

How much screen time is too much time for your kids?

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How much screen time is too much for a child? Reports of teens facing high rates of depression, anxiety and loneliness have led to recommendations about their use of social media.

Dr. Nusheen Ameenuddin is a Mayo Clinic pediatrician and a member of the American Academy of Pediatrics. While there are many benefits to technology, she says it also can affect children and teens in negative ways, including some [behavioral changes](#).

Is your teen always texting? Or gaming? Or you just don't know?

"We've always told [parents](#) to try to monitor their children's online content, to try to limit it, to make sure that it's not affecting their sleep or their schoolwork or their mood," says Dr. Ameenuddin.

And she says that's a huge job. Kids can get online, literally, from the palms of their hands.

"For parents, I would recommend that they check in with their kid and try to find out what [kids](#) are doing when they're online," she says. "Are they spending time playing games with friends? Or are they searching for things? Are they using it for schoolwork?"

Excessive use of social media can be related to how it affects your [child](#), she says.

"Anything that is affecting your child's sleep, anything that's affecting their mood, anything that is affecting their [academic performance](#) would be considered excessive use," says Dr. Ameenuddin.

She says that parents and adult caregivers know their children best and are likely in the best position to know what is or isn't excessive. If you are concerned, she says talk with your child's pediatrician or health care team for advice.

Screen time tips

Screen time can refer to time spent on smartphones, tablets, TVs or gaming devices. That could mean texting friends, watching videos or movies, playing games, doing homework, and browsing the internet.

Here are some ways to help establish healthy screen time habits.

- **Communicate:** Talk openly with your [children](#) about the video games and content they engage with online.
- **Set "no screen" times:** Designate periods without screens, like mealtime and one hour before bed.
- **Bedroom charging:** Encourage charging devices outside the [bedroom](#) for better sleep.
- **Lead by example:** Demonstrate healthy screen habits, such as putting your phone on "do not disturb" during family time and during dinner.

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