

# PARENTING TIPSHEET BALANCING SCREEN TIME

IT'S HOW  
WE CONNECT



As a parent, it may be difficult to know where to start when it comes to setting limits on children's online activity. How much time online is too much? How can you set reasonable limits? And more to the point, how can you enforce them? Here are some tips to help you bring a mindful balance to your family's use of digital technology.

## 1. AGREE LIMITS

Talk to your children about the amount of digital time they're living and then, based on what you agree is a healthy balance, set 'switched off' times of day. Help your children create a media use roster allocating blocks of time for homework, chores and their screen time.

## 2. BE AN OFFLINE SUPPORTER

Support and encourage your kids in activities that don't involve a digital device. A ball game or reading a book are all great ways to show kids how they can enjoy themselves without a mobile, tablet or computer.

## 3. SET FAMILY RULES

Make sure you're seen as a positive example. Do you want the dinner table to be a device-free zone? If so, then have everyone (including Mum and Dad) turn off their mobile phones and devices during dinner, or when taking part in family activities. Children are happier following rules if everyone in the family plays by them.

## 4. TURN OFF DEVICES BEFORE BEDTIME

Lack of sleep can affect alertness, concentration and memory. For a better night's sleep try encouraging children to switch off at least one hour before bedtime. Create a charging station and charge all household devices in the one spot overnight.

## 5. MAKE THE MOST OF PARENTAL CONTROLS

Many parental controls tools allow you to set time-of-day restrictions on children's device usage. We recommend Telstra Mobile Protect for mobile devices and Telstra Broadband Protect for your home network.

## 6. CONSIDER THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TYPES OF SCREEN TIME

Not all screen time is created equal. Think about the differences between using a device for homework or creative expression versus using it for passive entertainment.