

FitFUTURE

Strategies for
Better Living.

WEAN the SCREEN & Reduce Inactivity in 7 Easy Steps

by Jennifer Kerr, MS, RD, CDN

- 1 **Talk to Your Family**
Explain to your kids that it's important to sit less and move more in order to stay healthy.
- 2 **Set Screen Time Limits**
Create a house rule that limits screen time to two hours every day. More importantly, enforce the rule.
- 3 **Role Model**
You need to be a good role model and limit your screen time to no more than two hours per day, too. If your kids see you following your own rules, then they will be more likely to do the same.
- 4 **Compare Screen Time to Activity**
Start tracking how much time your family spends in front of a screen, including things like TV/DVD, video games, and using the computer for something other than school or work. Then take a look at how much physical activity they get and compare.
- 5 **No TV in the Bedroom**
Don't put a TV or computer in your child's bedroom. Kids who have a TV in their room tend to watch about 1.5 hours more TV a day than those that don't.
- 6 **Provide Better Options**
Watching TV can become a habit, making it easy to forget what else is out there. Give your kids ideas and/or alternatives, such as playing outside, getting a new hobby, or learning a sport.
- 7 **Don't Use Screens as a Reward or Punishment**
These practices make TV seem even more important to children.

To learn more about weaning screen time and other health topics:

National Heart Lung and Blood Institute
<http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/wecan>

