## Screen Time & Healthy Balance

### Quick Activities

These quick activities around screen time are designed for use with 7-11 year olds but are easily adapted for other ages.

Get students thinking about the signs they experience when they've been online for too long. This could be through discussion or using the examples below.

Why not ask them to sort the signs they've found into two categories?

- Signs from the world around you
- Signs from your own body

This could be done using a table (right) or by colour coding.

### Spotting the signs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signs from the world around you</th>
<th>Signs from your own body</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mum and Dad make me put the tablet away</td>
<td>My eyes hurt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I notice it's got dark outside</td>
<td>I need a drink</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Remind students that they won't experience these signs every time they go online. These are only the signs we get if we're online too often or for too long.

### Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Headache</th>
<th>Finding it difficult to get to sleep</th>
<th>The device feels very hot</th>
<th>Feeling moody or grumpy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constantly thinking about being online</td>
<td>Family members mention how long you've been online</td>
<td>Blurry vision</td>
<td>The device runs out of battery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling hungry</td>
<td>Looking at the clock and realising lots of time has passed</td>
<td>A message on the screen asking if you're still there</td>
<td>Neck ache</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Get creative!

Students could draw the outline of a body and then label where they experience signs they've been online too long, or you could ask them to make road signs warning of the dangers of spending too long online.

Further advice and resources: [www.childnet.com](http://www.childnet.com)  [www.saferinternet.org.uk](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk)
Screen Time & Healthy Balance

Finding a balance

Once students are familiar with the signs they might experience, it’s time to start thinking about how they can respond to them.

This all comes back to finding a healthy balance of online and offline activities.

You could give them a matching task, like the one to the right, where they choose a response for each sign experienced.

Make your students the experts

Maybe they could act as Agony Aunts responding to letters asking for advice about spending too much time online.

“I love playing online but sometimes I get a really bad headache. I find myself thinking about gaming all the time and sometimes I even forget to eat. What should I do? Lonely from London”

Use scales to make the concept of ‘balance’ as visual as possible

Give them a diagram of some scales and ask them to note down all the things they enjoy doing online on one side, but to always balance them with the things they enjoy doing offline on the other.

If you have access to balancing scales you could get them to do this in groups physically - using cubes they add one to each side whilst explaining to their peers something they enjoy doing online and an equivalent they enjoy offline.

Use drama by getting students to roleplay as healthy balance doctors. One is the patient who spends lots of time online - the other is the doctor.

What treatment will they prescribe?

For younger children it can be difficult to manage their own time online. Make sure they know that if they’re ever struggling to find a healthy balance, they can speak to an adult for help and support, or contact ChildLine - 0800 11 11 www.childline.org.uk

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