



Month 2; Week 1

# Limit the Box

## Let's Walk

### Why Limit Daily Screen Time?

#### Program Objectives:

- Determine the harmful effects of excessive screen time
- Identify the health consequences of sedentary lifestyle
- Develop a plan to limit screen time
- Identify the recommendations of Physical activity
- Make realistic goals to limit screen time and improve physical activity.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends limiting the use of TV, movies, video and computer games to no more than one or two hours a day. On average, children spend 3-5 hours daily on screen time. The time spent in front of screen often leads to the trend of sedentary lifestyle. Sedentary lifestyle and physical inactivity are strong lifestyle / behavioral risk factors that lead towards overweight and obesity among children and adults alike.



who spent more than eight hours watching television per week at age three were more likely to be obese at age seven. Screen time significantly decreases physical activity time and increases the consumption of calorie dense snacks thus leading to overweight and obesity.

**Limit the Box, Let's Walk** is a week long lifestyle change program that focuses on gradual decrease of family screen time and improved family physical activity to help build lifelong habits for a

healthy lifestyle.

A recent study reported that children

## Goals



**1** Decrease the time spent on watching TV, movies, or playing video and computer games to **less than two hours a day** for each member of the family.

**2** Start and maintain a physical activity regimen to be active at **least 60 minutes for children per day and 150 minutes of moderate or 75 minutes of vigorous intensity for adults per week.**

# 7 Reasons to Limit Screen Time

## Overweight and Obesity



Watching TV, movies, playing video and computer games leads to overweight and obesity with decreased physical activity and increased consumption of high calorie snacks and beverages.

## Behavioral Problems



Children who spend more than two hours a day on screen are more likely to have emotional, social and attention problems. Exposure to video games also increases the risk of attention problems in children.

## Decreased Academic Performance.



Elementary students who have TVs in their bedrooms tend to perform worse on tests than those who don't.

## Less time for play



Excessive screen time leaves less time for active play and other creative activities with the family thus decreasing family interaction.

## Violence



Too much exposure to violence on TV movies, music videos, and video and computer games can desensitize children to violence. Children may learn to accept violent behavior as a normal part of life and a way to solve problems. Children exposed to violent media content are more likely to bully than children who are not.

## Irregular Sleep Pattern



Studies have also found a correlation between bedroom media and Short Sleep Duration. The more TV children watch, the more likely they are to resist going to bed and to have trouble falling asleep.

## Inappropriate Exposure



Children are exposed to some information through media which may be incorrect or inappropriate. Young children cannot differentiate between fantasy and reality. They may assume that what they see is safe and acceptable.

## Family Action Plan

Healthier Lifestyle starts from home. Before limiting your children's screen time it is important that you determine how much time you spend watching TV. After you figure out the time spent in front of screen, it would be much easier to set reasonable limits to gradually decrease the family's screen time to less than two hours a day .



### Media-Free Bedrooms

Children who have TVs and computers in their rooms spend more time watching them than children who do not. Placing TVs and computers in a common area also provides the opportunity to monitor what children watch.

### Media-Free Dinners

Make dinner time gadget and media-free. Turn off the TV, computers and other digital gadgets during meal-times. Instead take turns talking about your day.



### Reward with the Positive

Avoid using screen time as a reward or punishment. Child may find it as an important event. Instead use praise and encouragement for time spent in physical activity. Consider screen time as a "non-event."

## After School Action Plan

### Make an Activity List

Ask your child to make a list of "Top 10 after-school activities". Help the child select healthy and practical activities such as riding the bike, walking the dog, helping with the dinner, etc. Post the list on the refrigerator and ask the child to check it after school every day.

### Set Reasonable Limits

If your child spends more than 2 hours a day on screen time, gradually decrease the viewing time in 10-15 minutes increments until you reach the goal of less than 2 hours a day. Always remember to provide a healthier alternative such as reading, walking or playing a board game ,etc.

### Plan What to View

Use a program guide to select and plan TV viewing. Make a weekly list of the programs that are appropriate for your child and post it on a visible area. Preview video games before allowing your child to play them.

### Take a Potato Break

Get physical activity and avoid marketing when watching TV. During commercial breaks remember to turn the sound off and start doing jumping jacks, push ups, run in place or stand up and twist from left to right.

## Physical Activity; A Healthier Alternative to Screen Time



**Break** physical activity into smaller chunks of time during the day. Ten or fifteen minutes at a time is fine as long as you're doing your activity at a moderate or vigorous pace.



### How much is Needed ( circle the amount of time you plan to be active)

	Moderate	OR	Vigorous
<b>Children (6-17 years)</b>	60 minutes per day		60 minutes per day
<b>Adults (18-64 years)</b>	150 minutes per week		75 minutes per week
<b>Older Adults (65 and above without any limiting health conditions)</b>	150 minutes per week		75 minutes per week

### Do it Your Way

#### Moderate Activities

(I can talk but I can't sing while I do them.)

- Biking on level ground or with few hills
- General gardening (raking, trimming shrubs)
- Sports where you catch and throw (baseball, softball, volleyball)
- Tennis (doubles)
- Walking briskly
- Water Aerobics
- Dancing



#### Vigorous Activities

(I can only say a few words without stopping to catch my breath.)

- Biking faster than 10 miles per hour
- Heavy gardening (digging, hoeing)
- Hiking uphill
- Jumping rope
- Race walking, jogging, or running
- Swimming fast or swimming laps
- Aerobics
- Tennis (singles)



Regular physical activity helps lose weight and improve overall health and fitness, and reduces the risk for many chronic diseases such as obesity, heart disease, diabetes and osteoporosis.

## Choose Fun Activities to Limit Screen Time

Plant a garden. Children love to water plants, see their flowers bloom or vegetables grow.

Take a walk before or after a family meal. Designate two or more nights as family walk nights.

On the weekends, plan a family trip to go for laser tag, bowling or miniature golf.

Bike around the neighborhood. Involve the neighbors too.

Play family video games that encourage physical activity.

Have a childhood story walk to and from the local park. Each member can share a favorite story from their childhood.

Rearrange or watch old family albums together.

Plan a weekly read-a-thon.

Have a camping trip in the Den.

Do "Family Olympics" with other families in the neighborhood.

Do a jump rope contest with the entire family.

Have the entire family help with chores like mopping, yard work, washing the car or cleaning the garage.

Dance to the tunes of 80s, 90s and today.

Activity of your choice!

**Did you know that an average hour long TV show has 18 minutes of commercials. Use that time to do some physical activity.**



**Goal:**

Decrease screen time to **less than two hours a day** for each member of the family. (Choose an alternate fun activity from page #5).

**Goal:**

Children ; Aim to be active at **least 60 minutes a day**  
 Adults: Aim to be active at **least 150 minutes with moderate or 75 minutes with vigorous intensity physical activity per week.**

## Activity Log

### Limit Screen Time and Improve Physical Activity

	Total Screen Time	Minutes of Physical Activity				Cut and paste the activity you chose from page number 5 or list any activity of your choice.
		Adult	Adult	Child	Child	
Monday						
Tuesday						
Wednesday						
Thursday						
Friday						
Saturday						
Sunday						

## Additional Physical Activity and Limiting Screen Time Resources

### Websites:

#### Center for Disease Control and Prevention

<http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/everyone/guidelines/index.html>

#### American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

<http://www.aacap.org/>

#### Healthy Lifestyle; Mayo Clinic

[www.mayoclinic.com](http://www.mayoclinic.com)

#### American Dietetics Association

<http://www.eatright.org/Public/content.aspx?id=6442463739>

#### US Department of Health and Human Services

<http://www.health.gov/paguidelines/>



### Books:

1. *The Berenstain Bears and Too Much TV* by Stan Berenstain, Jan Berenstain, Random House Books for Young Readers; 1st Edition edition (April 12, 1984) **ISBN:** 0394865707
2. *"Mommy, I'm Scared": How TV and Movies Frighten Children and What We Can Do to Protect Them* by Joanne Cantor, Mariner Books; 1 edition (September 15, 1998) **ISBN:** 0156005921
3. *52 Things for Your Kids to Do Instead of Watching TV* by Phil Phillips, Thomas Nelson Inc (October 1992) **ISBN:** 0840796382
4. *Active Start for Healthy Kids: Activities, Exercises, and Nutritional Tips* by Stephen J. Virgilio, Human Kinetics; 1 edition (August 5, 2005) **ISBN:** 073605281X
5. *Fun to Grow on: Engaging Play Activities for Kids With Teachers, Parents and Grandparents* by Virginia K. Morin and David Sokoloff, Magnolia Street Pub; 1 edition (April 1999) **ISBN:** 1890374016
6. *Tai Chi for Kids: Move with the Animals* by Stuart Alve Olson and Gregory Crawford, Bear Cub Books; 2nd Printing edition (November 1, 2001) **ISBN:** 1879181657
7. *Physical Activities for Improving Children's Learning and Behavior* by Billye Ann Cheatum and Allison Hammond, Human Kinetics; 1 edition (November 5, 1999) **ISBN:** 0880118741
8. *Team Challenges: 170+ Group Activities to Build Cooperation, Communication, and Creativity* by Kris Bordessa, Zephyr Press (November 1, 2005) **ISBN:** 1569762015
9. *TV's Influence on Kids* by Pawel Kolodziejcki, Kindle Edition, **sold by:** Amazon Digital Services

**For more information on how to limit screen time and improve physical activity visit: [www.mayoclinic.com](http://www.mayoclinic.com) and [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).**