

April 18-24 is Screen-Free Week

What if you and your family had an extra 20 or 30 hours a week to spend time together? Children spend an average of 32 hours a week in front of TV, computer and hand-held game screens. Excessive screen time has been associated with poor school performance, childhood obesity, attention problems, and a decrease in creative play. For adults, excessive time spent on responding to work emails in the evenings or overuse of social networking sites can interfere with personal relationships or decrease time available for recreational activities.



Screen-Free Week is a great way to help children (and adults) lead healthier, happier lives by decreasing dependence to television, video games, computers, and hand-held devices. Spending less time in front of a screen provides time for children to play, enjoy some fresh air outdoors, read, daydream, explore, and spend more time with family and friends. Adults should also set their own boundaries with technology and limit blackberry, cell phone and email communication so they have some personal time away from work to relax and re-energize. Screen-Free Week provides a springboard for making some lifestyle changes that will improve well-being and quality of life all year round!

Anyone can participate in Screen-Free Week by not viewing television, computer or other hand-held devices for entertainment during the week of April 18-24, 2011. Playing family games, preparing home-cooked meals, planning for a summer garden, spring cleaning the house or taking time to walk or bike with friends or family members are just a few of the many activities you could do to spend quality time with loved ones. For more ideas, visit www.screenfree.org.

Source: *Eat Smart, Move More NC*