



Laugh and LEARN

November 2024 Parent Packet

Check your parent packets for new info each month. And you'll get some additional information in your inbox each week after the program...stay tuned and make sure you're checking those emails!



Please note the date change for the December session. The date has been moved up one week. Mark your calendars!

Next Play Date

Friday, December 13 | 9:00AM
Grayson County Extension Office

Cooperative Extension Service

Agriculture and Natural Resources
Family and Consumer Sciences
4-H Youth Development
Community and Economic Development

MARTIN-GATTON COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT

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Managing Screen Time During Holiday Breaks



Holiday breaks can be a challenging time for managing screen time, as you often have more free time and are surrounded by digital devices. Striking a balance between screen time and other activities is crucial for ensuring that children stay active, creative, and socially engaged during these extended breaks. By setting limits and encouraging outdoor play, parents can help children maintain a healthy relationship with technology while enjoying a variety of holiday activities.

Balance Screen Time with Other Activities

The key to managing screen time is balancing it with other enriching activities. Holiday breaks provide an opportunity to engage kids in a variety of non-digital experiences, such as reading, arts and crafts, cooking, or playing board games. Encouraging family involvement in these activities can make them more enjoyable and meaningful for children.

It is also helpful to create a daily schedule that includes designated times for screen use as well as periods for other activities. This allows children to know when they can use their devices, reducing the likelihood of constant requests for screen time. Additionally, allowing educational content, such as documentaries or interactive learning games, into screen time can make it a more productive experience. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that parents help children choose educational content and avoid mindless consumption, which can be less beneficial for cognitive and social development.

Setting Limits and Encouraging Outdoor Play

Setting clear screen time limits is essential to prevent excessive use during the holidays. Experts suggest establishing clear boundaries, such as no screens during meals, family gatherings, or before bedtime. This creates a routine where screen use is monitored and doesn't interfere with important family or social time.

Outdoor play is one of the best ways to encourage children to disconnect from screens and engage in physical activity. Winter weather can still offer plenty of opportunities for outdoor fun, such as sledding, ice skating, or nature walks. For areas without snow, activities like biking, hiking, or simply playing games outside can be equally stimulating. Not only does outdoor play promote physical health, but it also boosts mental wellness by reducing stress and increasing exposure to natural light and fresh air. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention notes that children should aim for at least 60 minutes of physical activity each day, even during holiday breaks.

Parents can motivate children to play outside by joining them or organizing group activities with other families. Creating a balance between outdoor play and screen time helps children stay active, reduces screen fatigue, and ensures that the holiday break is filled with diverse and enriching experiences.

References:

American Academy of Pediatrics. (2016). Media and Young Minds. Retrieved from aap.org
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2022). Physical Activity Guidelines for Children. Retrieved from cdc.gov

Source: David Weisenhorn, Ph.D.; Specialist for Parenting and Child Development



MONEYWISE

VALUING PEOPLE. VALUING MONEY.

DECEMBER 2024

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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC:

BEING A RESPONSIBLE CONSUMER OF INFORMATION

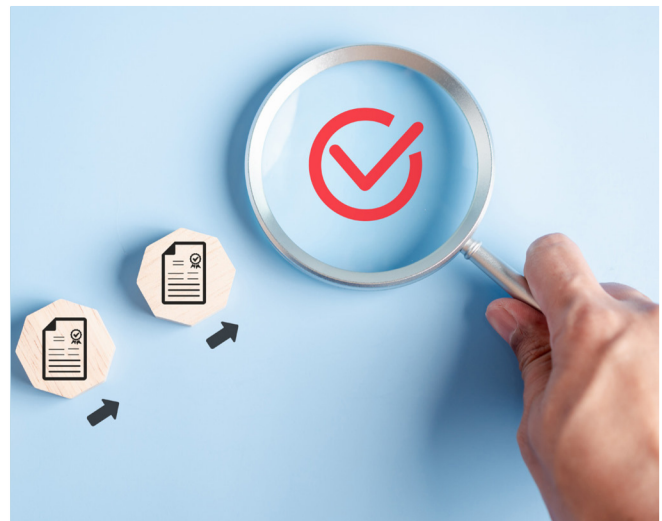
With the introduction of online sources for news and current events, the opportunity for misinformation has become a growing concern. When newspapers, radio, and television were the primary sources available for news, most providers recognized that their service was a “public good.” As such, they had a responsibility to verify the accuracy and reliability of their content. With more sources of information at your fingertips, accuracy sometimes becomes diluted or even nonexistent as anyone with an opinion, whether factual or not, can publish online.

GOING VIRAL

Just like viral infections start with tiny germs and spread quickly in your body to make you (and others) sick, viral stories use online hosts to make “copies” of the original post to spread it quickly. Within a very short time, many people might believe something to be true, just because they have seen it repeatedly. The accuracy of the information was not verified, even though it was shared millions of times.

STOPPING INTERNET “GERMS”

What can you do to prevent the spread of viral online “germs”? The News Literacy Project has



identified five key factors that you can apply to any story to weed out misinformation: authenticity, source, evidence, context, and reasoning.

First, ask yourself, does this even seem reasonable or credible? Is it **authentic**? If the headline and the story do not match, that is a red flag. If the story seems too outlandish to be true, that could be another reason to question whether it is true. Be aware that pictures, stories, videos, and even people’s voices can be manipulated through artificial intelligence (AI), so you should carefully evaluate everything you see and hear.



“IF IT SEEMS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE, IT PROBABLY IS”



Second, is the **source** trustworthy? Most reliable news outlets are transparent with where they get their information. They also might publish their ethics policies. Check out a publication's sources and policies to see if you are comfortable with their ethical standards. No sources? Another red flag.

Third, is there **evidence** that supports any claims that were made? If statements are made without evidence, you should hesitate before believing them. Even if evidence is presented, follow up to see if the evidence is credible.

Next, does the **context** make sense? If things seem out of place or are in conflict, dig deeper. Remember, not all sources are reliable.

Finally, is it supported by solid **reasoning**? If the story goes against common sense, trust your instincts and question the story.

BUYER BEWARE

You can also apply these factors to financial consumer awareness. Consider **caveat emptor**. This Latin phrase means, “Let the buyer beware.” When you buy a good or service, it is your responsibility to do your

due diligence to ensure that you pay a fair price and get a good product. While we now have consumer protection agencies and laws that look out for consumers' best interests, applying the five factors of misinformation can save you lots of time, money, and aggravation.

Various types of **scams and frauds** from “bait and switch” to “phishing scams” (addressed in previous MONEYWISÉ newsletters) might be more easily recognized if you consider the misinformation factors. Looking at anything you “consume” (from news to purchases) with a critical eye will help you better recognize scams and fraud. The old adage, “If it seems too good to be true, it probably is,” holds water. Contact your local FCS agent for more information on becoming an informed consumer.

RESOURCES

American Psychological Association. <https://www.apa.org/topics/journalism-facts/misinformation-interventions>

News Literacy Project. <https://newslit.org/>

The Role of Consumer Protection Agencies. https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/files/moneywise_june_2024.pdf

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Activity Guide



This is a guide on how to use materials in your kit. But feel free to let your child run with their imagination and do what comes to them as they play!

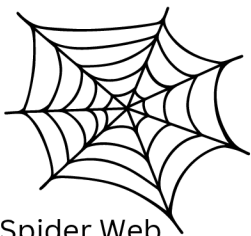
Pine Cone Bird Feeder



1. Tie pipe cleaner to one end of pine cone.
2. Use spoon or plastic knife/spatula to spread peanut butter all over pinecone. Other nut butters will work too!
3. Pour bird seed onto plate or tray and roll the pinecone so the seed sticks to the peanut butter.
4. OR sprinkle bird seed directly onto pine cone over the plate or tray
5. Hang your bird feeder somewhere you can watch as birds and squirrels come to have a little snack!

Nature Walk Scavenger Hunt

Take a walk outside and see how many you can find!



Spider Web



Orange Leaf



Mushroom



Lady Bug



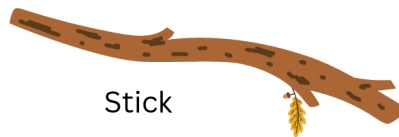
Yellow Leaf



Pine Cone



Squirrel



Stick



Flower



Acorn



Nest



Spider



Bird



Red Leaf

THANKSGIVING

2024



Name: _____ Age: _____