

## Screen Time Tips for 6 to 8 Year Old's

*The same parenting rules apply to screen time as to anything else — set a good example, establish limits, and talk with your child about it.*

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- **Supervise the use of your child's technology.** Allow your child 1-2 hours of screen time per day and make the screen time a family bonding experience. Ask for your child's passwords to any social media accounts and regularly check them. Make sure you explain why you are supervising them and do not shy away from educating them on the dangers of technology.
- **Research games and apps before buying or downloading.** The **Entertainment Software Rating Board** is an online resource that helps parents make informed decisions about video games and apps that their children play. They provide a rating summary that gives quick insight on the age appropriateness of a game. There are several other good options that can help you make an informed decision.
- **Schedule plenty of non-screen time into your child's day.** Create phone-free zones in your home such as the bedroom, bathroom, etc. Implement screen-free hours into your day. For example, no screens allowed from the hours of 8:00 PM to 10:00 PM. Keep your child active in school clubs, sports, peer engagement, and outdoor activities. Most importantly, be realistic with this process. If your child is used to spending long hours on screens, start by reducing screen time by one hour each day and go from there. Replace the screen time with family engagement and face-to-face conversation.

**Intended Use** – When it comes to raising children, priorities and values differ greatly from home to home. Identify your expectations: what, why, how, when, where for creating rules, boundaries, rewards, and consequences.

**Modeling** – The way you use technology can have a positive impact on your child's outlook on technology. Kids do what they see and say what they hear. Here are some examples on how to model healthy behavior:

- Set aside screen-free time and engage in face-to-face conversation with your child. This can be when your child gets home from school or when you come home from work, during meals, while watching your child do something they enjoy, etc.
- If you get a text message or social media notification while talking to someone else (especially your child) wait for the conversation to end before you respond to it.
- Keep all phones in an overnight family area to charge so you can avoid keeping them in the bedroom.
- Avoid using screens to entertain your child in situations like long car rides or appointments. Give them card games, a book, or memory games instead.
- Avoid watching TV at mealtimes.
- Be mindful of your digital footprint such as the photos and comments you post and are tagged in.
- Have open communication with your child. Talk with them about social media and following people online. Let them be a part of planning how your family will use technology.

**Protection** – Be consistent and available. Know who they are with and what they are watching and hearing. Set password protections on all screens and look into Internet Filtering Software.

1. **Qustodio:** Best Internet filter software overall. Allows you to block inappropriate content, limit games and apps, track your child's device, monitor their social media activity, and more.
2. **Net Nanny:** Best for monitoring your kids. Allows parents to block websites containing content such as death/gore, nudity, pornography, drugs, strip clubs, and more.
3. **Kaspersky Safe Kids 2021:** Best value internet filter app. Offers location tracking and YouTube Safe Search.
4. **Surfie:** Great for cell phones.
5. **Bark:** Best for detecting hidden threats.

**Communication** – Good communication is a habit, and it needs to start young.

- Have face to face conversations with your child.
- Avoid saying “because I said so.”
- Don’t embarrass your child by correcting them in public. Shame is powerful and can negatively affect your child’s ability to learn.
- Role play. Prepare them with expectations and responses.
- Use SONGS to help your child remember important topics.

### **Manners/Appropriateness**

- It will be important to teach your child how to care for their body and how to respect it, as well as respecting the bodies of other people. Our bodies are good and need things like air, food, water, clothes, affection, and exercise to grow up safe and healthy.
  - Teach your child about the similarities and differences between boys and girls
  - Use medically accurate names for private parts such as “penis” “vagina” and “breasts”
  - Talk with your child about boundaries and consent
    - Asking for hugs, high fives, fist bumps, etc.
    - It’s ok to say “no” or “no, thank you”
  - There should be appropriate affection based on relationships to your child – friends, family, teachers, etc.

## **The Stanford Marshmallow Experiment: How Self-Control Affects Success in Life**



### *References*

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