

# Tips for encouraging kids away from the screens

Following on from my post about [kids tv time](#), I thought I'd pass on some tips about getting kids away from the screens....

## Tips for encouraging kids away from screens



1. **Chatting** - Try (however hard it may be with some teenagers?!) to spark up some conversations, debates, or how about incorporating a 'catch up' routine as part of your regular day? Children often love a good debate or a chance to talk about something they love. Let them choose the topic if they want. It may only be 5 mins here and there, but that's great.
2. **Encourage friendships** - Try to encourage children to visit friends or have friends come round to you.
3. **Reading** - Spend time with your children reading stories, listen to them read to you. Visit your library.
4. **Provide opportunity for creativity** - Provide arts and craft materials, paints, a box of junk recycling (for junk modelling), music, encourage singing and dancing, make your own instruments and create a band. Encourage children to put on a performance or puppet show.
5. **Physical activity** - children should do at least 60 mins per day of physical exercise. Encourage walks, try making the walks fun by going on an adventure, or a scavenger hunt. Go to the park. Encourage the children to do races, have a game of football, cricket, or other ball game. Get the bikes out or scooters. Go on a family bike ride, children are more likely to be encouraged to do something if you join in too. Encourage dancing or participating in a sports club.
6. **Play** - Play is essential for children to learn and develop, encourage free play, where children can use their own imagination. Allow noise sometimes. Encourage children to play games together, or get some board games out as a whole family (have a games night). Think of a theme each week and encourage play around that theme, e.g. ocean, farm, police, pirates, nature, hospital, beach, woodland, the list is endless.(this may help spark some play ideas for children).
7. **Pinterest** - Take a look on pinterest, this is one of my biggest and best resources for ideas of what to do with children.
8. **Cooking** - let children help you prepare the dinner or organise some baking. It may be messy, but

great fun.

Basically, be bright and positive about encouraging children to find other activities away from the screens. Get involved, children will often join in if you are doing it too. This also provides a fantastic opportunity for family time. I am loving the idea of a games night.

Ultimately though, you will not always have time to join in with every activity, children need free time too, they need to be able to amuse themselves, use their own imagination and creativity without always being told. Encourage this enthusiastically (no matter what negative response you get) and stick with it. The more opportunity children have for free time (without the screens) the better they will become at utilising that time for fun.

Good luck

P.s I am about to arrange a screen free day in January, in order to raise awareness of encouraging children to have basic childhood fun, away from screens. I would love people to join me in having a screen free day and then blog about what they get up to. Please let me know if you would be interested in joining me....