

Keeping children safe is everyone's responsibility



Safeguarding Newsletter - November 2018

Edition 4

What parents need to know about

SCREEN ADDICTION

It can cause sleep deprivation. 7 out of 10 children said that they had missed out on sleep because of their online habits and 60% said that they had neglected school work as a result. It is important that children get the sleep they need to focus the next day.

The children's commissioner report "Life in Likes" explored how children aged 8-11 are using social media today. It showed that children are using their devices to speak to their online friends about problems and seek acceptance and support removing face to face interactions.

Your child may become less interested in anything that does not include their device. You may notice that your child is less engaged with other activities in the home. It is important to discuss this with your child as soon as you notice a behavior change.

APPS CAN BE ADDICTIVE

Apps have been designed with "psychological tricks" to constantly keep grabbing your attention. The addictive nature of apps aims to engage children and keep them coming back for more.



LIMIT SCREEN TIME

In today's digital age, technology is an important part of a child's development so completely banning them from their device will mean they are missing out on a lot, including conversations and communication with their friends. Rather than banning

them from using their device, we suggest setting a screen time limit. Work out what you think is suitable and healthy amount of time for your child to be on their device per week. Remember that your child may need to use devices for their school homework, so only set screen limits on recreational time on their device. Once you have established this, have the conversation with them to discuss why you are implementing a screen limit. There will be others in your child's friendship group who will not have screen limits set and will be sending messages when they do not have access to their phones.



LESS TIME MEANS LESS EXPOSURE

There are many risks associated with devices, such as cyberbullying, grooming, sexting, viewing inappropriate contents etc. Less time spent on a screen means that a child will be less exposed to these risks.

MOBILE FREE MEAL TIMES



Have you tried to settle your child by giving them a device at the dinner table or in a restaurant? This may seem like a quick fix to calm them down but, it is encouraging them to use their device as a distraction from conversation and dealing with their emotions. We suggest removing all technology from the dinner table and having conversations with your family about how their day has been.

ENCOURAGE ALTERNATIVE ACTIVITIES

It may seem like an obvious solution, but encouraging children to play with their friends, read a book, or play outdoors will help them realise they can have fun without a device. Playing football, trampolining, camping, going for a walk or swimming are all healthy replacements for screen time. Try to join them in their outdoor activities to show your support.



REMOVE DEVICES FROM THEIR BEDROOM

Setting a rule about removing devices from their bedroom will help your child to get the sleep they need and be more focused at school.



LEAD BY EXAMPLE

Children model their behavior on their peers, so if their parents are constantly on their device they will see this as acceptable. Try limiting your own screen time and follow the same rules you have set for them.