



HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM YOUTH SPEAK OUT INTERNATIONAL






Over the holidays, while resisting a second serving of dessert, you might find an even bigger temptation in screen technologies like smartphones, tablets, laptops and video games. The holidays are a perfect opportunity to form memories together as a family that will last a lifetime, but family time can get lost as children and parents pick up their screens. During the school year, children spend nearly five hours per day on average using screen devices. Teens spend around seven hours per day. This holiday season, don't let the screen devices in your house gobble up your family's quality time together. Make sure your child's best memories are about real life and not events that take place on a screen.

Here are a few tips to help you engage face-to-face this holiday.

- To create more face-to-face time with your family, start by setting expectations. The most effective approach is mutual and collaborative in which both parents and children agree on how and when to use screen devices.
- Know the benefits of quality time. Interacting face-to-face strengthens relationships, improves our ability to communicate, and reduces the risk of depression.
- Most teens say that screen time is simply a way to pass the time. By having activities ready, you can help your family choose an alternative to screen time.
- Let the spirit of the holidays inspire your family to Just Unplug™. For instance, ask your child what they're most thankful for when devices are put away.

The holidays are a perfect time for families to slow down and practice managing screen time. Youth Speak Out International offers a free Family Media Agreement to support you and your children as you make new memories this holiday season. To download this Agreement go to www.youthspeakoutint.org/digital-addiction-intervention/.

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