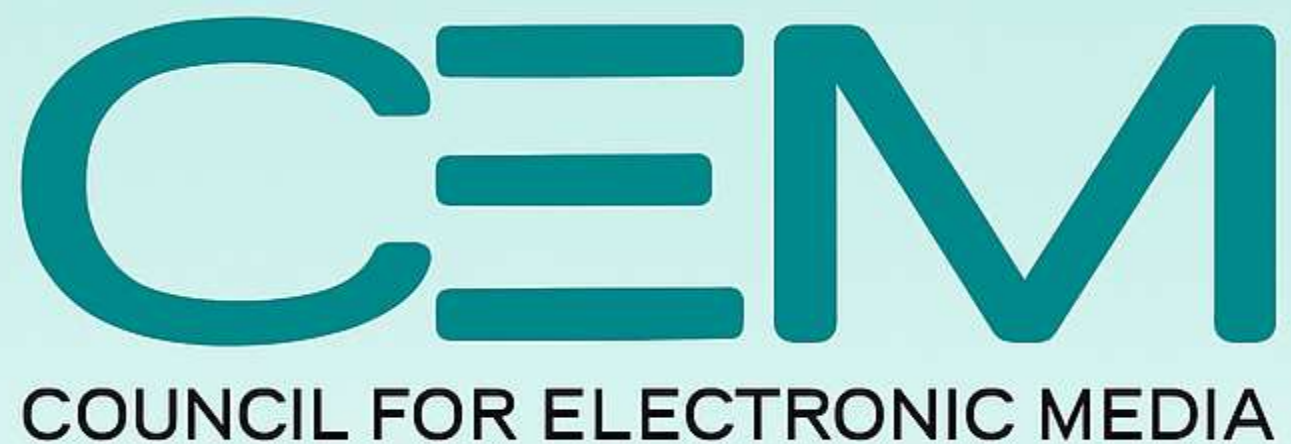


Republic of Bulgaria



Recommended Screen Time for Children

Guidelines for Safe Use of Media
and Online Content

Risks of Excessive Screen Time



Distraction from activities
and learning



Depression



Sleep problems



Low social
skills



Sedentary
lifestyle



Screen
addiction



Irritability



Problems with
communication

Eye Strain and Myopia

Extended time in front of screens is linked to an increase in nearsightedness among children. Frequent focusing on close distances for prolonged periods may lead to a decline in visual acuity.



Overweight and Obesity

Prolonged screen time is associated with reduced physical activity and increased overweight among children.

It is important to encourage movement and an active lifestyle.



Sleep Problems

Children who spend excessive time in front of screens often experience sleep disturbances. Blue light emitted by devices can make it difficult to fall asleep and reduce sleep quality.





Increased Anxiety

Excessive screen use can lead to increased anxiety in children.

Mental overload from the virtual environment often affects their emotional health.

Depression

Research shows that children who spend more time in front of screens exhibit higher levels of depressive symptoms.

It is important to manage screen time intelligently.



HYPERACTIVITY

Children who spend a lot of time in front of screens often exhibit symptoms of hyperactivity.

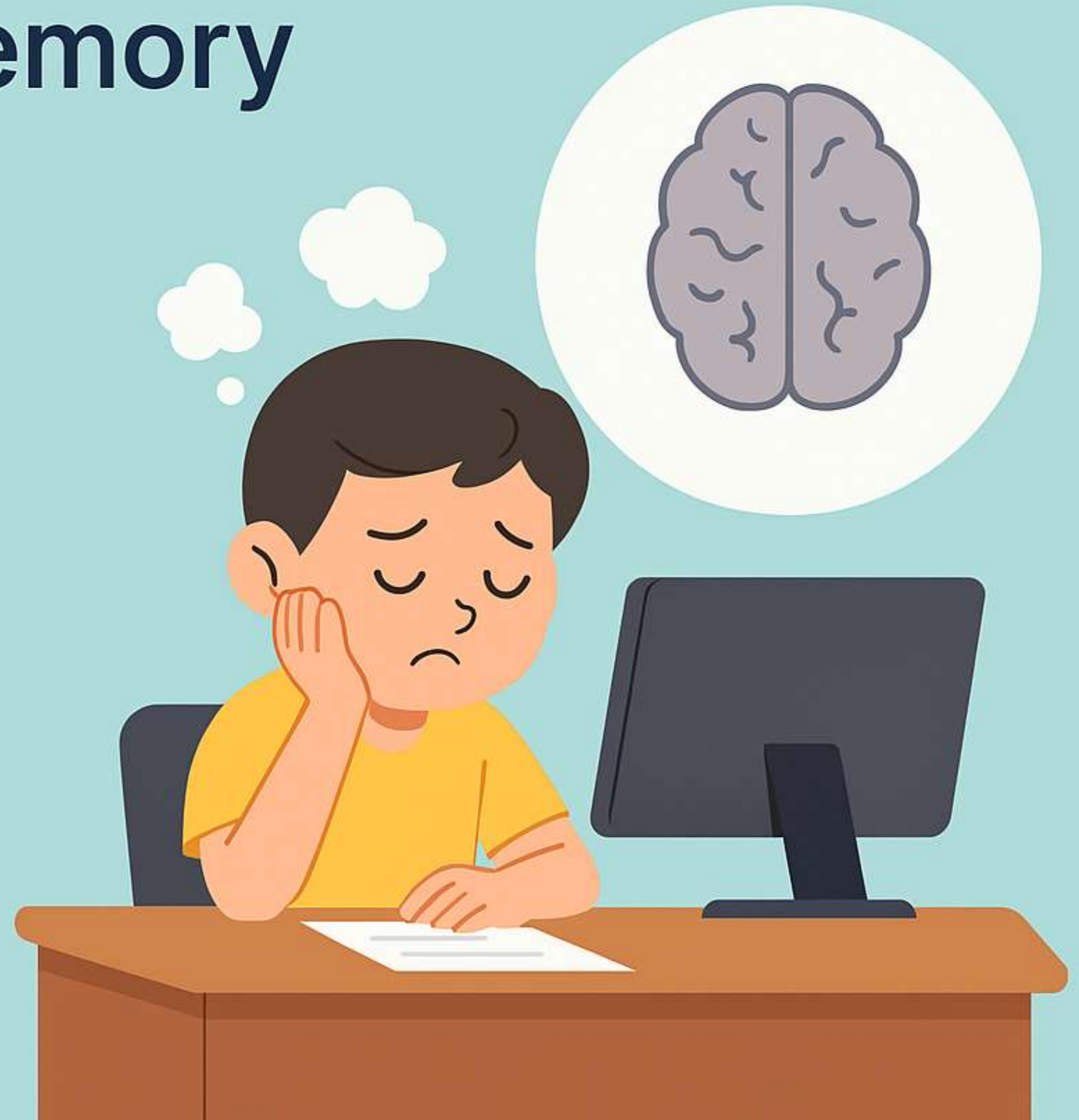
Stimulating media may increase activity levels and make it harder to concentrate.



Difficulties with Attention and Memory

Extended screen time may lead to attention and memory problems in children.

Constant distractions and fast-paced media content make it hard to concentrate.



Poor Social Skills

Excessive screen use may lead to reduced social skills in children. The lack of personal interaction makes it harder to form real friendships and connections.



Screen Addiction

Screen addiction is a growing problem that negatively affects children's health.

It can lead to difficulties in managing time and behavior, disrupting family relationships.



Recommended access to screen devices

Babies
(0–2 years)



Young children
(2–5 years)



Older children
(6–12 years)



Teenagers
(13–18 years)



Recommended viewing distance



Babies (0-2) years

The use of screen devices is not recommended. This period is critical for brain development, and interactions with the surrounding environment are extremely important.

Young children (2–5 years)

It is recommended that screen time be limited to 1 hour per day, with a focus on quality content and co-viewing with parents. Physical activity at this age is also important.



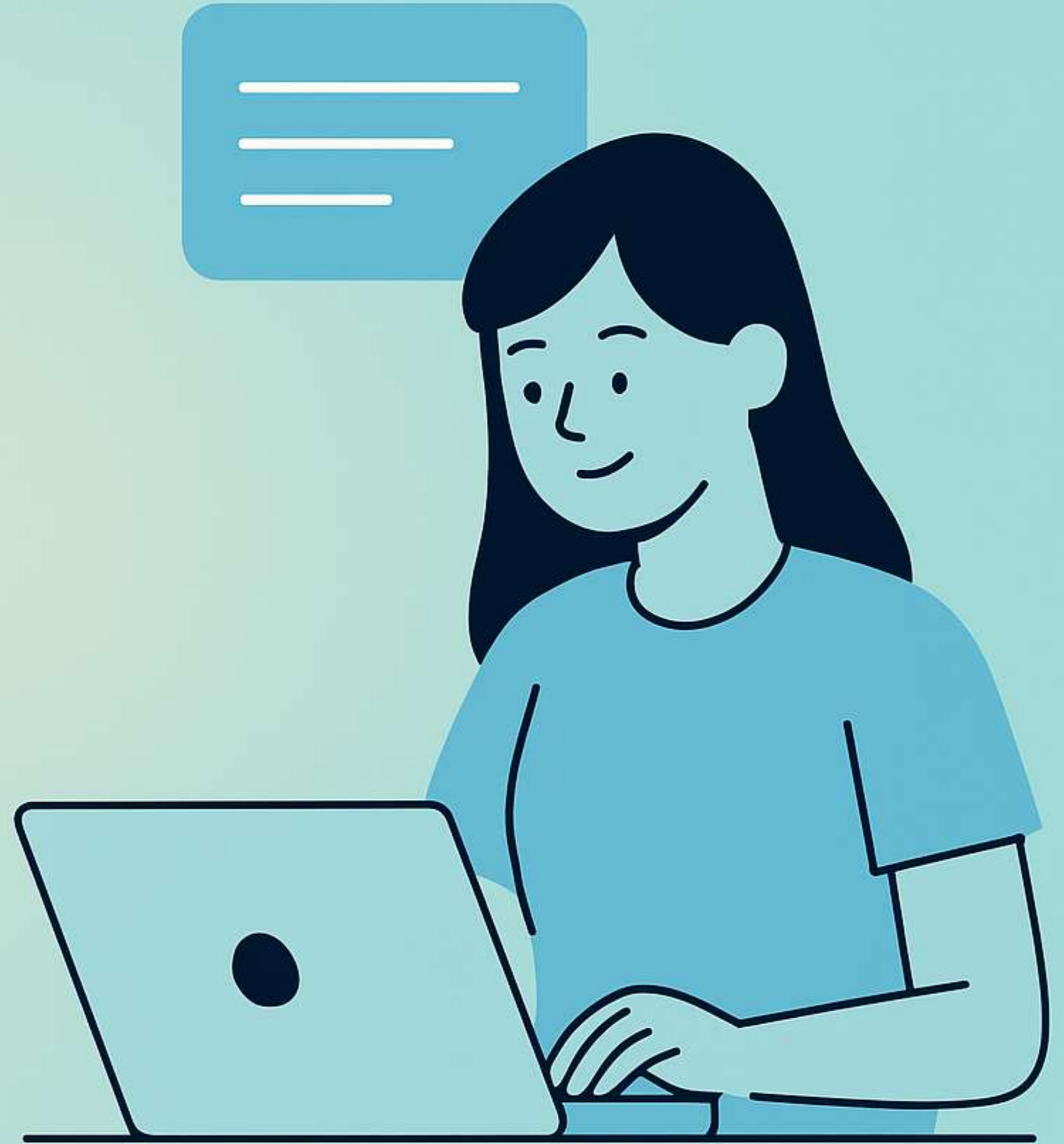
Older children (6–12 years)

It is recommended to limit screen time to up to 2 hours per day outside of school activities. It is important to set healthy boundaries for other activities, such as sports and social interaction.



Teenagers (13–18 years)

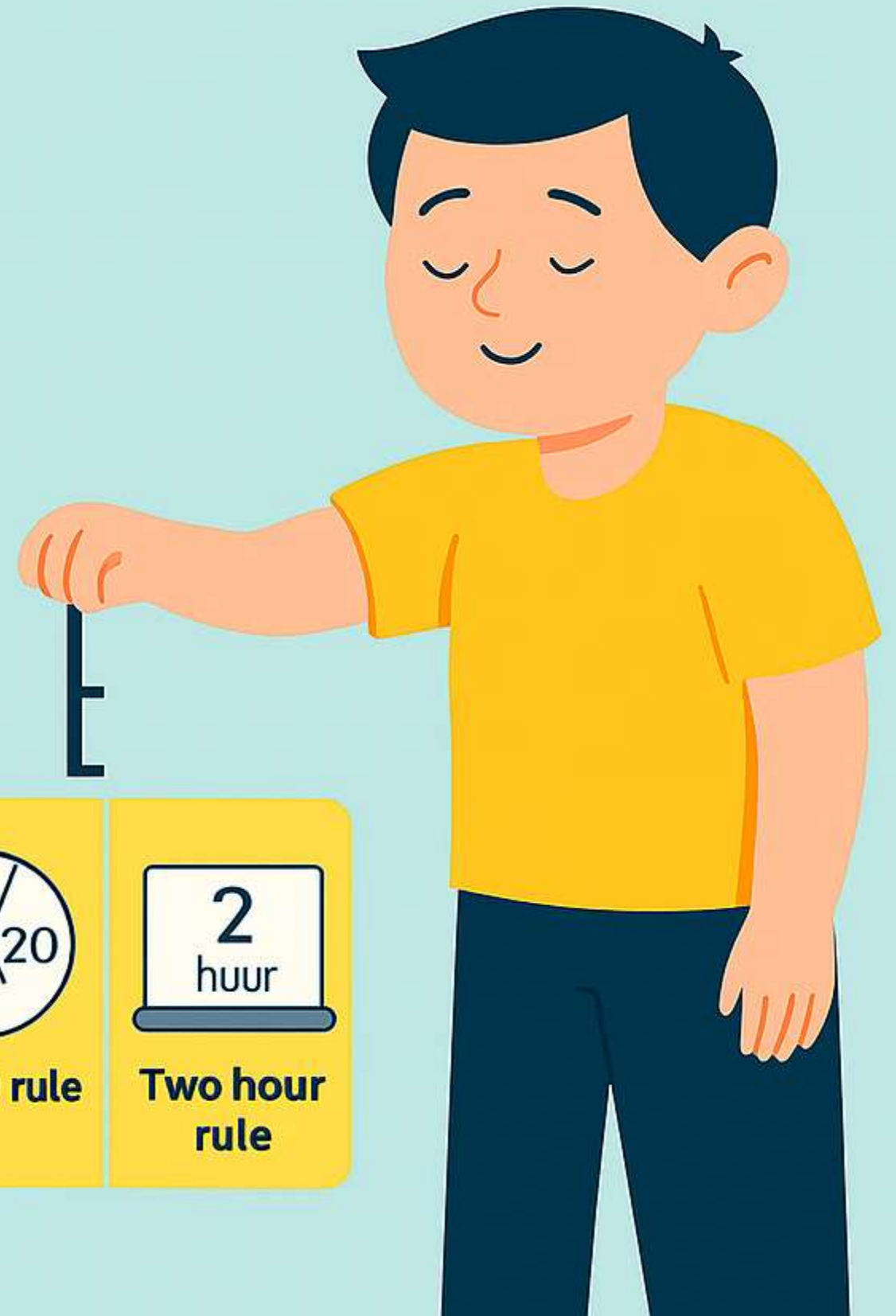
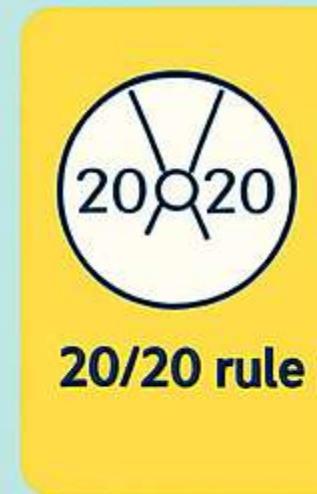
Responsible and balanced screen use is encouraged. Developing media literacy skills in adolescents is key to ensuring their online safety.



Recommended Viewing Distance

It is important that the screen viewing distance is more than 40–45 cm for phones and more than 3 meters for televisions.

Schools should monitor these distances for students.





**Use of media and
online content**

Parental Involvement

Parents should actively participate in children's media activities. Watching and discussing content together helps children understand and evaluate what they see.



Age Restrictions

Parents have a commitment to check the age restrictions of media products. Knowing the recommended age group helps to protect children from inappropriate content.



Age-Appropriate Content

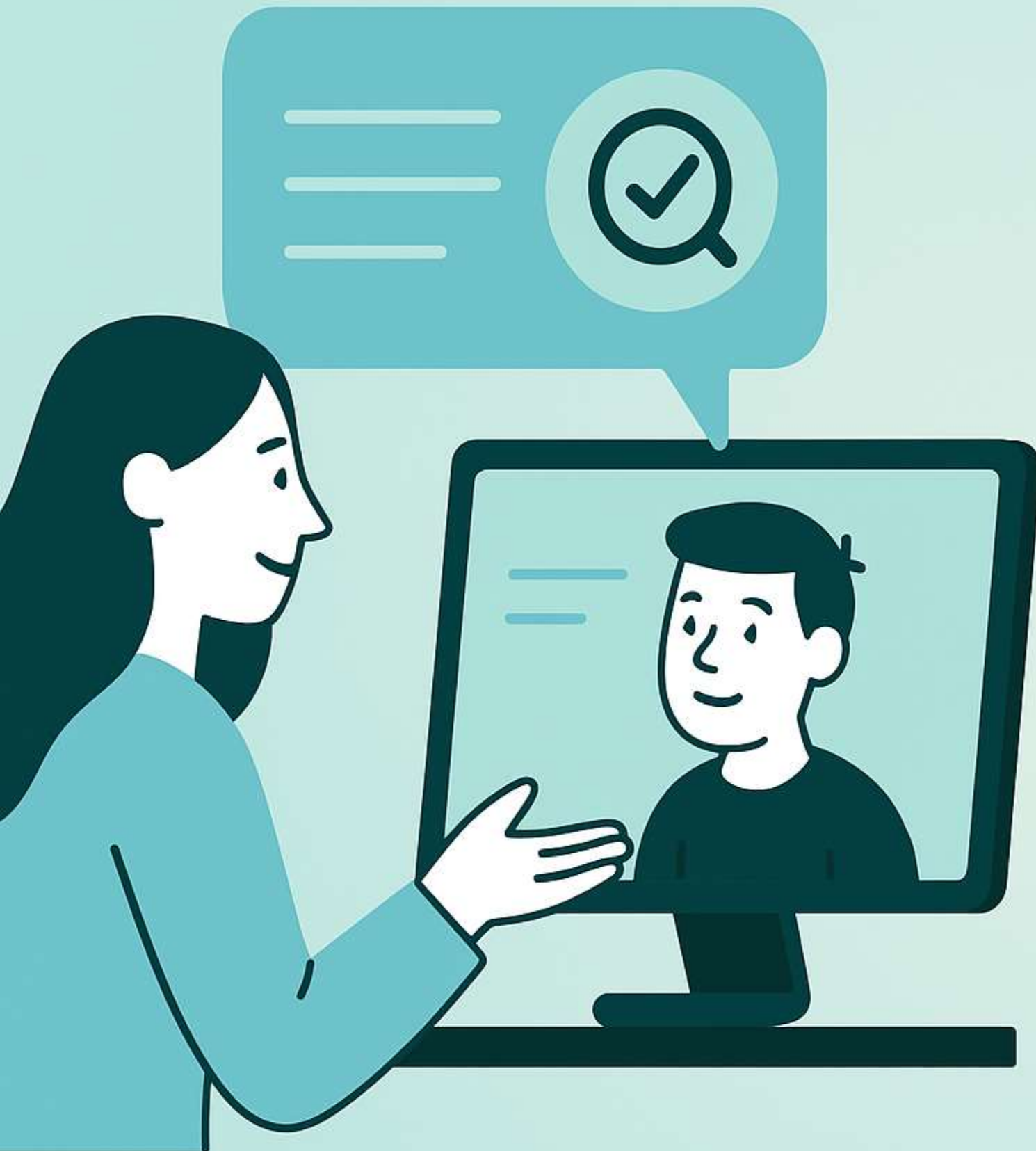
The content children consume should be appropriate for their age. It is important for parents to choose educational and entertaining programs that spark children's curiosity.



Avoiding Harmful Content

Parents should be vigilant about harmful content that may include violence or sexual content. Avoiding such exposure is essential for children's emotional and psychological development.





Media Literacy Conversations

Talking about media literacy teaches children how to recognize fake news and inappropriate content. This is important for developing critical thinking and skills for safe navigation in online environments.

Additional Guidelines for Parents

Open Dialogue with the Child



Building Trust



Parental Control Settings



Support and Assistance



Open Dialogue with the Child

Having open discussions about internet risks is essential. It is important for parents to explain that the internet is a valuable resource, but also a space that requires attention and caution.



Building Trust

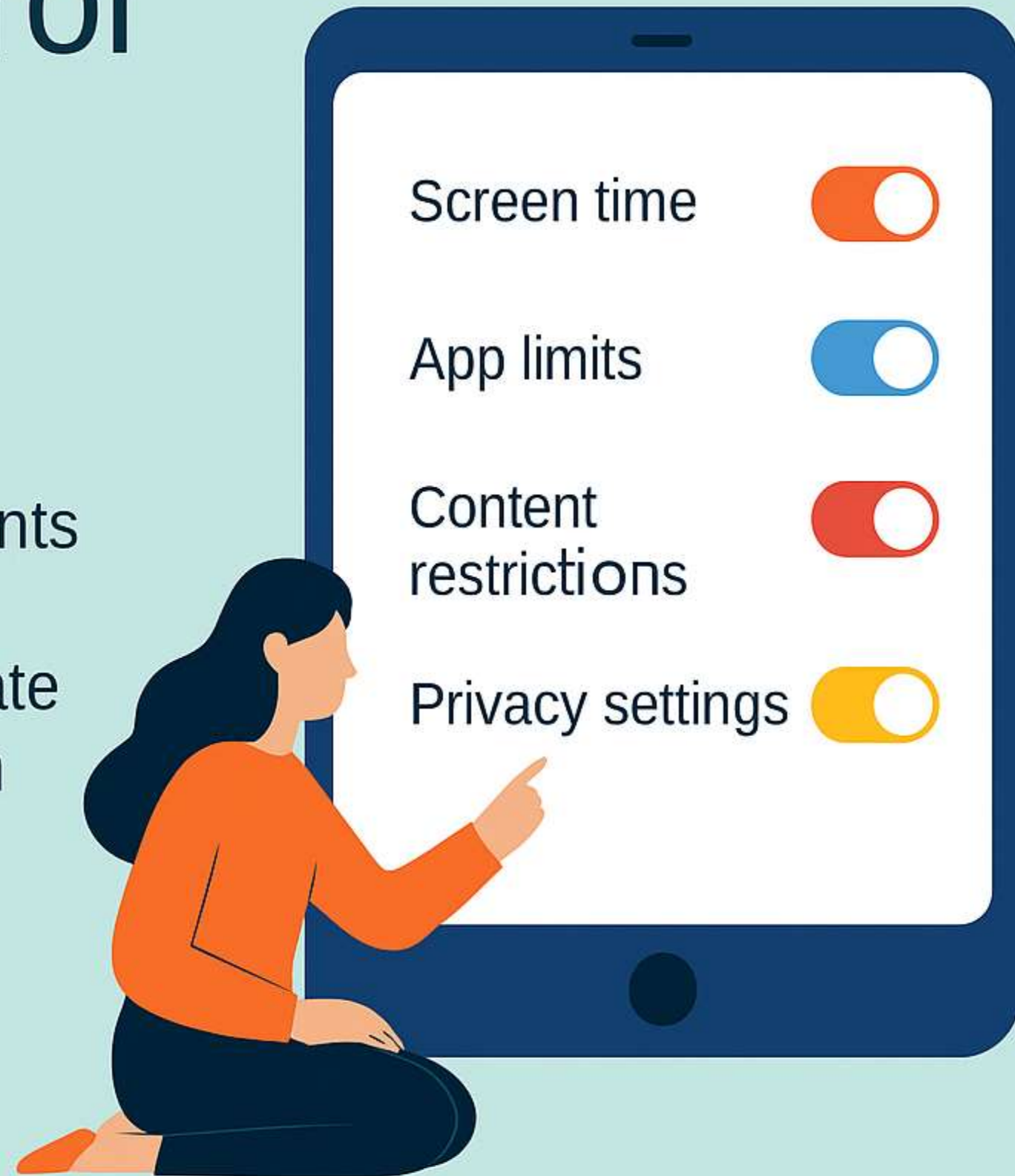
Trust is key to parent-child relationships.

Children should feel comfortable sharing concerns, which helps prompt timely responses to potential threats in the digital world.



Parental Control Settings

Most devices offer options for parental controls that allow parents to monitor children's screen time and restrict access to inappropriate content. Using these settings can greatly increase children's safety online.



Support and Assistance

Parents should know where to seek help with online safety issues. Helpful resources include helplines and organizations offering advice on dealing with internet threats.



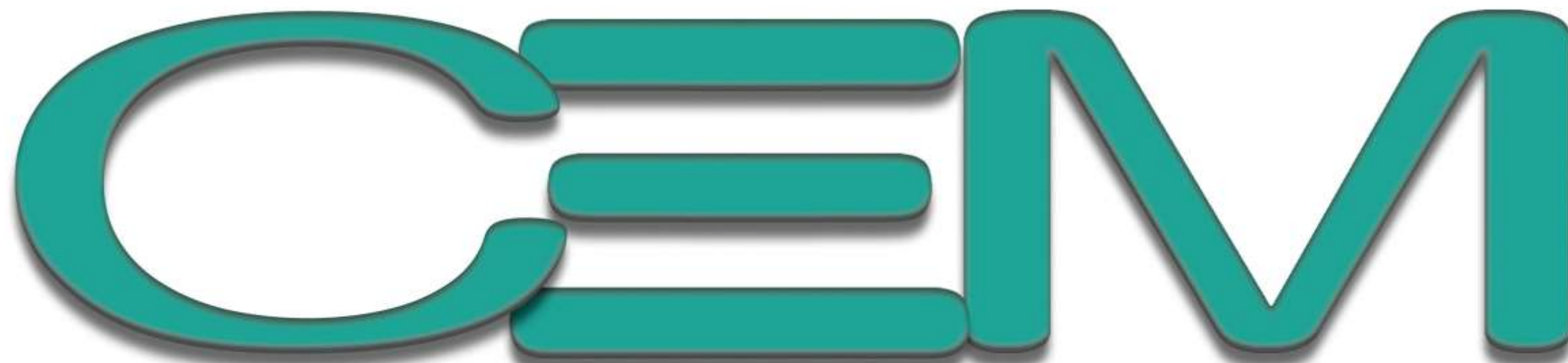
Providing Alternatives to Screen Time

It is important for children to have opportunities for physical activities and screen-free pastimes.

Suitable alternatives include sports, reading, and creative games that develop social skills and creativity.



**Thanks for Your
Attention!**



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