

## Technology Tips for Parents.

Technology has become such an integral part of our daily lives, which means that with an increase of access to technology, comes a higher need for guidelines and boundaries for our children and their technology use. Below are some tips that you can implement in your home to help your child develop a healthy relationship with technology that won't negatively interfere with their daily functioning and development.

- **Be in the Know!** Know your children's **friends**, both online and off. Know what platforms, software, and apps your children are using, what sites they are visiting on the web, and what they are doing online.
- **Set limits and encourage playtime.** Media use, like all other activities, should have reasonable limits. Make unplugged playtime a daily priority, especially for very young children.
- **Screen time shouldn't always be alone time.** Co-view, co-play and co-engage with your children when they are using screens—it encourages social interactions, bonding, and learning. Don't just monitor them online—interact with them, so you can understand what they are doing and be a part of it.
- **Be a good role model.** Teach and model kindness and good manners online. Because children are great mimics, limit your own media use. In fact, you'll be more available for and connected with your children if you're interacting, hugging and playing with them rather than simply staring at a screen.
- **Create tech-free zones.** Keep **family mealtimes**, other family and social gatherings, and **children's bedrooms** screen free. Turn off televisions that you aren't watching, because background TV can get in the way of face-to-face time with kids. Recharge devices overnight—outside your child's bedroom to help him or her avoid the temptation to use them when they should be sleeping. These changes encourage more family time, healthier eating habits, and better sleep.