



TEACHER TOOLKITS FOR PARENT WORKSHOPS

Globally and in many local communities, excessive screen-time is becoming an increasingly urgent concern for the well-being of millions of children, with research and parent surveys indicating negative impacts on emotional, social, and physical health across countries and regions. As digital devices become a natural part of everyday home and school life, many parents find it challenging to manage their teenager's screen use in a balanced way. The rapid pace of technology, driven by advances like artificial intelligence, machine learning, robotics, and automation, can leave caregivers feeling unsure about what counts as healthy digital behaviour or how to set practical boundaries.

Teachers and educators are in a strong position to guide and support families by sharing evidence-based insights about balanced technology use. Hosting parent workshops with practical, hands-on activities can help parents build awareness, gain useful tools, and develop confidence in creating safe, positive digital environments at home. When schools and parents work together, children receive consistent messages about healthy habits, making it easier for them to manage screens responsibly.

Below are two simple, research-informed exercises designed for teacher-led parent workshops. These activities help parents reflect on both their own and their children's screen use, strengthen communication about technology, and establish clear, supportive routines. Integrated thoughtfully into teacher toolkits, these exercises build strong school-family partnerships that promote digital well-being and shared responsibility in nurturing balanced, mindful screen habits.

EXERCISE 1: REFLECTING ON FAMILY SCREEN USE AND SETTING SHARED GOALS

Objective:

Encourage parents to self-reflect on family digital habits and collaboratively set attainable goals for healthier screen balance.

Materials Needed:

- Worksheets or handouts with guided questions
- Pens and paper
- Flipchart or whiteboard for group sharing

Procedure:

1. Introduction (10 minutes):

Open by acknowledging the complex role of technology—its many benefits and challenges. Briefly share evidence about the adverse impacts of excessive screen time on children’s sleep, attention, stress levels, and social skills. Emphasise the importance of balanced screen use and the power of parental modelling.

2. Guided Reflection (15 minutes):

Distribute worksheets with reflective questions. Suggested prompts include:

- How much time do my children spend on screens daily, including schoolwork and leisure?
- How do I feel when my child uses screens excessively or for long periods?
- What routines or rules do our family currently have about screen use?
- What challenges do I face in managing screens at home?
- What positive habits or routines help our family balance technology use?

Ask parents to complete the worksheet individually or in pairs, encouraging honest responses. This reflection builds awareness and uncovers barriers that families face.

3. Goal Setting and Sharing (20 minutes):

Invite parents to identify one or two realistic goals for their family’s screen use, for example, *“No screens during family meals”* or *“Tech-free 30 minutes before bedtime.”* Write goals on a flipchart to create a visual reminder.

Facilitate a supportive discussion about strategies to achieve these goals, such as creating designated screen zones or limiting areas where use of mobile phones is not encouraged.

Encourage parents to share concerns and ideas, fostering a sense of community and mutual support.

Why This Exercise Works:

Reflection increases self-awareness, a fundamental and empowering first step towards meaningful behaviour change. Collaborative goal-setting strengthens commitment by actively involving parents and children together in creating their family's tech plan, fostering a sense of shared ownership and cooperation. Open discussion normalises the challenges faced by families navigating the digital world and inspires practical, research-informed solutions that fit each household's unique needs. This process not only builds confidence in managing technology but also nurtures connections and mutual support among family members as they grow healthier digital habits together.

EXERCISE 2: ROLE-PLAYING CONVERSATIONS ABOUT TECH USE WITH CHILDREN

Objective:

Equip parents with effective communication skills to talk with children about healthy technology habits and set clear, respectful boundaries.

Materials:

- Printed role-play scenarios based on common parent-child tech interactions
- Space for small group or pair activities

Procedure:

1. Introduction (10 minutes):

Highlight that clear, calm conversations about technology are more effective than rules imposed without explanation. Explain that children respond best when they feel heard and are part of the decision-making.

2. Role-Play Preparation (10 minutes):

Provide parents with simple, relatable scenarios such as:

- A child wanting more screen time than allowed
- A disagreement over screen use before bedtime
- A parent wanting to encourage outdoor play over gaming
- Handling a child's use of social media

Ask parents or caregivers to read and discuss the scenario briefly.

3. Role-Play Activity (20 minutes):

Divide parents into pairs or small groups. Each group practices role-playing both parent and child, focusing on using “I” statements, active listening, and explaining the reasons behind screen limits. For example, saying, *"I feel worried when you use screens late because it can affect your sleep,"* instead of simply saying *"No screens now."*

Examples of nurturing language parents and caregivers can use include:

- *"I notice you seem tired in the mornings after staying up on your device, and I care about your energy for school."*
- *"I feel hopeful when we spend more time together without screens, because it helps us connect and enjoy family moments."*

After role-plays, facilitate group reflections on what was challenging or helpful.

4. Wrap-up Discussion (10 minutes):

Summarise key communication tips such as staying calm, setting clear expectations, and involving children in creating tech rules together. Encourage parents to try these techniques at home and observe any differences in their child’s response.

Why This Exercise Works:

Role-playing empowers parents to rehearse difficult conversations in a safe, supportive environment, building confidence and effectiveness over time. Practising communication skills that are grounded in empathy and respect not only improves family relationships around tech use, but also helps children internalise healthy boundaries and solve conflicts with greater understanding. When parents experience success in these role-plays and receive positive feedback, they become more comfortable initiating these important discussions and guiding children toward better choices as technology evolves.

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP IN TEACHER-FAMILY COLLABORATION ON DIGITAL WELL-BEING

Digital well-being is a shared responsibility requiring partnership between schools and families. Thought leaders highlight that parents often feel overwhelmed by fast-evolving technology environments. Teachers offering practical, clear guidance through workshops and toolkits provide an invaluable service to their communities.

When parents work closely with schools to reinforce consistent messages about technology use, children benefit from a unified and supportive approach that strengthens their ability to self-regulate screen time. Research shows that when caregivers feel informed, connected, and supported – both at home and in partnership with educators – children experience greater emotional stability, healthier sleep patterns, and improved social interactions with their peers.

By centering parent workshops around reflection and communication skill-building, educators lead a progressive shift from admonishment to empowerment. This approach respects family differences while promoting shared goals of balanced, mindful technology engagement. Embedding these exercises in teacher toolkits multiplies impact, extends support beyond the classroom, and nurtures digital citizenship that lasts a lifetime.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATION TIPS FOR EDUCATORS

- Keep workshops concise (30 – 45 minutes) and interactive, making space for sharing and questions.
- Provide takeaway resources summarising key points and additional reading.
- Encourage parents to set realistic, flexible screen guidelines that fit their family context.
- Collaborate with school counsellors or tech specialists when possible to enhance workshop depth.
- Follow up with parents through newsletters or meetings to reinforce messages and share successes.