing TV in the background while doing another activity).

Read the full guidance at
BestStartInLife.gov.uk

Scan or click
to see the
full guide

