CATCH Kids Club Family Tip Sheet:
SCREEN-TIME

Watching DVDs and TV shows, texting, emailing, surfing the Internet, playing video games, computer games, and handheld games. . . . The number of activities you can do in front of an electronic screen seems to increase every year. So does the amount of time you spend doing them.

Unfortunately, usually during “screen-time” you’re not moving. So too much screen-time can end up making your body get out of energy balance*. This is even more likely to happen if you eat while in front of a screen.

*Your body is in energy balance when it burns about the same number of calories you eat.

SCREEN-TIME: Your Family’s Numbers

The average amount of daily screen-time of American kids and teens is 7 hours. The recommended amount is 2 hours a day. (For preschool kids: less than 1 hour. For children 2 years or younger: no screen-time.)

Is the screen-time of the kids in your family closer to the average amount or the recommended amount?

Help your kids calculate the average number of hours they spend daily in front of any kind of electronic screen. Write down their names and the number of hours.

_____________________       _____________________         _____________________
_____________________       _____________________         _____________________

For anyone whose screen-time is above the recommended amount: Set a goal to reduce your screen-time—even if it’s only by an hour a day.

For everyone: It’s easy to overeat in front of a screen. That’s because you’re concentrating on what is on the screen. So, no matter what your amount of screen-time is, set a goal not to eat when you’re in front of a screen.
WHY REDUCE SCREEN-TIME?

As a family, name at least 10 reasons to reduce screen-time. Here are some reasons to get you started:

- After a while, you don’t feel like getting up and moving.
- You miss out on playing with friends and family members.
- You argue or get into fights like people on TV do.
- You want to buy the junk food or toys you see on TV.

TWO WAYS TO REDUCE SCREEN-TIME

1. Make a list of the TV shows you watch each night. Decide which ones are your favorites and which ones aren’t as important to you. Don’t watch at least one of the unimportant shows.

2. If you play a handheld game, video game, or a game on a computer or the Internet, play it for one fourth less time. (An adult can help kids figure out how much less time this is.)

WHAT TO DO INSTEAD OF SCREEN-TIME

If your family members reduce their screen-time, they’ll have more time to do other things. As a family, on a separate sheet of paper write down at least 10 things you can do instead of screen-time.

Remember that doing physical activity is an important part of keeping your body in energy balance. So make some of the things you name involve movement.