

Families First Newsletter

Made possible by the Rock Island Arsenal Family Advocacy Program.

Published by the Child Abuse Council

We value your feedback!



Let us know how you are liking the newsletter by taking this month's survey at: <https://forms.gle/xVexMdoxfcHEMcieA0>

Screen Time During Coronavirus Crisis

What limits are appropriate when kids are stuck at home?

by Hannah Sheldon-Dean

For many families, screen time is a touchy subject even in the best of times. Now, with parents and kids holed up together 24/7 and everything from school to birthday parties taking place online, it's even harder to know how to put boundaries on your child's screen time.

To support remote learning, many schools are distributing laptops or tablets for each student, so access to screens has increased in many households. Plus, you may be working from home without your usual childcare supports, which leaves you with less time to keep tabs on your kids' screen use.

Given all these unusual stressors, there's no right answer when it comes to managing screen time during the coronavirus crisis. But our experts have some tips to help you set expectations, support your child and — maybe most important of all! — cut yourself some slack.

Set boundaries — when you can

Right now, limits on screen time will probably look a lot different than they once did. Start by acknowledging — to your kids and to yourself — that with school and socializing happening online, increased screen time is unavoidable. But there are still techniques you can use to maintain boundaries: start with compassion, offer additional screen time as a bonus, brainstorm alternatives, keep a schedule, stay the course, and model healthy screen use.

Prioritize Wellness

Another way of thinking about screen time is to look at how your child is spending their time in general... Before coronavirus crisis, the checklist might have included things like spending time with friends, keeping up with schoolwork, and participating in extracurriculars. Now, the specific will look different, but you can still use the same idea to assess whether your child is spending too much time on screen. Ask yourself:

- Is my child sleeping and eating a somewhat balanced diet?
 - Are they getting some form of exercise every day?
 - Are they getting some quality time with family?
 - Do they use screen time to keep in touch with friends?
 - Are they invested in and keeping up with schoolwork?
- If you can answer yes to most of those questions, then it's probably not a huge deal if your child is getting some extra screen time these days.

Emphasize social connections

When it comes to limiting time on screens, there's one important exception: social connections. Dr. Anderson recommends taking advantage of technology to stay connected with friends and family, even if doing so means your child spends a little more time on screens than you typically allow.

Be present for your child

The kind of content your child interacts with is just as important as how much time they're spending on screens. To ensure that your child is spending their newly expanded screen time in appropriate ways, the best strategy is often to check in frequently and connect with your child over the things they're interested in.

Go easy on yourself — and your kids

As with so many aspects of life during the coronavirus crisis, it's impossible for anyone to be the perfect parent right now. "This is not a time for strict limits," Dr. Anderson says. If relaxing rules around screens gives you time to work, exercise, or do whatever else you need to do, accept that that may be the best decision right now. "If you can give yourself a B minus at the end of the day, with a few meltdowns from your kids but everyone's fed and getting some sleep, you're doing pretty well," says Dr. Anderson. Right now, having compassion for yourself and your family is much more important than getting the rules just right.

For the full article please visit: childmind.org/article/screen-time-during-the-coronavirus-crisis/

IN THIS ISSUE:

Screen Time During COVID

STEM Challenge!

Kids in the Kitchen: S'mores

Book Nook

STEM Challenge



SOLDIERS

FAMILIES

RETIREEES

CIVILIANS

STEM Challenge! Electricity

Try this simple, but fun experiment to see what things you can find around your house that conducts electricity.

Materials:

- Battery
- Small bulb (flashlight bulbs work great)
- Aluminum foil (folded and rolled)
- Tray
- Objects to test: a key, eraser, coin, nail, chalk, piece of wood, a candle, etc.

Set up your experiment by rolling up your foil, placing the battery at one end touching the foil and the bulb at the other end not touching the foil.

Place an object between the battery and the bulb (on the foil) then touch the base of the bulb to the foil to see if it will light up or not.



Find this experiment and more at: carrotsareorange.com

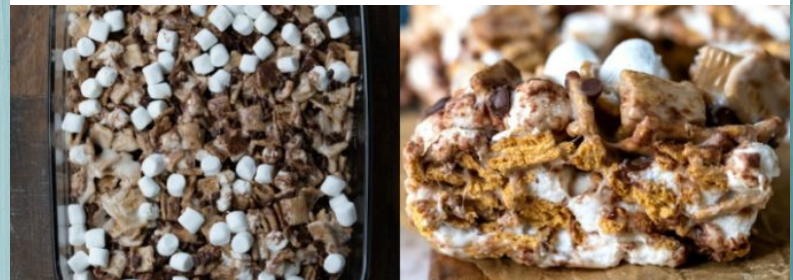
Kids in the Kitchen: Golden Graham S'mores

Ingredients:

- 6 tablespoons butter
- 21 oz mini marshmallows
- 8 1/2 cups Golden Grahams
- 3/4 cup mini semisweet chocolate chips

Instructions:

1. Grease 9x13 baking dish (set aside)
2. In large sauce pan, low heat, melt butter
3. Add 16 oz marshmallows, stir until melted
4. Remove from heat
5. Stir in Golden Grahams until combined
6. Add chocolate chips, remaining marshmallows, stir to combine
7. Press mixture into baking dish
8. Let cool to room temperature, cute, and ENJOY!



Book Nook

Books for Young Adults (12+)

- Influencer by Sara Shepard
- The Girls I've Been by Tess Sharpe
- The Electric Kingdom by David Arnold
- The Gilded Ones by Namina Forna
- Gone by Michael Grant
- It's Kind of a Funny Story by Ned Vizzini

Books for Teens & Young Adults

- Aftershocks by Nadia Owusu
- That Old Country Music by Kevin Barry
- Walking with Ghosts by Gabriel Byrne
- Girl A by Abigail Dean
- We Begin at the End by Chris Whitaker
- Bad Blood by John Carreyrou

MILITARY FATHERS!

If you are a military father – meaning you or your spouse is active, retired, or a guard member – you are invited to be a part of our monthly fatherhood activities! Each month we plan an activity specifically for children and their fathers. Twice a year we open these activities up to the whole family! All events are FREE and are at different community venues. Past outings have been fishing, ice skating, trampoline park, and many more. To learn more about the next activity email Jennifer Kerr at jennifer.a.kerr10.civ@mail.mil or Alyssa Acton at AlyssaA@childabuseqc.org