

Digital Education Agreements

0-6 years

We commit to:

1. SCREEN TIME AND GRADUAL INTRODUCTION

Managing our children's screen time is an educational priority: in the first two years, avoid all types of screens (TV, tablets, smartphones); from 3 to 6 years, limit screen time to a maximum of 30 minutes a day, with an adult present and actively supervising.

2. THE ROLE OF THE ADULT AND THE EDUCATIONAL MODEL

We are role models for our children and must therefore be mindful of our smartphone use in front of them: this is why it is important to reduce and limit personal use when they are present. It is very important to spend quality time with them without devices.

3. RELATIONSHIPS AS AN EDUCATIONAL PRIORITY

Relationships with children are a priority, especially during everyday moments (feeding, care, play, being present): at these times, it is important to refrain from using digital devices to minimise behaviours that disrupt the relationship.

4. AVOIDING DIGITAL DEVICES AS A 'FILLER'

Let's avoid using devices to calm or distract our children, instead valuing boredom as a positive and 'constructive' experience.

5. OFFERING PRACTICAL ALTERNATIVES AND REAL-LIFE EXPERIENCES

It is important to offer practical alternatives and real experiences, such as: free play, creative and hands-on activities, outdoor experiences, socialising, etc...

6. SIMPLE, CLEAR AND AGREED-UPON RULES

Within the family, it is important to establish clear rules, identifying times when digital devices are not to be used (mealtimes, bedtime, family time) and times when they may be used. It is also important to attach value to the act of using the device and avoid using screens as a reward or punishment.

7. CONTENT AND QUALITY OF THE DIGITAL EXPERIENCE

It is important to pay attention to the quality of the content provided by selecting age-appropriate material, using the PEGI rating system as a guide. Devices can be used to take photos.

8. BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN FAMILIES AND THE WIDER EDUCATIONAL COMMUNITY

Given the differences in educational approaches between families and the fear of being 'left out', it is important to share educational choices, build a common approach, and avoid making those who choose to set limits and rules feel different.

9. EDUCATIONAL COMMUNITY AND LOCAL NETWORK

It is important to create and involve educational institutions, sports clubs, youth clubs, grandparents and the entire educational community in the local network so that there is a network that conveys the same message.

10. SUPPORTING OPPORTUNITIES FOR DISCUSSION AND TRAINING TO RAISE PARENTS' AWARENESS

It is important to maintain a network that promotes the sharing of information and training, and provides tools and resources to support both parents and institutions.

These indications also arise from parents' daily difficulties in managing time and using digital technology as a tool to regulate their children.

The commitment we make as a community stems from the need to promote informed and gradual guidance based on the central role of the adult, the quality of the relationship and the establishment of simple, shared rules.

The agreement is based on the following principles:

- consistency in parenting approaches among adults
- partnerships between families and the educational community
- clear and shared guidelines, starting from early childhood

GUIDELINES FROM THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION:

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has set strict standards for 'screen time' (time spent in front of the TV, on smartphones or playing video games) for children under five. The primary aim is to combat early sedentary behaviour and promote harmonious physical and mental development, ensuring a balance between movement, rest and cognitive activities. The recommendations vary according to age group:

Under 2 years (0–24 months): The guidance is categorical: no screen time at all. During this crucial phase for brain and motor development, the WHO recommends prioritising human interaction, free play and reading, whilst avoiding all forms of passive digital entertainment. From 2 to 4 years: For children in this age group, the suggested maximum limit is 1 hour per day, with the stipulation that 'less is better'. Exceeding this limit takes away precious time from essential activities such as physical movement and exploring the real world.

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TWO IMPORTANT WEBSITES FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

Fondazione Patti Digitali website: www.pattidigitali.it

Italian Paediatric Society website: www.sip.it