

THE FAMILY GUIDE TO A GREAT SCREEN-FREE WEEK

- **Try to get everyone in your family on board for Screen-Free Week.** If adults are fully committed, children feel everyone is sharing the experience and is taking it seriously.
- **Decide what “screen-free” means for your family.** Does it include email and text messaging? Are you still going to Skype with family members in another state or country? There’s no “right” way to do this, but make sure that you’re all clear about what your commitment will be.
- **Make plans together for the week.** Start planning in early April (or sooner) so that by the time Screen-Free Week rolls around, everything is in place and ready to go. Make sure that everyone (who can) has a specific responsibility and an equal vote on key decisions.
- **Set a calendar of activities and events for the week.** One goal of Screen-Free Week is to allow kids unstructured time to generate their own screen-free play and activities. But, especially if this is your first time participating as a family, you’ll want to make sure that you are not left twiddling your thumbs. It’s most important to schedule some family activities in the early part of the week so that everyone can adjust to being screen-free. If you need some help thinking of ideas, check out our list of [101 Screen-Free Activities](#).
- **Reclaim the family meal as a time for talking together and/or sharing stories.** Plan your meals ahead of time and include the entire family (when possible) in the preparation and presentation of the meal. Get creative with napkin folding. Are you going to use candles one night to make that dinner special? Think of different ways to spice up the evening... maybe a discussion about a book everyone in the family has agreed to read?
- **Include friends, relatives, and neighbors in what you are doing, even if it’s for just one day or evening.** Get together with other families at a park, play organized games or just hang out!
- **At the end of the week, talk about how you feel, what all of you have accomplished, and what aspects of the week you would like to keep going.** Is it worth it to make one night a week screen-free, with meals together and a game following dinner? Would it be a good idea to get together with extended family or friends one day or evening a week and do something different? The key is to find out how everyone feels, and share the pluses and minuses—both to figure out how to make Screen-Free Week even better next year and to reduce your dependence on screens all year round.



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