

# Online Safety Newsletter

## Monitoring Screen Time

**T**eenagers who spend too much time on screens and mobile phones are at risk of a number of dangers, including:

- **Poor sleep:** The blue light emitted from screens can interfere with the production of melatonin, a hormone that helps regulate sleep. This can lead to problems such as insomnia, fatigue, and difficulty concentrating.
- **Increased risk of obesity:** Teenagers who spend more time watching TV or playing video games are more likely to be overweight or obese. This is because they are less likely to be physically active and more likely to snack while they are watching screens.
- **Addiction:** Social media and gaming can be addictive, and teenagers who spend too much time on these activities may experience problems such as anxiety, depression, and poor academic performance.
- **Mental health problems:** Teenagers who spend too much time on screens are more likely to experience mental health problems such as anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem. This is because they may compare themselves to others online, feel isolated from their peers, or be exposed to negative content.
- **Cyberbullying:** Cyberbullying is when someone uses technology to bully another person. This can include sending mean or threatening messages, posting embarrassing photos or videos, or spreading rumours online. Cyberbullying can have a devastating impact on the victim's mental health.
- **Online predators:** Online predators are adults who pose as children in order to prey on young people. They may try to befriend children online, ask for personal information, or send inappropriate messages.

**It is important for parents to talk to their teenagers about the dangers of spending too much time on screens and mobile phones. Parents can set limits on screen time, encourage their teenagers to be physically active, and help them develop healthy online habits. Here are some tips for parents on how to help their teenagers reduce their screen time:**

- **Set limits on screen time.** Talk to your teenager about how much time they spend on screens each day and set limits that you both agree on.
- **Encourage physical activity.** Help your teenager find ways to be physically active, such as playing sports, going for walks, or riding their bike.
- **Help them develop healthy online habits.** Talk to your teenager about the risks of online predators and cyberbullying. Encourage them to be careful about what they share online and to never meet up with someone they met online in person without your permission.
- **Be a role model.** If you want your teenager to reduce their screen time, it is important for you to set a good example. Limit your own screen time and make sure that you are spending quality time with your teenager without screens.

For further information, [nationalonlinesafety.com](http://nationalonlinesafety.com) have created a [guide to support parents](#)

