



# FAQs

**Q: How do I join Screen-Free Saturdays?**

**A:** The first step to receiving Screen-Free Saturdays e-mails is to [TAKE THE PLEDGE](#) on our website! Once you pledge:

- We'll send you an email with tips and resources to help you get started.
- We'll send monthly emails after that to help you continue your practice.
- The rest is up to you! Make your Screen-Free Saturdays yours.

**Q: What activities do you recommend for Screen-Free Saturdays?**

**A:** You can do literally anything (within reason and current health guidelines) on Screen-Free Saturdays that doesn't involve a screen. Need a place to start? We have compiled a list of [100 Screen-Free Activities](#), and each month we'll offer new ways to play and explore with what you already have. [Sign up now](#) to get our monthly Screen-Free Saturday emails with more resources and ideas!

**Q: I have very young children that don't use screens much anyway. Why should we participate in Screen-Free Saturdays?**

**A:** Screen-Free Saturdays are as much for adults as they are for children. It's great that your young children aren't using screens much – they need that for their developing brains, bodies, and hearts. **Just remember – even though your children might not need a break from screens, they need you to take a break!** Children rely on their caregivers to model screen breaks and to prioritize quality times.

**Q: I work on Saturdays. Do I need to pick Saturday or can I choose another day?**

**A:** The important thing is that you commit to a day and stick with it! So, whether you choose Saturday or Sunday or Wednesday, you'll make that day screen-free. You can also choose what hours work for you. Maybe it's noon Saturday to noon Sunday. Maybe it's from the first moment you wake up to the next day's alarm. Others block out 24 waking hours spread across the work week. Many families also find that it works best for them to go sundown to sundown – a [tech shabbat](#), as it has been coined. Find what works for you and commit!

**Q: My family relies on our smartphones to stay in touch with one another. How do we manage that?**

**A:** There are many different solutions for keeping in touch while managing the temptations of our tech. Some families swear by getting a landline, even simply to be able to do a screen-free day. If a landline is not in the cards for you, then keep your phone in one place. This will help



your family members to hold you accountable if you get sucked in. What we especially encourage is managing your notifications. It is so easy to get sucked in! Use the BRICK method for your phone. Dull the temptation of the phone by turning on iMessage's Do Not Disturb mode, which will auto-respond to your people and give them an option to connect with you if it's urgent. Use the script: "It's Screen-Free Saturday! I'm unplugged. I will see this when I'm ready to plug in on Sunday. If this is urgent, reply with 'urgent,' and I will receive your message right away."

[How to set up brick mode for iOS](#)

[How to use Do Not Disturb for Androids](#)

[How to set up auto replies](#)

**Q: I run an organization that has a similar mission. How can we promote or partner on Screen-Free Saturdays?**

**A:** We love partnership opportunities and work hard to cross-promote our endorsers and compatible initiatives. Please reach out to Rachel Franz ([rachel@commercialfreechildhood.org](mailto:rachel@commercialfreechildhood.org)) for opportunities to connect!

**Q: My family member is ill/in the hospital, and we need to make sure to stay close to our devices for any emergencies. Can I still participate in SFS?**

**A:** Yes! Please prioritize your family's health and safety during this time. If you need to be in touch, keep your device in a place that makes sense for you with the ringer up loud. This helps to be held accountable if we get sucked into scrolling and provides a concrete tool for distancing yourself from your notifications. Also, check out our answer to the question above about needing to use your phone to stay in touch!

**Q: What happened to Screen-Free Week?**

**A:** Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Screen-Free Week was postponed for 2020. Read more about our closure decisions and next steps [here](#).

**Q: Can we still celebrate Screen-Free Week?**

**A:** Of course! The official celebration, set from May 4-10 2020, is being carried out by many folks across the globe using social distancing protocols in their countries, but others have established other weeks to celebrate. Our [resources](#) are still available on our website and our Facebook page is available to share your experiences. Did you celebrate? [Send us](#) your stories!

**Q: Are all screens bad? Can I use some types of screens on Screen-Free Saturday?**

**A:** Regardless of the quality of media, there is no denying that, for most children today, time spent with screens overwhelms all other leisure activities – and that too much screen time is harmful. One of the purposes of Screen-Free Saturdays is to leave behind judgments about the quality of programming and focus instead on creating, discovering, building, participating,



and doing. That being said, we invite families to create a plan that works for them and their requirements around work, school, and communication technology on the weekends.

**Q: Instead of taking screens away from kids, don't we need to teach kids media literacy? A:**

It's not either/or. In fact, taking time away from screens entirely is an important part of media literacy. After all, rule one in media literacy is knowing when to turn it off. And, as screens are required for much more of our daily lives during the pandemic, our media literacy skills are challenged more than ever. Media-literate kids (and adults) have broad interests and experiences that they can use to interpret the media they consume. Giving children the chance to play actively, develop relationships, and learn to evaluate options will help them become more well-rounded people, better-educated citizens, more alert consumers—and be far more media literate.

**Q: My spouse/partner won't/can't participate. Now what?**

**A:** Screen-Free Saturdays are voluntary and meant to be fun and beneficial. Encourage your partner to give it a try. It's best if Screen-Free Saturdays are a family activity. But if that's not possible, encourage your partner to respect the choices that you and your children are making by avoiding screen time in front of the kids during the day.

**Q: I need some peace and quiet when I am getting my Saturday chores done. How do I occupy the kids while I fix dinner or do things around the house?**

**A:** Developing a few regular pre-dinner activities for children is a worthwhile investment. Some parents find that playing with kids for a few minutes helps everyone relax. You can also encourage kids to keep you company while you're cooking. They can help with simple tasks, read aloud, or talk about their day. Some families keep art materials or small toys in the kitchen to keep children occupied during dinner prep. Consider brainstorming with other parents about what they do. Find our Screen-Free Week & Screen-Free Saturday community on Facebook, post tips from your own experience, pose questions about your stumbling blocks, or just chat with like-minded Screen-Free participants.

**Q: We have teens at home! How can we best appeal to teenagers?**

**A:** Make it fun and provocative. Prepare for the week by stimulating discussion on screen time issues or debating opposing views. Help your teenager reconnect with their childhood, with their siblings, or with your family traditions. They have favorite screen-free things to do; Screen-Free Saturdays are an important way to carve out this time!