

Dear Parents/Caregivers,

We have been reading an engaging text called *Sink or Swim* by Marty Chan. Among other things, this text helps us to learn the importance of “balance” in our lives.

In our work with the text, students have had the opportunity to consider how balanced their day-to-day routines are when it comes to factors like eating habits, sleep time, exercise, media time, and so on. As a frame of reference, experts suggest that kids spend no more than two hours of screen time per day and that they balance that with at least 60 minutes of physical exercise every day.

Easy Action Ideas

- Add music to daily chores such as the dishes, tidying up, and taking out the garbage. Dance your way through them!
- Build a snowman, set up a back yard obstacle course, or challenge your child to a race up the stairs.

Moderate Media

In today’s world, kids and adults alike are connected to some form of media for large portions of their day. As parents and caregivers, we need to know what media kids are using, how much time they spend on them, and who they are connecting to. Here are some ways to help your child enjoy media in a balanced and healthy way.

- Play a video game with your child so that you know the content, their level of involvement and how much time they are spending with it.
- Listen to the music your child listens to. Talk about the ideas expressed in it.
- When using the computer, explore websites together. Teach the importance of never sharing any personal information, never befriending someone they haven’t met face to face, and letting you know if they ever feel threatened or see something online that upsets them.
- Set up cellphone and texting rules together.
- Discuss cyberbullying and remind your child to think of it as if the person were standing right in front of them. It is easy to put someone down when you can’t see them or hear any response. A guideline is to ask yourself the following question before writing anything in a message: How would I feel if I received this?
- Remind each other that “play” refers to outdoor active fun too, not just onscreen games.

Thank you for your interest!

Sincerely,