

# Monthly Newsletter

# SWITCH OFF

September 2026



## Switch Off, Sleep Well, Move More

A family newsletter for healthy screen time balance, better sleep and active play.

### LET'S BUILD HEALTHY SCREEN HABITS

Small, practical changes to recreational screen use can create more time to switch off, sleep, be active, enjoy outdoor play and connect as a family. This newsletter shares quick facts, simple screen free swaps and a 7 day family challenge to support healthier routines.

### WHY IT MATTERS

While screens are useful, too much recreational screen time can reduce opportunities for rest, physical activity and meaningful connection. Balanced daily habits help children feel ready to learn, play and recharge.

Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing (2026)

### DID YOU KNOW?

- 💡 Children need at least 60 minutes of physical activity each day.
- 💡 Recreational screen time should be limited to no more than two hours per day.
- 💡 Children aged 5–13 years generally need 9–11 hours of sleep each night to support learning, wellbeing and healthy development.

Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing (2026)

These guidelines encourage children to move daily, keep recreational screen time in balance and follow calm, consistent sleep routines. Many children do not meet all recommendations, so simple, realistic family strategies can make a meaningful difference.

In this newsletter you can expect:

Quick facts about screen time

Why sleep and movement matter

Easy screen free family swaps

Calmer bedtime reset ideas

A 7 day healthy habits challenge

Flexible support for family routines

### AFTER SCHOOL

Add a 10 minute movement burst before recreational screens: dancing, skipping, handball, walking, swimming or scooter riding.

### BEFORE BED

Try a screen free final hour with reading, drawing, storytelling, quiet music, stretching or a family chat.

### FAMILY TIME

Keep meals, car trips or homework breaks as connection times where screens are put away when possible.

## 7 DAY SWITCH OFF & MOVE CHALLENGE



### Monday

Choose a screen free bedtime activity, such as reading a picture book, drawing, quiet music, stretching, puzzles or talking about the best part of the day.

### Tuesday

Try 10 minutes of movement after school, such as dancing to a favourite song, skipping, handball, backyard soccer, swimming, scooter riding or a family walk.

### Wednesday

Make one family screen time rule, such as no devices at dinner, screens off one hour before bed, devices charged outside bedrooms, or homework before games.

### Thursday

Play an active family game, such as balloon volleyball, hide and seek, obstacle courses, animal walks, treasure hunts, chasing games or ball games.

### Friday

Choose a favourite movement activity, such as bike riding, swimming, dancing, yoga, walking the dog, kicking a ball, climbing, skipping or playground play.

### Weekend

Visit a park, beach or safe open space. Try a picnic walk, nature scavenger hunt, sand play, frisbee, ball games or a family reflection: What helped us switch off, sleep better or move more?

## SCREEN FREE SWAP MENU

Pick one swap when your family needs a break from recreational screens.



### QUIET SWAPS

Read together, draw, colour, journal, do a puzzle, listen to calm music, build with blocks or tell a story.



### ACTIVE SWAPS

Dance, skip, play balloon volleyball, create an obstacle course, kick a ball, swim, go to a playground or walk together.



### CONNECTION SWAPS

Cook together, make a fort, play a board game, do a scavenger hunt, get in the garden or talk about the day.



## BEDTIME RESET

1. Switch off recreational screens one hour before bed.
2. Choose calm activities like reading, drawing or stretching.
3. Charge devices outside the bedroom if possible.
4. Keep it kind: routines work best when they feel calm, not stressful.

## MAKE IT WORK FOR YOUR HOME

No backyard? Try hallway bowling, dance freeze, yoga, balloon games or animal walks. Hot or rainy day? Try indoor treasure hunts, music games, hide and seek or a short movement circuit. Busy night? Choose a 5 minute switch: read one story, do one stretch, have one chat, sing or listen to one song.

## TRY ONE SMALL SWITCH THIS WEEK!

Choose one screenfree time, one movement idea and one calming sleep habit. Small steps can become lifelong healthy habits.



## MAKE IT WORK FOR YOUR FAMILY

Every family is different. You might have limited space, busy evenings, shared bedrooms, hot or rainy weather, or different cultural routines. Choose one idea that feels realistic for your home.



## REMEMBER

Healthy habits do not need to be perfect to be helpful. Start with one small switch that feels achievable, repeat it when you can, and celebrate what works. Over time, simple screen free moments can support better sleep, more movement and stronger family connection.



## WE CAN HELP

Educators can support families by sharing simple screen free ideas, low cost movement games and calm bedtime strategies. We can also work with families to adapt ideas to different homes, cultures, routines and children's needs.



## START SMALL

Healthy screen habits work best when they feel realistic for your family. Choose one small change to try first, such as a screen free bedtime activity, a short movement break or one device free family moment. Small steps are easier to repeat and can still support children's sleep, movement and wellbeing.



## EVERYDAY HABITS, LASTING BENEFITS

Every family can support healthy screen habits in small, realistic ways. Switching off screens at key times, adding movement into the day and creating calm bedtime moments can help children rest, play, learn and connect. These changes do not need to be perfect; they work best when they suit each family's culture, home routine, space and needs. When families and educators work together, children are supported to build positive wellbeing habits that can continue at home, school and beyond.