

# DigiFit: Parent Guide for Digital Wellness

In today's world, our behaviors can extend beyond the walls of our schools, and getting students ready for a balanced digital lifestyle is essential to success at work as well as in life. Students need to learn how to interact socially, personally, and educationally in both face-to-face and online environments. With all of the new opportunities that are possible through digital learning spaces, students should master these skills through the lens of health and digital wellness.





To best practice balance, your child should learn to take breaks from technology instead of trying to survive a “banned” punishment.

Embrace productive uses of technology for learning and exploring. Make it a full family participation when appropriate, and include time to reflect. This allows parents to model the behavior they are expecting for their kids.

Consider the impact of technology use on physical health. It is important to take breaks for your eyes and ears. For your eyes, there is the 20/20/20 rule: for every 20 minutes spent looking at a screen, a person should look at something 20 feet away for 20 seconds. Also investigate if your child’s devices or headphones have volume limiters to avoid hearing damage.

### **Additional Resources:**

[commonsensemedia.org/device-free-dinner](https://commonsensemedia.org/device-free-dinner)

[healthychildren.org/](https://healthychildren.org/)

Video: [screenagersmovie.com](https://screenagersmovie.com)

### **Try This At Home:**

- Considering using a screen time app yourself
- Suggest integrating technology into physical activity like taking photos while hiking or use it to track exercise.
- Create a family media plan (check out [healthychildren.org](https://healthychildren.org) for help)
- Avoid using a device in idle moments like waiting in a line or sitting in a car (especially while driving).
- Modern smartphones provide wellness settings that can help you set limits to how long you can use certain apps each day
- Ask: How do you handle when someone is ignoring you while using their device?



Everyone, not just our students, will struggle at times when trying to stay informed while having to navigate bias in information.

The key is to staying aware use your critical thinking skills to identify when information, news, or editorial opinion is misleading or misinformed.

In social media, your child should know not to escalate issues by liking or sharing potentially incorrect or negative information.

Find positive ways to embrace passions and solving problems.

### **Try This At Home:**

- Discuss journalism with your child: why it exists, how it can help, and how it can manipulate or inform consumers
- For high-schoolers: Help your child create a professional profile in social media like LinkedIn.
- Be honest, let your child know this is hard for everyone.
- Shy your children away from trying to become "viral" for something unintelligent or negative.

### **Additional Resources:**

[Smartsocial.com](http://Smartsocial.com)



Parents cannot stress appropriate behavior online enough. A social network interaction should not be a dramatic departure from your child's in-person interactions, especially if they are negative. Argumentative and negative comments online is daring someone to reciprocate.

Etiquette in digital wellness stretches outside of online experiences. Children should be aware of their surroundings in public spaces. Wearing headphones or constantly looking down while moving is interpreted by many as being "disconnected." Work with your child to make eye contact with individuals in conversation.

### Try This At Home:

- Google yourself with your child and then do the same with their name.
- Remind your child that others are struggling and can be hurt by social media too.
- Pay attention to the words your child uses when playing online video games. "Trash-talk" should not involve derogatory language.

### Additional Resources:

[TheBullyProject.com](http://TheBullyProject.com)

Follow @DigCitCommit on Twitter for additional resources and support



Online safety (along with privacy and security) needs to be proactive in nature.

Remind your children that even if you share something online with only one person, you can't assume it won't be shared with others. Also be careful sharing location data with apps, as it can easily expose your location at sensitive times.

Even our most tech-savvy students can be victims of predatory behaviors.

### **Try This At Home:**

- Help children develop good password habits. Never share a password with someone, and make passwords unique, easy to remember, and not easily identifiable.
- Explore your phone's Privacy Settings. Make sure that everyone is aware of which apps have access to your location data.
- Educate yourself on human trafficking/predator tactics. This impacts every community.

### **Additional Resources:**

[statnow.org](https://www.statnow.org) (Human Trafficking Prevention)

[commonsense.org/education](https://www.common sense.org/education)

Video: Generation Like

<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/generation-like/>