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NUTRITION NEWS

UC CalFresh Nutrition Education Program

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SCREEN FREE WEEK



WHAT is Screen-Free Week?

Screen-Free Week is an annual, international celebration when families, schools, and communities swap digital entertainment for the joys of life beyond the screen. Instead of watching TV, surfing the web, or playing with apps and video games, they read, play, think, create, get active, and spend more time with family and friends.

Screen-Free Week is about taking a break from digital entertainment. You can celebrate, and still use devices for work or school. But if screens of any kind interfere with family time (including meals), you may want to rethink how and when you're using them.



WHY Celebrate?

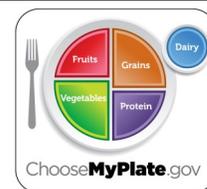
Regardless of whether children are consuming "good" or "bad" programming, it's clear that digital entertainment dominates the lives of far too many kids, displacing all sorts of other activities that are integral to childhood. Excessive screen time is linked to poor school performance, childhood obesity, and attention problems. And it is primarily through screens that children are exposed to harmful marketing.

Screen-Free Week is a fun way to reduce our dependence on digital entertainment, including television, video games, smartphones, tablets, and computers. It's a chance for children—and adults—to power down and reconnect with the world around them.

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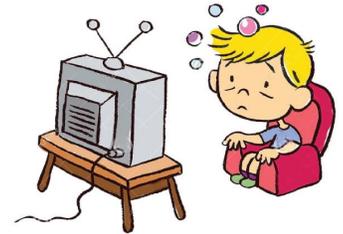
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RESEARCH SHOW BENEFITS OF REDUCED SCREEN TIME

- ★ Reducing screen time can help prevent childhood obesity.
- ★ Children who spend less time watching television in early years tend to do better in school, have a healthier diet, be more physically active, and be better able to engage in schoolwork in later elementary school.
- ★ Television viewing at a young age is associated with later behavioral problems, but not if heavy viewing is discontinued before age six.
- ★ Limiting exposure to television during the first 4 years of life may decrease children's interest in it in later years.



No app or program is as interactive as a teacher, parent, or playmate.

OLDER CHILDREN ARE ALSO AT RISK FROM EXCESSIVE SCREEN TIME

- ★ Children with 2 or more hours of daily screen time are more likely to have increased psychological difficulties, including hyperactivity, emotional and conduct problems, and difficulties with peers.
- ★ Adolescents who watch 3 or more hours of television daily are at especially high risk for poor homework completion, negative attitudes toward school, poor grades, and long-term academic failure.
- ★ Adolescents with a television in their bedroom spend more time watching TV and report less physical activity, less healthy dietary habits, worse school performance, and fewer family meals.

There's no evidence to support the popular view that children must start using screen technologies early on to succeed in a digital world. How children spend their time is important—lifelong habits and behaviors are formed in childhood.

Source: www.commercialfreechildhood.org

TEACHERS, PROMOTE SCREEN FREE WEEK

To prepare students for Screen Free Week, try to raise their awareness of how much time they spend watching television. Have your students keep a weeklong log of the TV they watch, including the names and times of the programs.

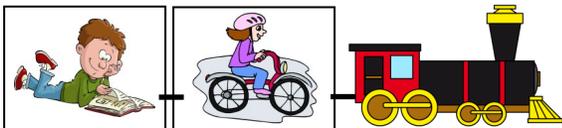
Have each student tabulate the number of hours they watched TV. This can start a discussion—make comparisons and reflect on differences. For older students, this can be tied to math lessons. Ask the students to figure out the average hours of TV watched daily, weekly, or annually.

	TV Program	Times
Sunday		
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		
TOTAL		

- ☺ On a large piece of paper write “Things to do instead of digital entertainment”. For younger students, ask for ideas and write them down. Post where all can see. As students think of more ideas, have them share and add to the list. For older kids, divide into groups and have a contest; who can come up with the most ideas in a specified time.
- ☺ Here’s an idea for one of you 5th grade teachers: have your students go to each class and survey the students about the types of digital devices in their homes (include TV, computers, phones, tablets, etc.). Next have students tally the data, figure out the percentages, and make bar graphs to display the survey results.

Some ideas taken from “Coping with TV: Some Lesson Ideas” by Bob Peterson

- ☺ Give students the topic and have them write stories:
 - If there were no TV’s
 - The town with no computers
 - The day all digital entertainment stopped working
 For younger students, create the story as a class. Older students can read their stories out loud to the rest of the class or share with younger grades.
- ☺ Ask students to work individually or in groups to create posters about **Screen Free Week** and display throughout the school.
- ☺ Explain to students that together you will create the Screen Free Train. Put the engine of the Screen-Free Train on the board. Tell them each student will get passenger car sheets to take home. Every time they choose an activity at home that does not use a screen (reading, drawing, dancing, playing outside, etc.) write or draw a picture of the activity on the passenger car and bring it back to school. Each day add new passenger cars to the Screen Free Train. Let’s see how long we can make the Screen Free Train!



**University of California
Cooperative Extension**

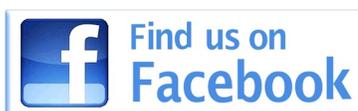
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[http://twitter.com/
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**Happy Healthy Me...Moving, Munching & Reading
Around MyPlate for 4 to 6 Years Olds**

Combines stories and literacy with nutrition education.

**Eating Healthy from Farm to Fork...Promoting
School Wellness**

A nutrition education curriculum that makes the connection between local food systems, garden-based learning, school food service, and the establishment of healthy habits. (K-2nd Grade)

My Amazing Body - 1st Grade

Good for Me and You - 2nd Grade

It's My Choice...Eat Right! Be Active! - 3rd Grade

These curricula promote healthy eating and physical activity. Children will gain skills to practice appropriate healthy behaviors.

Nutrition to Grow On

A garden-enhanced nutrition education curriculum. Objectives: 1) Teach the importance of making healthful food choices; and 2) improve children's preference for fruits and vegetables by giving them an opportunity to work with the land and grow their own produce. (4th-6th Grade)

Eatfit

A computer-based highly interactive nutrition and fitness program for middle and high school adolescents.

Jump Start

These cross-curricular lessons encourage high school students to eat healthy, keep moving and take action in their community.

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