



SOLUTIONS + TAKE-AWAYS FROM “SCREENAGERS”



CONSIDER THESE TECH TIPS FROM

SCREEN
AGERS



WEEKLY TECH TALKS

WEEKLY TECH TALKS are short family meetings about positive things about our digital age and then issues.

Benefits for the family: Starting with a positive about tech helps kids feel understood because they experience many positives and makes them more open to talking about limits, after all, the biggest issue at the elementary age level is the sheer time spent online because it is so captivating—think video games, YouTube, shows, etc.

Helping kids talk about media and issues around our digital age fosters critical thinking that is crucial for their journey to having healthy and balanced online lives. Go to screenagersmovie.com and find “Blog” at the top. This will take you to Dr. Ruston’s Tech Talk Tuesday blog. There, you will find hundreds of topics that Ruston has written on over the past eight years



SAFEGUARDING SLEEP

The science is clear: **keeping devices out of kids’ bedrooms at night is one of the most important rules we can set at home.** Research shows that insufficient sleep in childhood can have lasting effects on the brain, impacting cognitive and emotional development.

Devices interfere with healthy, uninterrupted sleep. Ideally, keep them out of bedrooms altogether. Store them in your bedroom or in a locked cabinet or bag (as one parent shared in the film).

Choose a central charging spot in the home—somewhere that makes it harder for kids to sneak and use devices overnight.



VIDEO GAMES

Research shows that **violent video games can increase aggressive thoughts and behaviors in children.**

- Limit or avoid violent games when possible.
- Practice “active mediation” by talking about what they’re playing. Ask questions like, “What would be the best way to handle that?”
- Be mindful of co-playing—it can unintentionally reinforce what’s on screen. Keep conversations open and non-judgmental, and remind kids they can make choices based on their own values.
- Keep headsets off so you can hear the game and create opportunities to talk.

Most importantly, regularly check in about what they see and how it makes them feel—especially with violent content.



SOCIAL MEDIA

Research shows that as teens moved more of their social lives onto social media, rates of anxiety and depression rose quickly.

Keep in mind that YouTube—even YouTube Kids—often includes content similar to social media platforms like Instagram. For this reason, some parents choose to allow YouTube only with supervision.

Dr. Ruston teaches a “Safety First” approach: reassure kids that you won’t automatically take away their devices if something goes wrong online. This helps them feel safe coming to you with problems.

Finally, talk with other parents about delaying social media. While 13 is often cited as a minimum age, many experts—including Dr. Ruston—suggest waiting until 16.



HOMEWORK

When it comes to homework, **fewer distractions are better.** Avoid TV, games, or extra devices during study time. What feels like multitasking actually strains the brain—research shows that trying to focus on two things at once leads to lower performance and weaker concentration.

If homework must be done on a laptop or Chromebook, use parental controls or apps to limit access to other tabs and sites. (These controls are often already in place on school-issued devices.)



For more tips and resources, visit:
www.screenagersmovie.com



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