Outsmarting the Smart Screens:
A Parent's Guide to the Tools that are here to Help

This guide highlights some user-friendly tools that will make setting time limits on technology much, much easier. They keep track of time for you, so they become the bad guy – not you. Give them a try! They will help you avoid the homework and bedtime battles, and leave more time for other activities like craft projects and creative play.

Of course, every family is different. You are the best expert on what works for your children and what are healthy screen time limits for your family. One additional piece of advice – if you try some of these changes, give them time to work! You may be surprised how initial resistance fades over time.

Tool to Limit TV Time:	Tool to Limit Computer Time:
The Tool: TV Timer BOB **How it Works:** Instead of plugging your TV into the wall, you plug it into TV Timer BOB. Each child has a separate account with a four-number passcode that you can choose together. Next, you set a television time allowance for each account. It can be a daily allowance or a weekly allowance. Let's say you choose 2 hours per day for your daughter. When your daughter wants to watch her favorite show, she types her code into the machine, and the timer starts counting down. When the hour is up, TV Timer BOB automatically shuts off the TV! Let's say there are certain hours that you don't want your child to be able to watch television, like at bedtime. You can use TV Timber BOB to set up "blocks." During these times, your child will not be able to turn on the television. **The Cost:** $79.99 on Amazon. We know this is not cheap, but could make a big difference.	**The Tool:** Parental Controls **How it Works:** Setting up parental controls on your child's desktop or laptop computer is the best way to limit your child's computer time. On an Apple computer, parental controls are located under System Preferences. You can set up time limits for weekdays and weekends. There is also a "Bedtime" section where you can choose specific hours when your child can't log in. On a PC computer, go to Control Panel. Under User Accounts and Family Safety, select "Set up parental controls for any user." You can use parental controls to set up time limits for weekdays and weekends. You can also choose specific hours, and during these hours your child will not be able to log in. **The Cost:** Free
Tool to Limit Smartphone Time:	Tool to Limit Video Game Time:
The Tool: Lockwork **How it Works:** For Android Smartphones, Lockwork will let you block out certain hours when you want to turn your child's smartphone into a regular phone. They can make emergency calls, but they can't text or browse the Internet. Right now, there is no way to set time limits on an iPhone® or iPad®. But, you can set up parental controls to choose what parts of the phone or tablet your child can access. To set up parental controls, go to Settings. Under Settings, go to General. Under General, go to Restrictions. (A note of caution: if you turn apps off and then turn them back on, they are reorganized in alphabetical order on the phone.) **The Cost:** Free	**The Tool:** TV Timer BOB **How it Works:** The TV Timer BOB works for video games (PlayStation, Xbox, Wii, etc.) in the same way as it does for TV time. Let's say you choose 2 hours per day for your son. When your child wants to play, he turns on the television and enters in his passcode. The two hours start counting down. When the 2 hours are up, TV Timer BOB starts beeping, and will automatically shut the TV off. To prevent possible damage to the hard drive, shut the video game down safely when the beeping begins! **The Cost:** $79.99

Tool to Limit Smartphone Time:	Tool to Limit TV and Video Game Time:
The Tool: AT&T Smart Limits **How it Works:** Smart Limits helps you manage your family's phone use by setting sensible limits on texts and purchases, blocking data, managing contacts, and viewing daily and weekly activity at home and on the go. The Smart Limits app is easily accessed on your iPhone or Android phone, or from the easy-to-use Web dashboard. Set limits on the number of texts your child sends and receives each month, gain insight into phone use with weekly reports on the amount of texting and calling activity, and receive new contact alerts. **The Cost:** $4.99 per month	**The Tool:** Time Machine TV & Video Game Timer **How it Works:** Parents give children custom tokens for doing something good which will allow them 30 minutes of video games or television watching. When tokens are handed out as a reward for chores, homework or good behavior, children learn that hard work has its rewards. Teach hard work over entitlement. It is a two part reward system. The child receives the reward of receiving the tokens and in the spending of them. Helps to teach children how to manage their time. The Time Machine connects before the TV and controls the signal. Each token allows for 30 minutes of viewing time. Tokens can be added for longer viewing times. The digital display notifies the user when the time is almost up. The cables and power cord are locked inside the case. The included keys give access to the cables and deposited tokens. **The Cost:** $24.99
Tool to Limit Smartphone Time:	**Tool to Limit Smartphone Time:**
The Tool: Screen Time- Media Time Manager **How it Works:** The Screen Time App is NOT just a time tracker! With Screen Time, you can assign daily, weekly, or custom minute allowances for each child. Allowances can be set to repeat each day or accumulate based on your preference. Empower children to earn screen minutes by doing chores and displaying good behavior. Encourage your kids to give up those minutes (with a kid-friendly screen) for other activities and rewards. Kids learn valuable skills by saving minutes for delayed gratification. Customize and have fun!!! Add, change, or remove tasks and rewards to fit yours and your kids' needs **The Cost:** $2.99	**The Tool:** Time Lock- Time Limit for Parents **How it Works:** This app puts a new spin on time restriction applications by running autonomously. Once you've determined how much time your kids can spend using an iOS device each day and set the limit, TimeLock will do the rest. The timer resets each day and can be stopped between sessions so that kids are able to spread their allotted screen time out over the course of the day. **The Cost:** $0.99
Tool to Limit Smartphone Time:	**Tool to Limit Computer Time:**
The Tool: Mobicip Safe Browser With Parental Control **How it Works:** Monitoring your kids' browsing habits and their screen time usage means keeping up with their cumulative usage, not just the time they spend on an iPhone device. This free app allows you to monitor your kids' usage of tablets, iPhones and computers, both through a web-based dashboard and from within the app. Build your own filter with a premium subscription upgrade and filter YouTube search results from this award winning and top-selling application. **The Cost:** Free	**The Tool:** Norton Family **How it Works:** If you already have a Norton Family account, this free app will increase the amount of control you have over kids' screen time and browsing habits. You'll know what websites your kids are visiting, be able to block those with questionable content, determine how much information kids are sharing over the Internet and see what phrases they're using in search engines. **The Cost:** Free