

Resources

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School District of Rhineland

Teens and Technology

Information for Parents

- Screen Time
- Social Media
- Sexting



Screen Time

What is screen time?

Time spent engaged in any type of screen, including computers, TV, cell phones, or gaming

Important Considerations

Research suggests children ages 3-18 should be limited to 2 hours of screen time per day

Children ages 8-18 currently spend over 7 ½ hours per day, seven days a week using media outside of educational activities

Teenagers ages 12-17 report using phones to text in their daily lives more than any other form of communication, including face-to-face socializing

Studies have found that students who went 5 days without screen time were significantly better at reading facial emotions or other nonverbal cues than those who continued to have access to their media devices

Children's reasoning and judgment skills are still developing through adolescence, which can lead to poor planning, decision-making, and understanding of the risks of their technology habits

What can you do?

Create screen rules together, which could include:

- No texting or TV during meals
- No TV until after homework and chores are done
- The TV gets turned off at a set time at night
- The computer stays in a public room in the home
- Leave cell phones outside of the child's bedroom at night

Encourage activities that involve socializing and are related to the child's interests

Social Media

What is social media?

Websites and applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking

Examples include Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram, and YouTube

Important Considerations

83% of 13-17 year-olds report having visited a social networking site

More than 75% of 14-24 year-olds believe that digital abuse is a serious problem for people their age

Cyber Bullying

This is the most common online risk for all teens, and is defined as deliberately using digital media to communicate false, embarrassing, or hostile information about another person

What goes online stays online

Many adolescents lack the awareness that posting inappropriate messages, pictures, and videos can leave a digital footprint and can impact their future

What can you do?

Establish rules for internet use:

- What sites your child can visit
- Who they can talk to
- How long they can be online
- When they can use the computer

Monitor your child's activities when they are online through supervision and/or software

Look for warning signs that something abnormal is occurring in regards to your child's internet use, such as becoming withdrawn or obsessive use

Sexting

What is sexting?

The act of sending, receiving, or retaining sexually explicit text messages, pictures, or video using cell phones or other digital media technology

Important Considerations

24% of 14-17 year-olds report having been involved in some type of sexting

Emotional Considerations

Vulnerable to blackmail, bullying, and harm

Legal Ramifications

By sending an explicit image, a young person is producing and distributing child abuse images and risks being prosecuted

No control over how images will be shared

Images can be saved or copied by others, and could be found in the future which can impact college acceptance and job applications

What can you do?

Outline your expectations and explain the rules of having a phone

Explain that your child's body is private and that being asked to 'sext' is inappropriate

Remind your child that even if they trust the person who is asking for a picture, the nature of their relationship could change in the future

Set parental controls for cell phones:

- Restrict camera use, voice calls, time of day the phone will work, block content, limit wireless web access
- Check with your cell phone provider for available parental controls

Reassure your child you will be supportive and understanding should they ever want to talk about sexting