



NOVEMBER 2020

SCREEN TIME: HOW MUCH IS TOO MUCH?

The COVID-19 pandemic pushed us into a virtual world, whether or not we were ready for it. There have always been recommended limits for “screen time” but these just don’t seem to apply in our new world where students are taking virtual classes and seeing their teachers through screens. What’s more important than the amount of time spent in front of a screen is *what* the youth is doing with it. Are they engaged in social or academic activities or are they passively watching it? [Common Sense Media](#) is a website to find answers about screen time and other concerns that parents may have in this new virtual environment.



“Kindness is caring for others, even when they may not care for you.”
~Random Acts of Kindness Foundation

SIGNS OF DEPRESSION IN ADOLESCENTS

The pandemic has been difficult on everyone, including young people. Social isolation, school stress, fear of illness and grief have impacted adolescents throughout Georgia. However, it might be hard to distinguish between typical adolescent development and depression because teenagers go through emotional highs and lows as they progress naturally through their development. Here are some signs that a young person may need professional support:

- Changes in weight or eating habits
- Unable to sleep

- Unusual sadness or irritability that lasts for days or weeks (typical adolescents are sad or irritable but their moods also include periods of joy)
- Isolating from friends and family
- Feelings of worthlessness or hopelessness
- Self-harming behaviors
- Thoughts of suicide

Parents who are concerned that their youth may have depression can contact the [Georgia Crisis and Access Line](#) for a **free** mental health assessment at **1-800-715-4225** or **download the GCAL app**.

PARENT CONNECT: CHILD SAFETY VIRTUAL DISCUSSION SERIES

For Additional Family Resources:
Visit the Prevention/Intervention webpage
Family Resources Tab [HERE](#)

This page is updated regularly.

Join the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children each Tuesday, along with special guests, as they discuss pertinent safety topics with practical take-aways for parents.

November 17th – Talking to Teens about Sexting

November 24th – Live Streaming & Online Enticement

December 1st – Cyberbullying

December 8th – Child Sex Trafficking

All discussions take place at 7:00PM.

REGISTER HERE:

https://ncmec.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_n3YAX9fRSOmIPsKFvIxxHg



THE BENEFITS OF GRATITUDE

There are several mental health benefits from practicing gratitude on a regular basis. Studies have shown that expressing thankfulness improves mood, increases social bonds, fosters optimism and even offers some physical health benefits. There are several ways to practice gratitude on a daily basis: ask members of the family to share something they are grateful for at meal times, keep a gratitude journal or write a note to someone thanking them.

Reference: <https://www.nationwidechildrens.org/family-resources-education/700childrens/2020/05/gratitude#:~:text=Showing%20gratitude%20has%20the%20following,can%20make%20you%20more%20optimistic.>



FIGURING OUT TEEN SLANG

Abbreviations and slang are part of adolescent communication and it can be difficult for adults to decipher what is being said when they are talking to or texting with each other. Words like *lit*, *dope*, and *salty* are frequently used by teenagers but parents may not know what they mean. When hearing a word or seeing an abbreviation for the first time, a useful resource can be the [Teen Slang Dictionary for Parents](#). This webpage gives the meaning of typical teen slang including abbreviations associated with parties, drugs and sex. The page is updated regularly so it is current on new abbreviations and slang that is being used by adolescents.

The Prevention/Intervention Office does not have any affiliation to or recommendation of outside resources that are promoted on this webpage so parents should investigate all suggested apps and websites prior to using them.



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