HEALTH PROMOTING SCHOOLS

Reduce Screen Time – Unwind Your Mind

Adapted from an APPLE Schools resource

HEALTH NOTE FACTS:

Winter break is a great way to increase family connections by spending time together and being present with family and friends.It is also a great opportunity for you and your family to reduce your screen time and unwind your mind.

Support your children to practice mindfulness during the season by encouraging them to be aware of their thoughts, feelings, body, and surroundings. Paying attention to the present moment can help children and adults learn to control their thoughts and feelings. Teaching children to slow down and focus on taking deep breaths can help them gain perspective on their situation. Unwinding the mind can also lower anxiety and help with problem-solving.

Reducing screen time is one important way that kids can be more present with family and friends during the winter break. The Canadian 24-Hour Movement guidelines specify the importance of movement for children and reducing screen time. The break can provide an opportunity to increase family activity and limit recreational screen use to no more than 2 hours per day.

RESOURCE LINKS:

- 24-Hour Movement Guidelines – 24-Hour Movement Guidelines
- Screen use and young children | Caring for kids
- Mindfulness - CMHA National
- screen-time-nobodys-perfect.pdf
- Healthy Screen Use | Centre for Healthy Screen Use
- Healthy Screen Use | Resource Library

Additional Tips:

Try some of the tips below to increase family time and reduce screens:

- Set an example and take a pause from your screens and devices over the winter break.
- Set aside some time to read together, play a board game or do some cooking.
- Develop guidelines for screen use according to age of child. Screen time is not recommended for children younger than 2 years of age. Children 2 to 5 years of age should have limited use- no more than one hour per day, and 2 hours or less for schools age kids.
- Support your child's reduction of screens by being patient as they transition to other activities: walking the dog, making a snowman, going to the library.
- The winter break can be a great opportunity to check out your local recreation center activity programs or borrow some outdoor equipment- snowshoes, cross -country skis.
- Plan a road trip to visit family and friends.
- Try yoga, dancing or a game of frisbee in the snow.



***Remember: Unwind your mind by turning off devices one hour before bed!**