# Managing Screen Time

Managing the distractions that our screens provide is an important life skill that is necessary in today's world. We are constantly bombarded by notifications, text messages, photos, emails, and more. Today's kids are growing up in this world surrounded by screens and technology and they often feel they know more about technology than adults. However, they do need adult guidance on how to achieve a healthy lifestyle - balancing homework, exercise, reading, snacking, and screen time. Managing the distractions that come with all of this technology is a very important skill they need to develop starting early on.

It is important to note that there is a difference between a student's technology use for school and for entertainment. Technology is an important and valuable tool for learning and students are not distracted or addicted to this technology. What students need to develop is the ability to do their homework on a device without succumbing to the distractions from other apps and notifications. They also need help in managing the time they spend on their phones and laptops beyond homework.

### Lower School
- Students at this age will have very little homework online. Most of their technology use will be for pleasure.
- Limit their time on the screen - no more than an hour a day (even encourage use every other day so they can have a break)
- Do not let them join "social media" sites (instagram, snap chat, )
- Make sure they use their technology in a family space and not alone in their room
- Encourage creative use of their device - taking pictures, making movies, drawing, coding
- Encourage them to get outside and do something active for at least as long as they were on their device.

### Middle School
- Allow use of social media only AFTER having conversation about cyberbullying, posts and pictures never disappearing from the Internet, and their digital footprint.
- Check in with your child and have them show you who they are connected to on social sites.
- Hold off providing them a cell phone for as long as you can (at least 13 years old is recommended)
- Have children "park" their cell phones in the kitchen or some regular spot before bedtime. NEVER allow them to take their cell phone to bed.
- Consider filtering your Internet access to keep unwanted sites from turning up on your family devices. **Note: these filters DO NOT filter certain apps i.e. porn found on Instagram still gets through
- Talk about access to porn (especially if you have a son). Devices bring about easy access to porn (and in most cases they cannot be blocked by a filter. Educate your children on the dangers of porn.
- Limit their use of non-school technology. Emphasizing a balance of outdoor activity, face-to-face socializing, family time and reading with the amount of time they spend on screens.
- If distraction during homework becomes a problem, consider physically moving the phone out of the homework area ("park" it). If that doesn't work, consider using some software or apps that help them keep on task (see reverse).

### Upper School
- Continue conversations with your teen about their use and their balance of homework, activities, and screen time.
- Have children "park" their cell phones in the kitchen or some regular spot before bedtime. NEVER allow them to take their cell phone to bed.
- They should begin to be able to self-monitor their distractions. If not, help them with options: either physically moving away from the device or adding apps or software to help.
- Continue to talk about your teen about their digital footprint and about what they post online.
- Talk about access to porn (especially if you have a son). Devices bring about easy access to porn (and in most cases they cannot be blocked by a filter. Educate your children on the dangers of porn.

**Waynflete**

# Tools for Helping Distracted Tech Users

**easily adopted and configured**

↓

**more complex and more comprehensive**

## Flipd https://www.flipdapp.co/    **FREE**    **iOS/Android**

Locks your phone or iPad on one app for a set amount of time. Use it during homework, during classes. Set schedules.

## StayFocusd http://www.stayfocusd.com/    **FREE**    **Chrome (laptop)**

Chrome PlugIn for laptops/desktops. Block certain websites from access or allow you only a set amount of time on those websites before locking you out.

## Freedom http://www.stayfocusd.com/    **FREE**    **iOS/Android**

This is the phone/iPad friendly version of StayFocusd. This has limited use without upgrading to the premium version.

## SelfControl https://selfcontrolapp.com/   **FREE**   **MacOS/Chrome (laptop)**

Chrome PlugIn for laptops/desktops or downloadable on a MscOS. Block certain websites from access or allow you only a set amount of time on those websites before locking you out. The downloadable version is harder to work around.

## DinnerTime Plus http://www.dinnertimeapp.com/ **FREE**   **iOS/Android**

This mobile app allows parents to control their children's phone from their phone. The free version is version is limited. When you upgrade, you can get usage reports, monitor your children in "real time" and control more than one child.

## Circle https://meetcircle.com/circle/    **$99**    **Home network hardware**

Circle is a small box (hardware) which you install on your home wifi. It will filter your Internet, block certain websites, limit time on certain sites, and monitor wifi use.

*Created by: Page Lennig, March 2018*

**Waynflete**