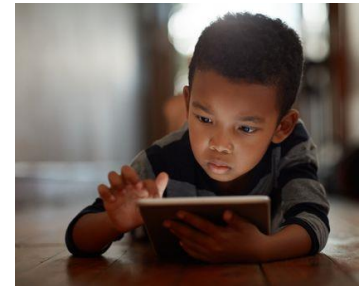




With schools closed and governments issuing orders for people to stay at home, a lot of kids have no choice but to turn to their screens for school and any kind of socializing. The debate over how much screen time is healthy is nothing new, but our devices have arguably never played as big a role in our lives as they do now when it comes to staying connected amid a global pandemic. Recent data shows that a majority of kids between the ages of six and 12 in the US are spending at least 50 percent more time in front of screens each day during the COVID-19 outbreaks. How might that affect kids' development and mental health?

1. Emotional concerns might be just addictive behaviors toward digital technology and depression.
2. Children could have access to inappropriate content.
3. Children are less active in terms of physical activity and exercise.
4. Children could experience a shortened or decreased attention span when it comes to cognitive development.



What can parents and guardians do to counteract some of those potentially adverse effects? Let's devote today to DEVICE FREE TUESDAY!! Below are a few screen free activities that will have kids learning, laughing and getting a break from the stress.

1. **Toilet paper roll binoculars:** Using three toilet paper rolls, cut one toilet paper roll down the middle. Go ahead and decorate the top of that roll using markers/crayons/paint. Tape each side of the cut roll to your second toilet paper roll and repeat the steps for the third roll on the opposite side. Then, take these items outside and explore!
2. **Egg carton mask:** Parents, cut off a section of the egg carton that contains two egg complete holes and two half egg holes so that you get a complete spike between the two sets of holes. Then, trim the edges and you should start to see the mask shape with two eyes and a nose! Make a hole and carefully cut out the center of the egg hole to make eye holes. Add holes to each side using old shoelaces/ string/ rubber band to be able to tie on the child's head. Now, let your child decorate using paint/crayons/ markers. When done, let your child put it on!
3. **Paper towel/ toilet paper roll train-** gather a paper towel roll/ toilet paper roll, old bottle caps, old shoelaces/string/rubber bands and make the longest train!! You can even add color to it by coloring/painting the paper towel/toilet paper rolls. Make sure to watch the little ones with the bottle caps!
4. **Hopscotch inside the house-** Get some pieces of paper. Place these sheets on your floor/carpet in the form of a hopscotch game. If the paper is plain, write numbers. As your child hops, have them to say the number they are on.



We hope this week's resources will help you and your families to build resilience during this stressful time.

<https://www.childrensmentalhealthmatters.org/resources/mentalhealthmondays/>

