

How To Get Your Kids To Stop Playing On Their Electronics *All The Da** Time!!*

An easy to use e-book to help parents & their tweens & teens create a screen time agreement to banish screentime battles for good!



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Hey there,

I know how frustrating it can be when your kids are glued to their screens and you swear it must be with super glue, because getting them off is just as difficult!

Even though technology use for kids today is as natural and expected as eating food, we also know that they need to learn balance and make time for important things in life.

This book will help you create a **Screen Time Agreement** to help get them off their screens, in a way that encourages their buy-in and cooperation, as well as the communication between you, because they will be involved every step of the way.

WARNING: This is really Empowering! Your child will start taking responsibility for their tech time. They will start showing up in a brighter, bigger way. You as their parent will also grow. As you'll see, this agreement is different. You are no longer playing "police parent". You will be taking a step back in order to let your kids step up.

The way this works is really clever...

We're going to turn the tables on your kids. Instead of you policing them they are going to police you. Now, don't worry - they won't get power hungry and boss you around. What ends up happening is they get a taste of their own medicine. And oh goodness, is it sweet! ;-)

Having a **Screen Time Agreement** in place for your family gets everyone on the same page with a plan in place and this allows you to be responsive rather than reactive.

Suddenly, you can parent from a place of love rather than frustration – and this is where magic happens.

Here's how you use this book:

- Part 1 is for you to use as a parent
- Part 2 is for your child(ren) to fill out
- Part 3 is designed to help you put it all together and create your family screen time agreement!



Each part of the book is broken down into 4 easy steps to think through, with each step taking about 15-20 minutes, for a total of about an hour. Part 3 is done together as a family in between each step, and those conversations can be as quick or as long as you'd like. You can do this when you're all together anyway (such as during dinner), or you can plan specific family meeting times for about a ½ hour.

Along the way, I've included things to think about and discussion prompts for the entire family, presented in ways that encourage participation. As you work together, keep in mind that the definition of compromise is "an agreement that is reached by each side making concessions". That means that there may be things that you and your child(ren) don't completely see eye-to-eye on, but you can each agree to live with.

While you as a parent will ultimately make the decisions, having your kids participate as much as possible will inspire open communication and connection between you, as well enhance their problem solving and communication skills in all areas of their lives.

Going through the four steps

When going through each step you may notice that some items will apply to your whole family, while others only to certain children depending on their age and maturity. Use your best judgement and go with what makes sense for your child(ren). You can either create individualized plans or one plan with differences specified for each child. Feel free to include rules for parent usage as well! Does mom or dad need to put down the screen for a bit? Showing your kids that you are willing to improve yourself inspires them as well!

I'm so excited to share this this powerful tool with you because I know the possibilities that using this will open up for your family! I hope you find this book easy to use and that it makes a difference for your family.

For more tips, tricks and training to create a more pleasant home-life, please join my free [Facebook group](#) or contact me at sandy@sandyhallcoaching.com.

In health & happiness,
Sandy Hall



To get started, here's a handy script to use when introducing this book to your child(ren):

I have something new I want us to try. As you get older, it's important to me that we learn how to work together better so we can create solutions rather than me just telling you what to do. I have this book that is supposed to make it easier for us to agree on screen time and help you to become more independent. I think that having this agreement is going to help us be on the same page so that there's no confusion on expectations or consequences. This means I'm going to be calmer and happier and so will you. I'd really love for you give it a try with me, would you be ok with that?

If yes:

I'm so happy that you're willing to give it a try with me. Thank you! I'll give you your part and then let's set up a time to talk about it.

If no:

Well, I'm sorry you feel that way, but I am still going to use it on my own. This means that I'm going to be making some changes and if you decide you want to talk about it more I'd love that.



Part 1: Parent Guide For Creating the Screen Time Agreement

Step 1

Know your starting point

Why Create a Screen Time Agreement?

Understanding why you should create a **Screen Time Agreement** for your family requires understanding a few other things. To begin, write down your answers to the following questions:

- Why do you want to create this agreement? _____

- What is happening now with regard to technology and your Tween or Teen? _____

- What you want to experience as a result of the **Screen Time Agreement** (less battles, more family time, etc.)? _____



Our kids are given many different opportunities to use electronics from before breakfast to bedtime. Starting with a clear picture of what devices you consider to count towards their allowable electronic time, and how much is currently being used, makes it easier to move on to the next step.

We all know that time flies when you're having fun, so it can be difficult for kids to realize how much time they're actually spending on electronics. This is a great opportunity to see how similar (or dissimilar) your thoughts on how much time is currently being used are compared to your child(ren).

Using the table below, take a few minutes to think about what devices are being used and estimate the amount of time you believe is being used on an average daily basis.

<i>Device</i>	<i>Parents: Estimated time currently used by children.</i>
<i>School Use</i>	
<i>Phone</i>	
<i>IPad/Tablet</i>	
<i>TV</i>	
<i>Computer (non-school use)</i>	
<i>Gaming System</i>	
<i>Other:</i>	
<i>Other:</i>	
<i>Total Time:</i>	

Table 1



Before comparing notes with your child(ren) and deciding how much time they should have, here are some good

Things to think about:

- The American Academy of Pediatrics no longer gives guidelines for tweens & teens electronics time usage. Rather, they suggest that “parents be a good Media Mentor and model good use, while making sure that media does not take the place of adequate sleep, physical activity and other behaviors essential to health.”
- Do you think that you model good usage behavior? How or how not?
- How many hours per day you are comfortable with your child(ren) using technology? Why do you feel this is a good amount?
 - How balanced do you feel your children’s time is spent?
 - What else can your children do during “down time”?
- What positive impacts will be made by changing your current usage, both individually & as a family?
 - Example - What would 30 minutes of dedicated family time during dinner mean to you?
- Do you have different expectations for weeknights vs. weekend? How about during Holidays/school vacations?
- Does school use count towards technology time?
- Should your child(ren) be able to use devices while doing homework? Why or why not?
 - What types of devices, what purposes?
 - Is music allowed, if yes, any restrictions?
 - What would you need to see in order to be comfortable with this?
- Does family tv/movie time count against their other usage?
- Do you want a free-day/night such as family movie night that doesn’t count towards their usage?
- Do you want to create Screen-Free Zones where no electronics are allowed? Possible options include:
 - Meal time: Kitchen or dining room table
 - Car (other than long trips)



Notes:



Step 2 for Parents

Creating Usage Agreements

In this step we're going to focus on creating time limits and usage guidelines so that everyone is on the same page and knows what is allowed and expected. While you will ultimately make the decisions, having a good idea about how much time you feel is appropriate, and why, will make for easier discussions.

Device	Usage parents would like	Things to think about:
<i>School Use</i>		Using the chart, enter the usage amounts you would like to have for your child(ren), taking into account what you feel is healthy and realistic to maintain and enforce. You can always re-evaluate this at a later time, but for now the goal is to pick a time amount you can both be comfortable with, even if it's not the ideal (yet). Notes: <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<i>Phone</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>	
<i>IPad/Tablet</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>	
<i>TV</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>	
<i>Computer (non-school use)</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>	
<i>Gaming System</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>	
<i>Other:</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>	
<i>Other:</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>	
<i>Total Time:</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>	

Table 2



The next part to this step is being clear on what requirements your child(ren) must meet to in order use their devices as well as when the devices cannot be used.

Things to think about:

- Are there expectations that must be met before usage?
 - o Grades (ex: anything below a C means no usage - is this per assignment, test or class?)
 - o Homework (does it need to be done before or do they get a break after school first?)
 - o Chores you want done
- When can electronics not be used?
 - o Dinners/meals
 - o Teen Driving
 - o Device Curfews, no use after X time of night
 - Phones can be set to do not disturb or airplane mode
 - Why should devices be turned off 30-60 minutes before bed (there are various reasons that can be discussed, but a good starting point is that it's good for their brains).
 - Do you want devices to be charged in a location other than their bedroom?
- Which of these items (if any) are non-negotiable?

As you know, in life there are times to negotiate, and many other times when you have to follow rules - even when you don't want to, don't agree, or think they're stupid.

Encouraging your child(ren) to talk about what they don't like about a rule as well as what they think is a realistic alternative, is a great way to build your communication with them.

However, you will still have some non-negotiable items that are important to you and I encourage you to think about what you would need to see happen for the rules to be adjusted, or changed, and then listen to your kids replies when they share their thoughts.

I suggest that unless they have shared something that changes your feelings on it being non-negotiable, you stand firm on these items for a set amount of time (1-3 months is a good general rule). During this time your child(ren) must follow the rules as stated, and then after that there can be a discussion and reevaluation of the rules.



Notes:



Using the chart below, note any requirements or restrictions that you feel are fair and enforceable. Feel free to change the categories to what makes the most sense for your family.

<i>Time/Device</i>	<i>Requirements for use</i>
<i>Ex. Before School</i>	<i>Must be dressed, have breakfast, lunch made & backpack ready to go.</i>
<i>Before School</i>	
<i>After School</i>	
<i>Grades</i>	
<i>What chores need to be done before use:</i>	
<i>Dinner</i>	
<i>Curfew:</i>	
<i>Other:</i>	
<i>Other:</i>	

Table 3



Step 3 For Parents

Decide on what is allowed to be used and viewed

Parent's, this area is one that you will most likely need to do some research and think about before talking to your kids. It's always good to ask for their input, but safety and health is your primary goal here.

Things to think about:

- Do you know what apps/websites your kids are using or want to use?
- How much time do you want to spend monitoring these?
- Or do you prefer to have an outside program that enforces time & content restrictions? Some options include Net Nanny, Circle
- Are there apps/sites that are non-negotiable no's?
- The Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) is US Federal law that applies to online services that collect personal information of children under the age of 13 and details rules & responsibilities in order to protect their privacy & safety online (including confirmed parental consent). Many websites, especially social media websites such as Snapchat, instagram, and facebook, are non-compliant with these rules & regulations and explicitly state that children under 13 may not have an account.

This means that if your child is under 13 and has one of these accounts they have lied about their age and **their information and rights are not protected.**

These rules are often ignored and there is much social & peer pressure around this, so it is important to know what you will allow and be firm on this.

- How will this be enforced
 - o Weekly phone checks
 - o Follow them on social media
 - o Parent approval needed before apps are downloaded
 - o External monitoring system



Notes:



Step 4 for Parents

Decide on the consequences for rules not being followed.

When possible it's best to make these a natural response to the wrongdoing, while making sure they are realistic and enforceable. Having these decided before any problems have happened really helps you respond rather than react when situations do come up.

In your child(s) section I've asked them to create a list of consequences they feel would be appropriate, but you will need to give them a timeframe you want that by. You can then discuss these and use any you feel are appropriate as well as coming up with your own. If they don't give you their list within the specified timeframe then let them know your consequences will be implemented for 1-3 months and then they may have the opportunity to negotiate consequences.

In regard to consequences, it is important to specify that there will be no negotiating while a set consequence is being enforced. Rather, a designated time (such as a family meeting) can be used to allow the opportunity for negotiation. This is a great opportunity to encourage your kids to be strategic thinkers, and consider what motivates them instead of it just being punishment from parents. If the kids feel a consequence is unfair or not working for them, they are able to say why and what they think is an appropriate alternative. Parents can then choose to change the consequence or stick with what has already been set in place, but children have participated and felt heard which is always a good thing. Using the list of requirements you and your child(ren) came up with, consider consequences that should be put in place if those are not followed.

We'll go into more detail below, but first here are some

Things to think about:

- How will you enforce the consequences?
- How long will they last?
- Are there any issues that are particularly problematic that you want to have addressed?



- Is there a natural consequence that would happen in the “real world” and is that applicable here?
- Do you feel that reminders/warnings should be given, and if yes, how many?
- Is there anything else that you’ve thought of that you feel needs to be addressed?

Here are some examples of common problems and natural consequences (those that make sense for the issue and could potentially happen outside the family as well). In general, 1-2 consequences per problem is preferred, I list more below to give you options.

- Too much electronic time being used
 - electronics are then only allowed in community space of home for a specified amount of time.
 - Phone restriction (taken away) at x time until x time.
 - Wi-fi turned off
 - External restrictions put into place (Net Nanny, Circle, phone monitoring, etc).
- Chores/expectations not being met before usage
 - Device taken away until job/expectation is met: If this is a repeated problem you may want to make the rule that they do not get access until job/expectation is met.
 - Have to do an additional job to earn privilege back.
- Inappropriate usage
 - App deleted
 - Device only able to be used when parent is present
 - A letter to parent explaining what they did, why it was wrong and what they will do differently in the future. If another person was involved a letter to them as well.
 - External restrictions put into place (Net Nanny, Circle, phone monitoring, etc).



In the table below, list items you think may be problematic, and also look back to the list of requirements you and your child(ren) came up with, and consider consequences that should be put in place.

Problem:	
Consequence:	
Problem:	
Consequence:	
Problem:	
Consequence:	

Table 4

A final note...

Here's a secret - even though it's important to have these consequences in place, if you want to see your kid(s) participating more fully and faster, be sure to praise them for the little successes and efforts they're making along the way. Did your child(ren) actually get off their phone for dinner without being asked? Mention it - show them that you notice and are happy about it, and step by step you'll see them doing more things like that on their own. When you recognize their positive behavior, it gets repeated!

Congratulations on taking the time to go through this screen time agreement process! All that's left to do now is finish putting everything on one page. In part 3 of this book there's an easy to use fill in the blank template for this :)



Part 2: Young Adult Guide For Creating a Screen Time Agreement

Hey there, you may be grumbling right now about having to do this stupid agreement thing because mom or dad is on your back about electronics again. Or maybe you don't even see what the big deal is and why anything needs to change... but let me assure you, this is for your benefit as well for your parent(s).

Having a Screen Time Agreement is going to be a relief because now you'll know what the rules are instead of things changing based on the moods of your parents. You get to point out what's *not fair* because you're helping decide *what is fair*.

Do you ever feel like every conversation you have with your parents ends in someone getting frustrated or angry, or that even when they "listen" they don't hear you? This 4-step process is going to make these conversations super easy and give you space to share your thoughts and ideas too. As you're becoming an adult it's important for you to be a strategic & forward thinker as well as to be able to present your ideas (and arguments) in ways that are respectful and encourages conversations rather than just making someone angry.

It's also important for you to learn to balance your time so that you can lead a full life that is healthy & happy.

I hope you find this book easy to use and that it gives you and your parents a chance to connect and communicate in a way that is enjoyable and you feel heard and understood.

In health & happiness,
Sandy Hall



Step 1 for Young Adults: Know your starting point

Why Create a Screen Time Agreement?

Understanding why you should create a **Screen Time Agreement** requires understanding a few other things. To begin, write down your answers to the following questions:

- Why do you think your parents want to create this agreement? _____

- What do you like about technology use as it is now? _____

- What benefits do you think may come about as a result of the **Screen Time Agreement** (more consistency, more family time, parent's happier, having more influence in deciding consequences)?



Unlike your parents, you've had access to technology your whole life. From breakfast to bedtime there are a variety of ways you can use devices, and many are a great addition to your life. It's good to start with a clear picture of what devices you think should count towards your allowable electronic time, as well as how much you are already using.

We all know that time flies when you're having fun, so it can be difficult to realize how much you're actually spending on electronics. Using the chart below, take a few minutes to think about what devices you use and estimate the amount of time you spend on an average daily basis.

<i>Device</i>	<i>Young Adults: Estimated time currently used</i>
<i>School Use</i>	
<i>Phone</i>	
<i>IPad/Tablet</i>	
<i>TV</i>	
<i>Computer (non-school use)</i>	
<i>Gaming System</i>	
<i>Other:</i>	
<i>Other:</i>	
<i>Total Time:</i>	

Table 1



Now that you have an idea of how much time you're currently spending on your devices, you can begin to understand what a realistic agreement would look like to you. It may be helpful to remember that the definition of compromise is "an agreement that is reached by each side making concessions". That means that there may be things that you and your parent(s) don't completely see eye-to-eye on, but you can each agree to live with.

Before talking with your parent(s) here are some *things to think about*:

- How do your parents model good or bad technology use?
- While I know it would be great to have no limits, consider how many hours per day you realistically would like to use your devices, as well as how much time you think would be healthy.
 - Why do you feel this is a good amount?
 - Do you exercise regularly?
 - Do you get enough sleep? (9-11 hours is recommended)
 - How often do you see friends in person as well as online?
- How else can you relax during your "down time"?
- Should your usage differ during the weekend, holidays or school vacations? If so, how and why?
- Do you think that school use (homework) should count towards technology time, and do you want to use devices while doing homework?
 - What types and how can you stay focused on your work without becoming distracted (have a good answer ready if you want to convince your parent(s) of this one!)?
- What positive impacts could happen by changing your current usage, both individually & as a family?
 - What would 30 minutes of dedicated family time during dinner mean to you or your parent(s)?
 - What personal benefits might you see?



Notes:



Step 2 for Young Adults

Creating Usage Agreements

This is where we're going to focus on creating agreeable time limits and usage guidelines so that everyone is on the same page and knows what is allowed and expected.

<i>Device</i>	<i>Usage you want</i>	
<i>School Use</i>		Using the table enter the usage amounts you would like to have (based on reality!) You can always go back and relook at this at a later time, but for now the goal is to pick a time amount you can both be comfortable with, even if it's not the ideal you want. Remember, while your parent(s) ultimately make the decisions, being prepared with well thought-out reasons of why you should have the amount of time you want makes it more likely they will listen (and agree) with you. Notes: <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<i>Phone</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>	
<i>iPad/Tablet</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>	
<i>TV</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>	
<i>Computer</i> <i>(non-school use)</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>	
<i>Gaming System</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>	
<i>Other:</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>	
<i>Other:</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>	
<i>Total Time:</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>	

Table 2



Before you and your parent(s) can come to an agreement on how much time you should actually be allowed to use, it's important to think about what requirements you need to meet in order use your devices as well as when the devices cannot be used.

Things to think about:

- What do you need to do before getting to use your devices?
 - o Grades (if you get a D should your usage be affected? Is this per assignment or per class?)
 - o Homework
 - Do you want to listen to music while working?
 - Should you complete assignments before games?
 - Do you want a break between assignments, and how will you get back on track?
 - Be honest with yourself about how responsible you are about this. In most cases it's easier to stay focused and just "get 'er done".
 - o Chores (is there something that you know mom/dad is going to want done first?)
- I know you hate to think about devices not being allowed at all, but there can be times where it makes sense. Think about when can electronics shouldn't be used. Some possible times may include:
 - o Family meals
 - o While Driving
 - o Device Curfews, no use after X time of night
 - It's hard to get to sleep when you keep getting notifications, how do you feel about setting your phone to "do not disturb" or airplane mode?
 - For a healthy night sleep, it's recommended that devices be turned off 30-60 minutes before bed (there are various reasons for this, but a good starting point is that it's good for your brain).
 - Are you able to wake up in time to get ready for school?
 - Do you want devices to be charged in a location other than your bedroom?
 - o Is there a time that you would like your parent(s) to be off of their electronics as well?
 - o How can your parent(s) model good electronic use?



Be prepared for you parent(s) to have some requirement items that are non-negotiable (teen driving is an excellent example of this). I know, it sucks. But the truth of the matter is that there will *a/ways* be times in life where you aren't going to like the rules but have to follow them anyway. Parents have these too, it's just a part of life. However, the better you prepare your thoughts, so that you can clearly explain yourself and what you want, the better chances are that you'll be able to come to an agreement that will make you both happy.

Notes:



Using the information from your notes, enter in requirements or restrictions you feel are important and fair. Feel free to change or add categories!

<i>Time/Device</i>	<i>Requirements for use</i>
<i>Ex. Before School</i>	<i>Must be dressed, have breakfast, lunch made & backpack ready to go.</i>
<i>Before School</i>	
<i>After School</i>	
<i>Grade Requirements</i>	
<i>What chores need to be done before use:</i>	
<i>Dinner</i>	
<i>Curfew:</i>	
<i>Other:</i>	
<i>Other:</i>	

Table 3



Step 3 For Young Adults

Decide on what is allowed to be used and viewed

As awesome as technology is, the reality is that there is a ton of information out there that's not appropriate or safe for you to be viewing. Your parent(s) job is to keep you safe and healthy (including your mind), so try to understand their concerns and perspective (as they should do for you as well). You've most likely been taught some good use practices and safety information at school, so talking about these with your parent(s) can help ease their minds and trust that you are ready for this responsibility.

Things to think about:

- What are you & your friend's favorite apps to use, and why?
- What should you do if you see something inappropriate?
- Have you seen or experienced cyber-bullying? How should you handle it?
- Are there any apps/websites that you think are not good to use, and why?
- Many apps, especially social media ones such as Snapchat, Instagram, and Facebook are non-compliant with rules and regulations that are in place to protect children under the age of 13. This means that if you are under 13 and have one of these accounts ***your information and rights are not protected.***

Yes, I know that "everyone" does it, and that these rules are often ignored.

There's also a ton of social & peer pressure around this, but it's important information to know and understand.

- You know they're going to worry about this, so think about how your parents can know that you are using devices and apps safely. Some ideas may include:
 - o Follow you on social media
 - o Parent approval needed before new apps are downloaded
 - o Some parents like to do weekly phone checks or use an external monitoring system, why should or shouldn't your parents use this type of solution?



Notes:



Step 4 for Young Adults

Decide on the consequences for rules not being followed.

Have this list to mom/dad by _____.

I know, consequences aren't fun. Believe it or not, parents really don't like having to enforce them either. But, that being said, having consequences decided before any problems have happened really helps you to know what's going to happen regardless of your parent's mood or patience level that day. This allows you both to respond rather than react when situations do come up.

This section is important, because you really get to show your parents what you think is fair, reasonable and realistic when it comes to consequences. I encourage you to take some time to really think about this and consider what motivates you instead of it just being punishment from your parent(s).

When possible, it's best to make these a natural response to the wrongdoing, so try to think about what you might encounter out in the real world or at school. If you don't give them your list by the specified time they gave you, know that their consequences will be implemented for 1-3 months (no negotiations) and then you *may* have the opportunity to renegotiate consequences.

Things to think about:

- Where else in life do you see consequences?
- What type of consequences feel realistic and make sense?
- How long should they last?
- Is there a natural consequence that would happen in the "real world" and is that applicable here?
- Do you feel that reminders/warnings should be given, and if yes, how many?



Here are some examples of common problems I've seen and types of consequences that can be used. Feel free to be creative and come up with your own ideas! In general, 1-2 consequence per problem is preferred, I just list more to give options.

- Using too much electronic time
 - Can only use devices in certain areas of your home for a specified amount of time.
 - Phone taken away at x time until x time.
 - Wi-fi turned off during certain times of the day
 - External restrictions put into place (Net Nanny, Circle, phone monitoring, etc).
 - Chores/expectations not being met before usage
- Device taken away until job/expectation is met: If this is a repeated problem your parent(s) may want to make the rule that you do not get access until job/expectation is complete.
 - You have to do an additional chore/job to earn device usage.
 - Inappropriate usage
 - App deleted
 - Device only able to be used when parent is present
 - A letter to parent explaining what you did, why it was wrong, and what you will do differently in the future. If another person was involved a letter to them as well.
 - External restrictions put into place (Net Nanny, Circle, phone monitoring, etc).



In the table below list any problems that you think may come up as well as thinking about the list of requirements that you and your parent(s) came up with and consider consequences that should be put in place.

Problem:	
Consequence:	
Problem:	
Consequence:	
Problem:	
Consequence:	

Table 4



Part 3: Putting it all together
Step 1 Know your starting point

This part of the book is all about coming together as a family and creating your agreement. This is best done one step at a time, during a dedicated time, such as family meetings or dinners, but if it feels overwhelming feel free to break it up into manageable chunks that work for you.

To begin, take a minute to share your answers to the first three questions you answered in step 1, then note what benefits you all have come up with in the space provided below.

We agree that creating this agreement can benefit us by:



You may think you each have an over or under inflated sense of how much electronics are being used, so this is a great opportunity to see how similar (or dissimilar) your thoughts on how much time is currently being used. Enter your estimated time currently being used in the table below:

How we view current usage (insert your answers from Table 1)

<i>Device</i>	<i>Parents: Estimated time currently used by children.</i>	<i>Young Adults: Estimated time currently used</i>
<i>School Use</i>		
<i>Phone</i>		
<i>IPad/Tablet</i>		
<i>TV</i>		
<i>Computer (non-school use)</i>		
<i>Gaming System</i>		
<i>Other:</i>		
<i>Other:</i>		
<i>Total Time:</i>		

Table 5



Discussion Prompts:

- Note how similar or dissimilar your estimated times are above. Why do you think this is? Can you come to an agreement on a similar number after listening to each other’s viewpoints?
- Does school use count towards technology time?
 - What about music during homework?
 - How can parents feel confident that work will still get done?
- Does family tv/movie time count towards usage?
- What areas make sense to have as Screen-Free Zones, where no electronics are allowed? Possible options include:
 - Meal time: Kitchen or dining room table
 - Car (other than long trips)

Notes:



Step 2 for putting it all together

Creating Usage Agreements

In this step we're going to come together to create time limits and usage guidelines so that everyone is on the same page and knows what is allowed and expected.

To start, enter in the usage amounts from Table 2 that you each came up with, leaving the agreed usage time blank for now.

Device	Usage parents would like	Usage child(ren) would like	Agreed Usage Time
<i>School Use</i>			
<i>Phone</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>
<i>IPad/Tablet</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>
<i>TV</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>
<i>Computer (non-school use)</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>
<i>Gaming System</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>
<i>Other:</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>
<i>Other:</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>
<i>Total Time:</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>

Table 6



Discussion Prompts:

- How much differences are there between your desired time amounts?
- Looking back at your personal notes from the *thinking points*, compare notes on where are you there's big differences in your expectations and wants..
- What do you like about each other's points of view?
- Are there expectations that you feel are unrealistic? If so, why?
- Kids, what would it look like for your parents to model good usage behavior?
 - o Ex: When should mom/dad not use their phone?
 - o How much time should they be on games?

While parents will ultimately make the final decisions, these discussions will help build your relationship both now and for the future!

These are some good conversation starters to see how different your thoughts are. Having open discussions about each other's perspectives will help you both feel heard and will benefit your child(ren) to be able to articulate their opinions and feel like they have a say in how decisions are made in your family. All these things are very powerful as they grow and want more independence and responsibility!

Working together, come to an agreement or compromise on the amount of time that is allowed. You both may have to give a little bit, but the closer you can get to an agreement or compromise the easier it will be to follow and enforce. Enter this amount into the table above.



Great job, you now have an agreement on how much time can be used on devices! Let's move on to requirements that need to be met before using them.

To begin, parent(s) share your non-negotiable items and take a moment to share why these are important to you.

Looking at your notes and Table 3, you each have a list of requirements that you feel are appropriate and realistic. Take a moment to share those, and note any you both agree upon immediately. Add those to the table below.

<i>Time/Device</i>	<i>Requirements for use</i>
<i>Ex. Before School</i>	<i>Must be dressed, have breakfast, lunch made & backpack ready to go.</i>
<i>Before School</i>	
<i>After School</i>	
<i>Grade Requirements</i>	
<i>What chores need to be done before use:</i>	
<i>Dinner</i>	
<i>Curfew:</i>	
<i>Other:</i>	

Table 7



Now let's go back and look at the requirements that you may disagree on and use these

Discussion points:

- Why do you feel this requirement should/should not be enforced?
- What are minimum grades to have electronic privileges?
- Why does/doesn't homework need to be done before using devices?
- Chores that must be completed, is there flexibility on what time they can be done:
- As a family, we won't use electronics during these times:
- Device curfew (weeknight & weekend), why it is important and how can we follow it?
 - o Phones can be set to do not disturb
 - o Why should devices be turned off 30-60 minutes before bed (there are various reasons that can be discussed, but a good starting point is that it's good for their brains).
 - o Do you want devices to be charged in a location other than their bedroom?

As you come to agreements, note any requirements or restrictions that you feel are fair and enforceable in the chart above.

It may be helpful to put a (*) next to any items that you would like to revisit later, and agree that as a family you can revisit these items in _____ (1-3 months suggested) amount of time, where parent(s) would need to see the below noted behaviors to consider changing the rule(s).



Step 3 for putting it all together

Decide on what is allowed to be used and viewed

There is so much information available online, and not all of it is good. Using your notes and the following discussion prompts, talk about what you feel are safe and healthy guidelines when using electronics.

Discussion Prompts:

- What are you & your friends' favorite apps?
 - What do you like about these apps?
- How can you use technology in a positive way?
- What do you do if you see inappropriate content or behavior?
- Discuss what is appropriate to post/share
 - Would you want Grandparents to see it?
 - Would you want future employers to see it?
- People sometimes talk differently to each other online than they do in person. Have you seen this happen? Why do you think this is?
- Talk about how your rules may differ from others (different families have different rules and this will be true from diapers through college), your family values, and why all of this is important.

Notes:



Step 4 for Putting it all together

Decide on the consequences for rules not being followed.

Hopefully you both have a list of consequences that you can talk about and come to an agreement on which seem fair, and some which may be adjusted so you can both be happy. As mentioned before, when possible, it's best to make these a natural response to the wrongdoing, while making sure they are realistic and enforceable. Having these decided before any problems have happened really helps you respond rather than react when situations do come up.

Once these consequences are set in place it is important to note that there is **no negotiating while the consequence is being enforced**. Rather, a designated time (such as a family meeting) can be used to allow the opportunity for discussions. While I recommend that you wait 1-3 months to change any rules and consequences that you have agreed upon, it can be beneficial to have discussions before then.

If the child(ren) feel a consequence is unfair or not working for them, they are able to say why and what they think is an appropriate alternative. If parent(s) feel that requirements are still not being met and consequences are needing to be adjusted, this can also be discussed. Doing this assures that you both have participated and felt heard which is always a good thing.

Discussion Prompts:

- Where else in life do you see consequences?
- Listening to each other's lists of consequences, what do you like or dislike?
 - Do you feel something is too easy/harsh? Why?
- Are there any other reoccurring issues/problems that need to be addressed?
- What would happen in the "real world" if this problem happened?
- Do you feel that reminders/warnings should be given, and if yes, for what and how many?



In the table below, list the problems and consequences that have been agreed on:

Problem:	
Consequence:	
Problem:	
Consequence:	
Problem:	
Consequence:	

Table 8

Sometimes talking about consequences can feel really heavy. Remember to celebrate your successes as a family and to take time to acknowledge and appreciate all that you each are doing! Enjoy the little steps that you're taking and making progress with.

Congratulations, you now have completed all of the steps for creating your **Screen Time Agreement!** I hope that this process has helped increase your communication and problem-solving skills in order to create an agreement that provides structured freedom for you and your family.

All that's left to do is to fill in the final agreement on the next page, using the information you've already decided on, and copy or print the document. Check your email for a handy word document version of the agreement so you can do this on your computer if you'd like! I recommend that everyone have their own copy as well as keeping a copy handy in a central location that is easy to reference.



Family Screen Time Agreement.

_____ Last name

Device	Agreed Usage Time	Rules or Requirements for use
<i>School Use</i>		
<i>Phone</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>	
<i>IPad/Tablet</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>	
<i>TV</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>	
<i>Computer (non-school use)</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>	
<i>Gaming System</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>	
<i>Other:</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>	
<i>Other:</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>	
<i>Total Time:</i>	<i>Weekday:</i> <i>Weekend:</i>	



I understand that I may not: *(insert items from step #3)*:

Consequences that may be enforced: *(Table 4)*:

Problem:	
Consequence:	
Problem:	
Consequence:	
Problem:	
Consequence:	

The next opportunity to re-negotiate these terms will be on/in _____.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Parent: _____

Date: _____

Parent: _____

Date: _____

