

# SFC-SA Screen Time Guidelines



**\*Based on World Health Organisation Guidelines 2019**

AGE	TIME	IMPACT OF SCREEN TIME	PARENTING TIPS
0–2 years	0 hours/day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impaired ability to focus</li> <li>• Missed developmental milestones</li> <li>• Underdeveloped fine motor control</li> <li>• Delayed language development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No screens except video calls</li> <li>• Prioritise face-to-face interaction and sensory play</li> <li>• Encourage movement, exploration and real-world bond</li> </ul>
2–5 years	1 hour/day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impaired eyesight</li> <li>• Poor body control</li> <li>• Expectation of instant feedback</li> <li>• Delayed language and cognitive development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All screen time should be co-viewed with a parent</li> <li>• Discuss what was watched to build early critical thinking and emotional awareness</li> <li>• Choose calm, developmentally appropriate content</li> <li>• Prioritise imaginative play, storytelling, and hands-on activities</li> </ul>
5–10 years	2 hours/day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weak emotional impulse control</li> <li>• Social anxiety</li> <li>• Obsessive interest in games/videos</li> <li>• Impaired memory development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No personal device ownership</li> <li>• Use the 20–20–20 rule: every 20 minutes of screen use, take a 20-second break to look at something 20 feet away to protect eye health</li> <li>• Encourage hobbies, outdoor play, sports, and creative projects</li> </ul>
10–14 years	2.5 hours/day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impaired reward circuitry</li> <li>• Poor self-control</li> <li>• Difficulty reading social cues</li> <li>• Withdrawal and low motivation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No personal device ownership until high school and then devices should be loaned, not owned</li> <li>• Screen time is a privilege, not a right</li> <li>• No devices in bedrooms or bathrooms</li> <li>• Discuss entertainment vs productivity and healthy online behaviour</li> <li>• Support real-world friendships, skill-building, and active downtime</li> </ul>
14–18 years	3 hours/day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social withdrawal &amp; low self-esteem</li> <li>• Distorted reality perception</li> <li>• Poor social intelligence</li> <li>• Difficulty completing goals</li> <li>• Prioritising online relationships</li> <li>• Sleep &amp; posture problems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Devices should be loaned, not owned</li> <li>• No devices in bedrooms or bathrooms</li> <li>• Discuss entertainment vs productivity and fantasy vs reality online</li> <li>• Teach how persuasive technology influences choices</li> <li>• Prioritise balance with extracurriculars, family routines, and community engagement</li> <li>• Encourage teens to build real-life confidence and independence</li> </ul>

