

# Healthy Teens

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? Lengthy negotiations? 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 teens 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 service range for the full tech-free effect.
3. Make sure late-night online chatting, surfing and texting doesn't cut into important sleep

time. Ask your teen to give you their cell phone at a certain time at the end of the day so sleep is not interrupted.

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 teen 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](http://www.csep.ca/CMFiles/Guidelines/CanadianSedentaryGuidelinesStatements_E_2012.pdf)

## Articles

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### 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/](http://www.amayouthrunclub.com/)



**Alberta Health Services**

## Teen Driver Safety

For many teenagers in Alberta, driving is often a big step toward independence. It is an exciting time, but also a risky time; as crashes are highest among teenagers in their first year of unsupervised driving. This is because most new drivers underestimate risks and overestimate their abilities.

Teens must know how to recognize and manage the risk of driving, like bad weather, unruly passengers and other drivers. In order to reduce the risk of crashes, teach your teen to take **Smart Risks** when they are driving.

Encourage your teen to **Look First**. This means being prepared to drive, every time by checking road conditions and mapping routes before they get in the car. It is also important to check tires, adjust seats and rearview mirrors before driving.

Teens must always **Buckle Up** their seatbelt, no matter how short the drive. It's the law.

Teens can **Get Trained** by taking a driver's education course and learning from an unbiased expert with years of experience teaching new drivers.

For teenagers, it's the law to



**Drive Sober.** Set a rule against drinking or taking drugs and driving for your teen. Aside from always encouraging your teen to take smart risks when driving, there are many things you can do to help keep your teen safe.

1. Set a good example behind the wheel by modeling the smart risk behaviours above. Always wear your seatbelt, never speed and be respectful of other drivers and pedestrians on the road.
2. In addition to driver's education, teach your teen how to drive under your supervision in low risk conditions before moving up to more risky situations.
3. Stay informed about Alberta's graduated driving

license laws and start a conversation with your teen about them.

4. Use the Parent/Teen Driving Agreement with your teen to start and keep an open, honest dialogue about their driving behaviour. It will also help you work together to set boundaries, build trust and help your teen stay safe on the roads.

**> To access the Parent/Teen Driving Agreement, visit <https://myhealth.alberta.ca/Alberta/AlbertaDocuments/hi-ip-pipt-chc-parent-teen-driving-agreement-ho.pdf>**

**> For more information about graduated driver licensing, visit <http://www.transportation.alberta.ca/1852.htm>**