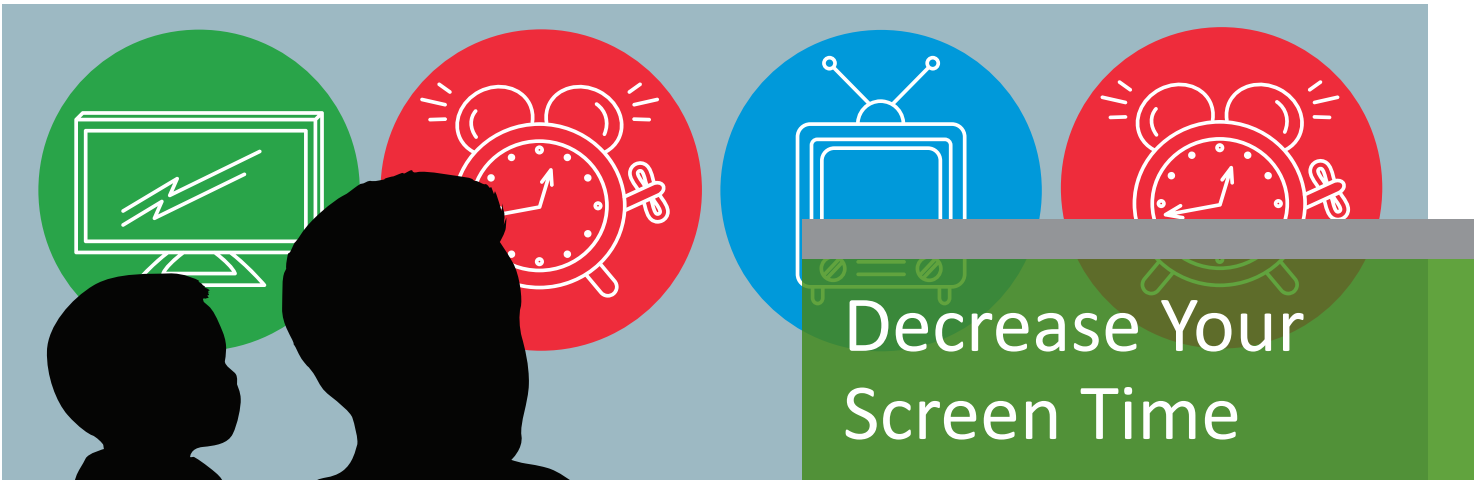




# Wespath

BENEFITS | INVESTMENTS

a general agency of The United Methodist Church



### What is screen time?

Screen time is time spent in front of a computer, TV, video game, smart phone, tablet or movie screen.<sup>1</sup>

### Why is it important to limit or decrease screen time?

While there are benefits to the many ways we view information and are entertained via screens such as exposure to new ideas, increased opportunities for social connections and getting information quickly—research shows there is a negative side as well. Risks include effects on sleep, attention and learning, higher incidence of obesity and depression, exposure to inappropriate or unsafe content and confidentiality.<sup>2</sup>

### How much screen time should you have ?



The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that screen time for kids should be limited to two hours (non-school related) a day. Guidelines for adults haven't been clearly defined. **The average American spends more than 10 hours a day in front of a screen (this includes work).**



### Ways to Decrease Screen Time<sup>3</sup>

- **Talk to your family.** Explain that it is important to sit less and move more. They will have more energy and feel better.
- **Set screen time limits.** Create a house rule that limits screen time to two hours every day.
- **Set a good example.** Be a good role model—limit your screen time to no more than two non-work hours a day.
- **Log screen time.** Set up a chart and track how much time is spent in front of a screen versus being active. It will help you know what changes need to be made and where to start.
- **Make screen time active time.** When in front of a screen, do something active like stretching, leg lifts, jumping jacks or marching in place.
- **Create screen-free bedrooms.** Don't allow a TV, computer or tablet in any bedroom.
- **Make meal time family time.** Turn off all devices during family meals and talk to each other. Eat together as a family as often as possible.
- **Break the habit.** Give your kids exposure to new hobbies, sports, outdoor activities or board games.
- **Don't use screen time as a reward or punishment.** Kids tend to want what they can't have.

For more hints on decreasing screen time or learning more about the screen-free week initiative go to [www.screenfree.org](http://www.screenfree.org).

<sup>1</sup> Healthier Generation.org

<sup>2</sup> Pediatrics, *Children and Adolescents and Digital Media*, October 2016

<sup>3</sup> www.nhlbi.nih.gov