

## **Lesson: Screen Break**

### **Supplies Needed:**

- Paper and pencils
- 3.6\_SW\_Screen-Time-Challenge

### **Goals:**

- Students will learn the term screen time.
- Students will learn the risks of too much screen time.
- Students will brainstorm ideas to reduce screen time at home.

### **Lesson:**

Last month we talked about exercise and energy balance. Raise your hand if you can remember some of the nutrients we discussed that will help you feel good when exercising.

*(Calcium-strong bones, protein-strong muscles, fruits and vegetables-vitamins and minerals and carbohydrates-energy, water)*

Who exercised 60 minutes a day or increased how much they exercised last month? Great Job! Let's have everyone get up now and let's do two minutes of exercise. **(Select two or three exercises suggested by the students.)**

**(Show slide 1.)** This month we're going to talk about limiting screen time. Who has heard the phrase "screen time" before? Raise your hand if you can tell me what it means. *(Time spent watching television, playing video games, surfing the Internet, using a computer, etc.)*

How much free-time everyday do you spend in front of a screen on school days? Remember this includes computer, iPods, TV, and video games. If you watch one movie, that is about two hours of "screen time". **(Give students a chance to answer. Help them by thinking about what they do before school, on the bus, after school, before bedtime.)** What about on weekends or vacations?

This is an important topic because a lot of children spend too many hours in front of the screen every day. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends limiting screen time **(to a maximum of two hours in one day. Less than two hours is**

**even better. ONLY mention these maximums if your class is exceeding them!)**

Why do you think they recommend that? What's wrong with spending time in front of a screen? **(Show slide 2.)**

- *(You have less time to play actively. Exercise and active play keep us healthy and help us maintain our weight.)*
- *(It increases snacking on unhealthy foods like chips and crackers. When people are watching TV, playing video games or using computers, they don't pay attention to how much they are eating so they tend to eat more.)*
- *(Elementary children who have televisions in their bedrooms tend to do less well on tests than those who don't.)*
- *(Watching too much TV makes it harder to fall asleep and get the rest you need.)*

**(Show slide 3.)** So now that we know why it's important, let's come up with some things we could do to limit our screen time. We're going to play a game. **(Break class into 3 to 5 teams.)** Each team will have 3 minutes to write down as many different things they could do that don't involve screens. We'll go in a circle with each group saying one idea that hasn't been mentioned yet! The last group that is able to offer a new idea wins. Ready? Start writing down your ideas!

**(Wander among the groups and offer ideas if they are getting stuck. Art, flying kites, wind surfing, making plays, playing kickball, tae kwon do, etc. They don't have to be ideas they will necessarily do.)**

Ok, now let's see which team has the most ideas! Choose one person from your group to be the speaker. When I point to your group the speaker gives one of your teams' ideas – no commentaries please, just the idea. Remember, don't say an idea that's already been mentioned! Teammates should listen carefully and cross off items on their list that you or the other teams mention. **(Go in a circle. When a team is eliminated they just sit quietly until no more ideas are offered.)**

Those are great ideas! Did you hear any new ideas that you may enjoy doing?

If you think you are spending too much time in front of the screen you can cut back by setting limits. Even if you are not spending too much time in front of the screen you may still want to try out some of these tips:

1. Make screen time special: choose a show or game you really enjoy.
2. When a T.V. program ends, turn the TV off and don't channel surf.

3. Set a time limit for how long you'll play video games or use the computer.
4. Do not eat meals or snack while using electronics.

**(Distribute Screen Time Packets and Show slide 4.)** These are worksheets for you to keep track of your screen time. Fill in your name and enter today's date. As you can see, there are columns for each day of the week. The rows show the activities: Computer, Video Games, Television, Total Screen Time and Active Play/Sports. In the squares write down the time you spent that day doing each activity.

For example, say it is Tuesday. You play basketball with friends after school for 45 minutes so you would record 45 in the Active Play/Sports box under Tuesday. Then you come home and watch TV for 30 minutes, so you would record 30 in the Television box under Tuesday. Then you do homework and eat dinner. After dinner your family goes to the park and you run around for 35 minutes. In the active play/sports row you would record this as  $45+35 = 1 \text{ hour } 20 \text{ minutes}$ . Then you play video games with family for 20 minutes so you put 20 in the Video Games box under Tuesday. Then you read and go to bed. Your Total Screen Time for Tuesday would be  $20 + 30 = 50 \text{ minutes}$ .

Now it's your turn. Have you had any screen time or active play yet today that you should record? **(Have students fill out the current day on their worksheet. Help them as needed.)**

Before bed, record any other screen time or active play you did. Any questions? For the next three weeks, fill out these worksheets. After three weeks you will graph the time you spent in each activity and answer some questions. We'll discuss your findings next month.