

Online Safety Newsletter: February 2019

Is screen time affecting your child's sleep?

“88% said screen time had a negative impact on their sleep”

(Source: Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health.)

The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH) have recently published a guide which reviews the existing research on screen time usage by children. As a result of this research they have published a number of recommendations. One of those recommendations is around screen use before bed time.

“Does screen use interfere with sleep?

Even quite modest sleep deprivation can interfere with mental and physical health, educational success and family relations. It is important, therefore, that screens do not interfere with a good bedtime routine, either for children or adults, and **we would adopt the expert recommendation that screens are avoided for an hour before the planned bedtime.”**

(Source: January 2019, Page 7, https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2018-12/rcpch_screen_time_guide_-_final.pdf)

“Protect sleep

Most experts advise that children are not exposed to screens for an hour before bed, so that their brains have time to wind down for sleep without the stimulation from the light of the screen (and the content being viewed). Some manufacturers have introduced ‘night-modes’ which emit less blue light, but there is no evidence that these are effective so we do not think that this makes screen use before bed ‘OK’.”

(Source: January 2019, Page 9, https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2018-12/rcpch_screen_time_guide_-_final.pdf)

For more information and to read the RCPCH screen time parent fact sheet, visit: <https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/resources/health-impacts-screen-time-guide-clinicians-parents>

5 Tools for Using Your Phone Less

Commonsense Media have created this short video and article showing you some of the tools available on the most popular platforms to help you use your phone less:

<https://www.commonsemmedia.org/blog/use-your-phone-less-with-tools-from-apple-google-snapchat-and-more>

How SMART are you?

A quiz that you can play online with your child (ages 7-11) which is not only great for starting a conversation but reinforces the SMART rules:

<https://www.childnet.com/young-people/primary/smart-rules-quiz>

Toca Boca Apps

Toca Boca have released 42 apps so far for younger children including their latest release 'Toca Kitchen Sushi' (Aged 4+, £3.99 iTunes).

Their apps are safe and fun to play and there is bound to be at least one of their games that your child will love!

O2 NSPCC Online Safety Helpline

You can call **0808 800 5002** (Mon – Fri 9am – 7pm) if you or your child have any Online Safety questions. More info available here:
<https://www.o2.co.uk/help/nspcc/helpline>

Chatting in games

Most popular online games include the ability to chat with others, likely strangers. We've looked at 3 of the most popular games to show you how to disable chat (where possible). If you don't want to turn chat off then we recommend children play without a headset and in a room where you can hear their conversations. As always, ensure your children know how to report players and they know that they should also talk to you or a trusted adult if anything concerns them.

Fortnite (PEGI rating 12+)

Fortnite contains voice and text chat systems. You can turn the voice chat off **but not the text chat**. To turn chat off, go to Settings, Audio and switch voice chat to off.

Minecraft (PEGI rating 7+)

In multiplayer mode children can chat with other people. To turn chat off, click 'options', select multiplayer settings and click on chat choose shown, hidden or commands only.

Roblox (PEGI rating 7+)

For users aged 12 and under, Roblox automatically enforce more restricted settings so they can only

directly message other friends (that they've accepted) **but does your child know all their 'friends' on Roblox? Are they signed up with their right age?** To adjust the chat and interaction settings of your child's account, click on the gear icon in the upper right corner and click Settings, click the Privacy option and adjust the Contact Settings and Other Settings.



Snapchat – reporting tools



If your child is using Snapchat (although children should be over 13 to use it), ensure that they know how to report anything upsetting or inappropriate and they know that they should also talk to you or a trusted adult.

- **To report a Story on Snapchat:** Press and hold on the Snap until a  button appears. Tap it to report the Story.
- **To report a Snap someone sent you:** Press and hold on the Snap until a  button appears. Tap it to report the Snap.
- **To report a Snapchat account:** Press and hold on that Snapchatter's name and tap the button. Tap 'Report' to report the account.
- **To report a Story on the web:** Click the  button on the video, then click 'Report'.
- **To hide something on Discover:** Press and hold a tile on the Discover screen, then tap 'See less like this' or unsubscribe.

For further information and help from Snapchat go to: <https://www.snapchat.com/l/en-gb/safety>