

Healthy Children

September 2018 Parent Newsletter



5 Easy Ways to Tame Tech Use

What happens in your home when it's time to turn off the screens? Epic whining? Begging for just 15 more minutes? Dramatic allegations that you are the strictest of ALL parents? You are not alone. Flashy games, social media and endless online video content make technology very appealing to kids and adults alike. Parents often struggle with how to get their kids unplugged more often. It's not always easy but it can be simpler than you think. Here are five ways to tame tech use:

1. Make tech-free times. For example, at the dinner table or when guests are visiting.
2. Get out in nature. Nature can be a delightful distraction! Get out of cellular range for the full tech-free effect.
3. Make sure screen use doesn't cut

into important sleep time. Keep screens out of the bedroom.

4. Encourage a range of activities. As the old adage goes, variety is the spice of life.
5. Be a good role model with your own screen time habits. Follow the rules your family has agreed on.

Taming technology in your home doesn't mean your child can't play video games, watch movies or text their friends. What's most important is that families have plenty of media-free time to enjoy relationships, hobbies and memorable adventures.

➤ **For more information about screen time, visit**
http://www.csep.ca/CMFiles/Guidelines/CanadianSedentaryGuidelinesStatements_E_2012.pdf

Articles

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Bike Safety: What should parents know?

Does your child's school have an AMA Youth Run Club?

The Alberta Medical Association (AMA) and Ever Active Schools have brought a free, award-winning program for school-aged children to Alberta schools. They can provide schools with resources and support for new and/or existing run clubs. To learn more visit www.amayouthrunclub.com/



Bike Safety: What parents should know

This fall, your child may want to exert some independence by biking to school or to another destination on their own. If you are trying to decide if your child is ready to bike alone, consider if they are ready to judge traffic and safety risks.

Your child's ability to ride on the road is based on their experience, environment and development. Most children are not ready to ride in traffic until they are between 10 and 14 years old. Before they can ride on the road they will need to learn safe practices, such as:

- Paying attention
- Using brakes and hand signals
- Learning car and traffic signals
- Staying away from major risks such as busy intersections or hidden driveways
- Passing pedestrians safely

Also consider the route your child will take to school. Is there



a lot of traffic or construction? Are there safe intersections to cross at?

Whether they are with you or alone, your child must wear a helmet. It is the law in Alberta. Bike helmets can protect your child from head injury by as much as 80%! But all helmets are not made equal. Ensure your child is wearing the right helmet for cycling. Other wheeled activities such as skateboarding require a different type of helmet. Also ensure your child's helmet is a good fit. The [AHS](#)

[Bike Helmet YES](#) test will help guide you in buying, fitting and using the helmet properly.

Be a role model by wearing your helmet on every ride. Teaching and practicing the rules of the road, and wearing the right gear will help make this biking season a safe one.

➤ For more information about bike and small wheeled recreation safety, visit Myhealth.Alberta.ca