



KidsHealth.org/classroom

Teacher's Guide

This guide includes:

- Standards
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- Discussion Questions
- Activities for Students
- Reproducible Materials

Standards

This guide correlates with the following National Health Education Standards:

Students will:

- Comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention to enhance health.
- Analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology, and other factors on health behaviors.
- Demonstrate the ability to access valid information and products and services to enhance health.
- Demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.
- Demonstrate the ability to use decision-making skills to enhance health.
- Demonstrate the ability to use goal-setting skills to enhance health.
- Demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and avoid or reduce health risks.
- Demonstrate the ability to advocate for personal, family, and community health.

National Health Education Standards: www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/sher/standards/index.htm

When teens spend so many hours looking at a TV, computer, tablet, phone, or video game screen, they have less time for other important things, like exercise, learning, real-world socializing, and even sleep. These activities will encourage students to discover healthier, more active ways to spend their time.

Related KidsHealth Links

Articles for Teens:

Why Exercise Is Wise

TeensHealth.org/en/teens/exercise-wise.html

Easy Exercises for Teens

TeensHealth.org/en/teens/easy-exercises.html

How to Pick a Great Book

TeensHealth.org/en/teens/books.html

Technology: 5 Ways to Reboot Yourself

TeensHealth.org/en/teens/reboot.html

Are Video Games Good for the Mind?

TeensHealth.org/en/teens/gaming.html

5 Ideas for Better Sleep

TeensHealth.org/en/teens/tips-sleep.html

Discussion Questions

Note: The following questions are written in language appropriate for sharing with your students.

1. In your opinion, can teens become “addicted” to their screens (phones, tablets, computer, TV, video games)? Is it possible to break the habit?
2. How can too much screen time interfere with a healthy lifestyle?
3. Is it difficult to disconnect from your gadgets and screens at night? Would you agree or disagree with experts who say that an inability to unplug at bedtime can affect teens’ sleep habits?
4. How do family members’ screen-time habits rub off on each other? Would you be more likely to turn off your TV, computer, and phone if the rest of your family did the same?



Activities for Students

Note: The following activities are written in language appropriate for sharing with your students.

Screen-Time Tracker

Objectives:

Students will:

- Assess their daily screen-time habits
- Try to replace screen time with healthier activities

Materials:

- “Screen-Time Tracker” handout
- Pencil or pen

Class Time:

- 25 minutes (5 minutes explaining the assignment, 20 minutes after completing the handout over 2 weeks)

Activity:

Not including homework, how much time do you spend in front of a screen each day? If you’re like most teens, it’s probably a lot. During Week 1, use the Screen-Time Tracker to record how much time you spend watching TV; playing video games; or using a smartphone, tablet, or computer (other than for homework). During Week 2, continue to record your screen time, but make it a goal to cut back. When you’re about to watch TV, play a video game, or go online, try a screen-free activity. After the second week, we’ll talk about the changes you made. Did you feel any differently? Did you get more done?

Extension:

Make copies of the “Screen-Time Tracker” handout for each of your family members. See who can score the lowest amount of screen-time hours. What were the most fun activities that didn’t involve a TV, computer, tablet, smartphone, or video game screen?



Sleepless in Screenville

Objectives:

Students will:

- Research the effects of screen time on sleep

Materials:

- Paper and pencil or pen

Class Time:

- 45 minutes

Activity:

After reading the TeensHealth articles about screen time and sleep, write a response to this letter to the school newspaper advice columnist. Be sure to give plenty of facts that will help “Sleepless in Screenville” convince her sister that powering down, especially at night, is important for good health.

Help! Ever since I started sharing a room with my sister, I haven't been able to sleep. The TV is always on. Her friends text all night. She even wakes up to check Instagram and her Facebook page. She's just as tired as I am the next day. How can I convince her that the world won't end if she focuses on getting a good night's sleep?
– Sleepless in Screenville

Extension:

On Day 1, have students track the way they spend their time on a typical weekday. On Day 2, ask them to make sure to include at least 1 hour of exercise or physical activity (walking or biking to school and other active daily routines count), 8 to 10 hours of sleep, and as little screen time as possible (homework using a computer does not count). Have them write an essay about how Day 2 went, and ways they might be able to make meeting the Day 2 goals easier.

Reproducible Materials

Handout: Screen-Time Tracker

KidsHealth.org/classroom/9to12/personal/fitness/screen_time_handout1.pdf

Quiz: Screen Time

KidsHealth.org/classroom/9to12/personal/fitness/screen_time_quiz.pdf

Answer Key: Screen Time

KidsHealth.org/classroom/9to12/personal/fitness/screen_time_quiz_answers.pdf



Name: _____

Date: _____

Screen-Time Tracker

Directions: Fill in the number of hours, to the nearest quarter-hour, you spend with each type of screen during Week 1. Add up the daily hours in the last column, then add up the total hours for the week here: _____ hours.

Week 1	Computer*	Mobile Devices*	TV	Video Games	Total Hours
Monday					
Tuesday					
Wednesday					
Thursday					
Friday					
Saturday					
Sunday					

*not including use for homework



Personal Health Series Screen Time

Name: _____

Date: _____

Screen-Time Tracker

Directions: Fill in the number of hours, to the nearest quarter-hour, you spend with each type of screen during Week 2. Add up the daily hours in the last column, then add up the total hours for the week here: _____ hours. List your screen-free alternatives at the bottom.

Week 2	Computer*	Mobile Devices*	TV	Video Games	Total Hours
Monday					
Tuesday					
Wednesday					
Thursday					
Friday					
Saturday					
Sunday					

*not including use for homework

Screen-free alternatives: _____



Name: _____

Date: _____

Quiz

1. True or false: Overdoing screen time is linked to lower grades and a higher chance of becoming overweight.
2. True or false: Turning off the TV at night is a good way to help you fall asleep.
3. Teens should exercise at least _____ minutes a day.
4. Teens sleep this much each night:
 - a) 7 hours
 - b) 7½ hours
 - c) 8 hours
 - d) 8 to 10 hours
 - e) 9½ to 10 hours
5. True or false: Participation in team or individual sports is the only way to get healthy exercise.
6. True or false: Walking or biking to school counts as exercise.
7. Exercising causes the body to produce _____, which are chemicals that can help a person feel more peaceful and happy.
8. True or false: Teens who spend lots of time sitting in front of TV, video, and computer screens and using their smartphones are more likely to be overweight.
9. True or false: Texting doesn't count as screen time.
10. You can get better sleep if you:
 - a) and your friends agree not to message after a set time
 - b) charge your phone away from your bedroom
 - c) power down your computer at night
 - d) turn off the TV
 - e) all of the above



Quiz Answer Key

1. True or false: Overdoing screen time is linked to lower grades and a higher chance of becoming overweight.
2. True or false: Turning off the TV at night is a good way to help you fall asleep.
3. Teens should exercise at least 60 minutes a day.
4. Teens sleep this much each night:
 - a) 7 hours
 - b) 7½ hours
 - c) 8 hours
 - d) 8 to 10 hours
 - e) 9½ to 10 hours
5. True or false: Participation in team or individual sports is the only way to get healthy exercise.
6. True or false: Walking or biking to school counts as exercise.
7. Exercising causes the body to produce endorphins, which are chemicals that can help a person feel more peaceful and happy.
8. True or false: Teens who spend lots of time sitting in front of TV, video, and computer screens and using their smartphones are more likely to be overweight.
9. True or false: Texting doesn't count as screen time.
10. You can get better sleep if you:
 - a) and your friends agree not to message after a set time
 - b) charge your phone away from your bedroom
 - c) power down your computer at night
 - d) turn off the TV
 - e) all of the above