

Screen Time and Children's Mental Health

Primary school aged children are increasingly connected to the digital world and in our homes, children have access to multiple devices that are connected to the internet. This creates challenges for parents in terms of supervising both the content and the time frame of their child's internet use.

Too much time on the computer or internet can lead to isolation from friends and family and can have negative impact on your child's health and wellbeing. Australia's National Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines recommend two hours or less per day for children aged 5 to 17 years. This includes all screen time; television, gaming and internet use. The Raising Children's Network (raisingchildren.net.au) recommends the following strategies to encourage appropriate screen time:

- Talk with your child about what they are doing online and find out why it matters to them
- Ensure your child has opportunities to take part in a wide range of physical and social activities.
- Set reasonable limits on internet and gaming time
- Negotiate consequences for not sticking to the time limits
- Agree on a particular times that will be internet and screen free.

The following websites have excellent information to support parents:

<http://raisingchildren.net.au>

<https://www.esafety.gov.au>