



**For parents
of
adolescents**

Recommendations for using digital media

www.youthandmedia.ch



GOOD TO KNOW

Digital media are omnipresent in the world today – and that particularly applies to adolescents. They have grown up with smartphones and the Internet, and use the opportunities they provide quite naturally. Nevertheless, it is important that they are guided in their use of media by parents and others close to them.

The focus should be on talking about the content but also the risks associated with using the Internet – with the aim of ensuring that young people use digital media responsibly and safely. They should be able to critically question both information and their own behaviour.

We hope our recommendations encourage you to take a positive and creative approach to the question of media use, to remain in touch with what interests adolescents, take their experiences and assessments seriously, and to consciously shape the way they use digital media.





RECOMMENDATIONS

GRADUALLY GRANT MORE INDEPENDENCE.

In the case of adolescents who use digital media responsibly, you can gradually reduce how much guidance you need to give them. But stay interested and always be ready for any discussions they may want to have.

MAKE SURE RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES ARE BALANCED.

Adolescents should not spend all their free time with digital media but should also engage in other leisure activities – e.g. being active outside, doing sport and meeting up with their peers. Boredom does not immediately have to be combated with screen media. Talk about the fact that a constant stream of screen entertainment is not actually necessary or healthy. Using any form of screen media before going to bed makes it more difficult to go to sleep.

DEFINE SPECIFIC SCREEN-FREE TIMES TOGETHER.

Defining screen-free times is more suitable for adolescents than defining specific media times. Make clear agreements together and attach great importance to them being adhered to. From the outset, make sure it is clear what the consequences will be if this is not the case.

REMEMBER YOU ARE A ROLE MODEL.

Parents and other people close to children and adolescents are role models when it comes to using media. So make sure you give your own media habits some thought.

CAUTION WITH PRIVATE DATA AND ONLINE ACQUAINTANCES.

Explain to your adolescent children that sharing personal details and pictures of themselves and others can be problematic. First meetings with online acquaintances should only take place at busy, public places. It is also to be recommended that someone close to the young person is informed about any forthcoming meeting.

OBSERVE THE LAWFUL USE OF IMAGES.

Everyone has the right to their own image. Before posting or sending photos and videos, the consent of the persons depicted should be obtained.

TALK ABOUT THE PORTRAYAL OF VIOLENCE AND PORNOGRAPHY.

Brutal violence and pornographic images showing children are illegal. Erotic images minors take of themselves and share with others (sexting) are deemed to be illegal pornographic content. Making pornography of any type available to children under the age of 16 is also a criminal offence.

RULES ON RESPECTFUL CONDUCT ALSO APPLY ONLINE.

Remind young people to show respect when sending comments and messages. If someone feels they are being attacked online, they should be taken seriously. In the case of cyberbullying, hate speeches or discrimination, it may be necessary to ask an expert for help.

ENCOURAGE CRITICAL THINKING.

Talk about the subject of fake news and how to recognise such news. Discuss how advertising works – using examples of product placement or in-game offers.

OBSERVE THE AGE RATING.

Observe age ratings for films (FSK etc.) and games (PEGI, USK etc.).

ENCOURAGE A POSITIVE AND CREATIVE USE OF MEDIA.

Promote the creative use of digital photos, videos and music. There are very good games and videos that provide plenty of enjoyment. Furthermore, the Internet offers a wide selection of learning content and tutorials.



FURTHER INFORMATION

Youth and Media is the national platform for promoting media skills.

We want children and young people to use digital media safely and responsibly. This is why we offer information, tips and recommendations for parents and other people important in a child's life as well as for educators and other experts:

www.youthandmedia.ch

This flyer is aimed at parents, educators and anyone close to adolescents between the ages of 12 and 18. **There are two other flyers**, one with recommendations for the age group up to 7 years of age (preschool) as well as one for parents and key people in the lives of children of primary/lower secondary school age (6 to 13 years of age). **All flyers are available in 16 languages.** You can download them or order them free of charge from our website.

Our website also features additional information, links and explanations on all recommendations:

www.youthandmedia.ch/recommendations



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