



WHOLE-SCHOOL CAMPAIGNS ON RESPONSIBLE TECH USE

Today, children spend a lot of time on phones, tablets, and computers. While technology helps with learning and fun, too much screen time can cause stress, trouble focusing, emotional ups and downs, and feeling lonely. Schools are in a great position to help students learn how to use technology in healthy ways. Whole-school efforts – like campaigns and activities – can teach kids about balance, raise awareness, and create a positive environment where everyone thinks carefully about their tech habits. These efforts help students feel confident and in control of their digital lives.

Two simple, research-backed exercises can be used by teachers in classrooms, school assemblies, or other activities. These exercises are easy to adapt and help students understand the effects of technology, build skills for managing screen time, and feel motivated to make healthy choices. By involving the whole school, these campaigns encourage everyone to support mindful and balanced use of technology, making it easier for students to thrive both online and offline.

EXERCISE 1: DIGITAL HABITS REFLECTION AND PLEDGE

Objective:

Encourage students to reflect on their personal technology habits and commit to small, manageable steps for healthier tech use.

Materials:

- Reflection sheets or digital forms with simple questions
- A poster or wall space for displaying pledges
- Writing materials

Procedure:

1. Group Discussion and Awareness (10 minutes):

Start with a whole-class or school assembly discussion about what responsible technology use means. Include real-life examples of how too much screen time can affect sleep, mood, attention, and relationships. Emphasise that technology has many benefits but balancing screen use with offline activities is important for well-being.

2. Personal Reflection (10 minutes):

Hand out reflection sheets with questions like:

- How many hours do I spend on screens daily?
- What do I usually do on my devices?
- How do I feel after using screens for a long time?
- What small change can I make to improve my digital habits?

3. Create a Responsible Tech Pledge (15 minutes):

Ask each student to write a simple, positive pledge they can achieve, such as “I will take a 5-minute break every hour,” or “I will spend one hour daily without screens.” Display these pledges on a “Digital Well-being Wall” in a common area to inspire others and remind students of their goals.

4. Follow-up:

Incorporate brief weekly check-ins during class or assemblies to celebrate successes, share tips, and discuss challenges related to pledges.

Why This Exercise Works:

Reflection helps children become aware of their current habits and encourages ownership of behaviour change. Public pledges create accountability and foster a supportive community culture. Research shows self-awareness combined with social support is key to building lasting healthy digital behaviours. When students reflect and commit together, responsible tech use becomes a shared goal rather than an individual task. This sense of belonging and collective responsibility motivates students to stick with their pledges, making responsible habits part of the school’s everyday culture.

EXERCISE 2: TECH-FREE TEAM CHALLENGES

Objective:

Promote teamwork, creativity, and connection through activities that limit tech use and encourage offline engagement.

Materials:

- Challenge cards with task ideas
- Spaces for group activities (classrooms, gym, outdoor areas)

Procedure:

1. Introduction (5 minutes):

Explain that managing screen time can be fun, especially when done with friends. Present the idea of a “tech-free challenge week” or day, where classes or groups complete fun offline tasks together.

2. Team Formation and Challenge Selection (10 minutes):

Divide students into teams and give each group a set of challenge cards. Examples include:

- Create a short skit or story without phones or tablets
- Organise a team sport or outdoor game
- Paint or draw a poster showing digital balance tips
- Write a thank-you note to someone who helps them balance tech use

3. Challenge Completion and Sharing (varies):

Teams work together over the campaign period to complete their challenges. At the end, hold a sharing event where teams present their work, reflect on their experiences without relying on technology, and discuss how it felt to disconnect.

4. Recognition:

Celebrate all participants with certificates or small rewards that recognise their effort to practice healthy tech habits.

Why This Works:

Offline group activities strengthen social bonds, increase physical movement, and give students a break from screens. Collaborative challenges build motivation and positive peer pressure to reduce excessive digital engagement. These activities teach valuable skills like creativity, communication, and cooperation – essential in both online and offline worlds.

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP IN WHOLE-SCHOOL TECH CAMPAIGNS

Whole-school campaigns around responsible technology use go beyond simply setting screen time limits or classroom rules. They show a deeper understanding that digital well-being includes awareness, emotional balance, empathy, and building positive relationships online and offline. Thought leaders in digital education encourage schools to embed digital citizenship and well-being into their daily culture and values, making them a visible and celebrated part of school life for students, teachers, and families.

By engaging students in reflective and hands-on learning experiences, teachers help children build lifelong skills to manage technology wisely, kindly, and with confidence. When the entire school works toward the same goal, messages about responsible tech use become consistent and meaningful. These shared efforts nurture curious, compassionate, and resilient young people who can thrive both in the digital world and in their everyday lives.

PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION TIPS FOR EDUCATORS

- Tailor exercises to different age groups, ensuring simplicity for younger children and deeper reflection for older students.
- Integrate technology responsibility topics in various subjects, including PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic education).
- Involve parents and carers by sharing campaign goals and encouraging at-home tech balance.
- Lead by example: demonstrate responsible tech use and mindful digital habits in your own classroom practices.
- Monitor and evaluate campaign impact with brief surveys or discussions to continuously improve your approach.