



FROM YOUR CFS **Wellness Specialist**



Helping Children Set Healthy Media Boundaries

Many parents today face a challenge previous generations did not: knowing how much screen time is healthy for their children and how to set limits without constant conflict. Smartphones, social media, and online gaming are relatively new, and research shows that excessive screen use can negatively affect children's physical health, mental well-being, social skills, and academic performance.

Too much screen time has been linked to sleep difficulties, anxiety, attention problems, reduced physical activity, and challenges with friendships. Knowing these risks, parents may wonder how to guide their children toward healthier habits without constant power struggles.

1. Understand why screen time matters to your child.

Screens often meet important needs such as connection, confidence, enjoyment, or calming. When parents take time to understand what need screen time is meeting, they can help children meet those needs in healthier, screen-free ways.

2. Involve children in setting screen guidelines.

Choose a time to talk together about screen use and agree on a few shared family guidelines. Examples include screen-free meals, removing screens from bedrooms at night, or setting evening screen limits. Starting with one guideline at a time helps everyone adjust more successfully.

3. Replace screen time with meaningful family connection.

Taking away screens without offering alternatives often leads to frustration. Family activities such as board games, outdoor play, nature walks, or simple at-home traditions help children rediscover joy and connection beyond screens.

4. Help children learn to manage boredom.

Boredom isn't a problem to eliminate. It encourages creativity and independence. Providing options for creative play, active movement, and quiet relaxation helps children learn to entertain themselves without relying on screens.

If screen use begins to interfere with sleep, responsibilities, emotional regulation, or relationships, professional support may be helpful.

Helping children establish healthy screen habits can feel overwhelming. Thankfully, we do not face this challenge alone. God promises wisdom and strength when we ask. "If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God...and it will be given to you" (James 1:5). Trust that He is able to do more than we can imagine as you guide your children toward balance and well-being.
