



Developmental Assets

There are 40... How many does your child have?

Asset #20 Time At Home

We live in a fast paced, technologically driven world that promotes communication and passive activities through computers, electronic games, and television. Although these activities (also known as screen time) can be both educational and pleasurable, they can also reduce the amount of quality time families spend interacting with each other. The Search Institute identified the way that a child spends his/her time at home as one of 40 Developmental Assets – proven to prevent substance abuse, depression, and other social problems.

Did you know?

- **The average Canadian child spends more time in one year watching TV than the amount of time spent in school?**
- **The average Canadian student spends more time watching TV than any other activity except sleeping?**

The following steps may assist families to create an environment that limits screen time activities, while encouraging family time:

Be a good example to your children.

Limit your own “screen time” and be active at least 60 minutes per day

Encourage children from a young age to be active in many different ways.

Assist children to develop skills in a variety of activities.

Create a family “action plan”

For example, active chores, active family outings, alternative activities on rainy days.

Turn off the television, computer and video game.

Limit screen time to 1 hour per day for preschoolers and less than 2 hours per day for school age children, and plan screen-free days.

Initiate a positive reward system.

For example, one hour of reading earns a half hour of television, computer or video game time.

Value your child’s health – monitor their growth and activity patterns.

Enjoy active time together as a family

For example, challenge your kids to a game of basketball or volleyball.