

## Appendix B: Why Be Screen Smart?

### Screen Smart strives to:

- raise awareness of screen time (with students, but also with parents and teachers), and
- reduce screen time to less than 2 hours a day (or maintain that level if already achieved).

There are 6 messages supporting the achievement of these objectives. Messages 4 and 5 are targeted to teachers and parents.

1. Our bodies are designed to move. People who are active each day live healthier, happier, and longer lives.
2. Screen time can displace physical activity, reading, and face-to-face socializing. By turning off screens, children have more time for active play and other beneficial pursuits.
3. Children often eat while they watch TV and eat what they watch. Commercials expose children to unhealthy food. Children who watch more TV often snack more and drink more sugary drinks.
4. Children with less screen time are more likely to have better school success with improved grades, improved reading skills, better attention in class, and better communication skills.
5. Children develop lifestyle habits that persist into adulthood. Parents, caregivers, and other family members can influence children in the development of healthy lifestyles that include regular physical activity and active play and controlled amounts of screen time.
6. It is easy to make a difference – we can **TRADE30** minutes of screen time each day for other fun activities.

### Kick-off questions for Day 1!

We know that when students are given a rationale for the work they are asked to do, they tend to commit more to the task.

Introduce Screen Smart by engaging students in a discussion. Some questions are offered below, and teachers can choose those most appropriate for the student group:

- What is your favourite activity? Why?
- What is your least favourite activity? Why?
- What are “screens”? [Answer: computers, TV’s, DVD players, cell phones, portable electronic devices, etc. used for work, school and recreation]
- What do you like about [type of screen identified by students]?
- What do you like about your favourite screen?
- How do you feel after playing a sport that you like?
- What do you think experts say is an OK amount of screen time each day? [Answer: 1-2 hours is OK. Less than 1 hour is best; more than 2 hours is too much]
- Do you usually snack when you use screens? What types of snacks are your favourites at these times?
- What kind of screen time do you find hardest to stop for other activities? Why do you think that is?
- Are some screen activities social? If so, in what way?

### Help crystallize student thinking on Day 5!

Ask students to look at their Lifestyle Pie Chart today (Day 5, Friday) and the one they did on Day 1 (Monday). Probe:

- How does your Lifestyle Pie Chart today compare to the one done on Monday?
- How do you feel about the changes (or lack of changes) between the Lifestyle Pie Chart on Day 1 and today?
- What did you enjoy about doing your favourite screen activity this week (if you did have screen time)?
- What non-screen activity was your favourite this week? Why was it your favourite?

If you give out an individual certificate (see sample), have students complete the following sentence in the space at the bottom of the page:

**The most important thing I learned from Screen Smart**

**Week was** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_