

WHITEHALL

HEALTHY REPORTER

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Ways to cut down screen time

Computers, cell phones, TVs, and other electronics are part of life.

Time spent in front of screens can be a good thing. It can help people learn a lot and communicate quickly. But too much screen time can be a problem.

Health experts say children should limit screen time because it can lead to sleep issues, attention problems, and other difficulties.

In interviews with the *Healthy Reporter*, students and staff suggested ways children can reduce the amount of time they sit in front of screens.

Mrs. Billela, school secretary, said students should turn off the TV and go outside and play.

She has developed the practice of turning off her TV for the spring and summer to cut down on screen time.

Still, Mrs. Bellela said she spends a lot of time in front of screens because of her job. For instance, she has to check attendance.

Ms. Wertly, the art teacher, said she spends several hours a day using her cell phone because she keeps a lot of information there. It also connects her to the world. Sometimes, it gives her headaches. She thinks reading a book printed on paper is a good way to escape the screen, she said.

Faith Reyes, a fourth grader, said she doesn't like to spend too much time on computers. She enjoys being outside and exercising.

Katie Garcia, a second grader, offered several alternatives to screen time. You can ride your bike, play with your pet, and hang out with your friends.

Hasan Pearson, a fourth grader, suggested that children could ask their parents to take them somewhere or simply go outside.

Watching TV sometimes makes fourth grader Malik Grant feel bored. He doesn't like the commer-

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Students eager for summer fun

When it comes to summer fun, Whitehall students stay active by biking, swimming, and taking walks. Whitehall staff members head to the beach.

A *Healthy Reporter* survey indicates that bike riding is a popular summer pastime for students.

Brandon, a second grader, said he likes bike riding because "it is fun, you get to go fast, and cold air comes when you go fast." Navarro, a third grader, said he enjoys doing "wheelies and other stunts."

Carlos, a kindergartner, simply said bike riding is "fun and you can feel a breeze." Fourth grader Brandy is encouraged to take a bike ride "when I go outside on the porch I usually see others riding."

Swimming is also a favorite activity. "I like it because it keeps me cool and is really fun to do," said Leilah, a fourth grader. Michael, a kindergartner, said he goes "to the pool because you can dive!"

Some students hang out with friends, including the four-legged kind. "I love taking my dog for a walk

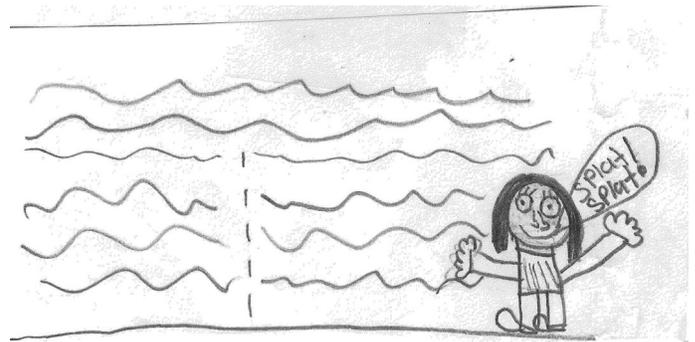


Illustration by Aaliyah Hill

because I love my dog so much and it's fun to walk him," said Ruby, a fourth grader.

Whitehall adults favor the beach.

"I love the sound of the ocean and the feeling of the sand and also the breeze," Mrs. Hetrick, the music teacher, said.

—By *Healthy Reporter staff*

Congratulations for good work!

Joseph Gomez won first place in the Healthy NewsWorks' Healthy-Heart Poster Contest at Whitehall. For his effort, Joseph won a \$25 gift card.



Trinell Watson took second place and William Kennedy finished third. (William's picture appears on this page.) Each earned a copy of the *Heart Smart Kids Cookbook* by the *Detroit Free Press* and the Henry Ford Health System.

Vanessa Bernal Ramos and Gabriella Garcia-Velez received honorable mention awards. Congratulations!

The posters were judged by members of the University of the Sciences' Pediatric Pharmacy Advocacy Group (PPAG) Student Chapter. Both posters are part of a traveling art show this spring and summer. For more information, please visit:

www.HealthyNewsWorks.org

Two *Healthy Reporter* journalists have contributed to the new book *Leading Healthy Change In Our Communities 2014*.

The reporters are Brian Sanchez and Jaden Jones. The book, which is available in print and online, is written and illustrated by student journalists in the Healthy NewsWorks media program. The book features profiles of 14 leaders in the Philadelphia area who are making communities healthier.

Brian and Jaden wrote reflections about their experiences serving on the *Healthy Reporter* this year.

To learn more about the book and the Healthy NewsWorks student media program, please visit:
www.HealthyNewsWorks.org

Whitehall Healthy Reporters

A publication of the Whitehall Elementary School in the Norristown (Pa.) Area School District. Student staff members include Guadalupe Andrade-Tellez, Ninette Anorve, Gabriella Garcia, Jaden Jones, Ashley Kelly, Manuel Lopez, Alejandra Luna-Hernandez, Brian Sanchez, Quadirah Wise, and Gianni Young. Mrs. Martin is the *Healthy Reporter's* faculty advisor.

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Mrs. Martin suggests activities for summer

Create your own play dough

You will need:

| | |
|------------------|---|
| Bowl | 1 cup flour |
| Mixing spoon | 6 tablespoons of salt |
| Cup | 1 ½ teaspoons oil |
| Measuring spoons | 4 tablespoons of warm water |
| | Optional: 2 or 3 drops of food coloring |

Instructions:

1. Mix flour and salt together in bowl.
2. If you want colored dough, mix oil and food coloring in cup.
3. Add VERY warm water from the faucet to the cup and pour it into the flour mixture.
4. Stir it together to make a ball and then use your hands to mix it up.
5. Mix and mix with your hands ("knead") until it is soft and all the same color.
6. Make something fun!

Make a puppet

You will need to find:

- A straight stick like a pencil or popsicle stick
- Tape or glue
- Scissors and any kind of paper (Make sure to get permission from an adult to use the scissors.)
- Crayons or markers

Instructions:

1. Draw your puppet on paper.
2. Cut out around the picture.
3. Tape or glue it to the stick so you can hold it up.
4. Make many puppets and put on a play for your family and friends.

Mrs. Martin, school librarian and Healthy Reporter editor, said someone shared the play dough recipe many years ago. She created the puppet activity. Mrs. Martin wishes everyone a healthy and safe summer.

Screens can be boring

(Continued from Page 1)

Malik said that playing board games and reading a book are good ways to reduce screen time.

Mrs. Alba, a school paraprofessional, recommends doing exercises, taking long walks, and spending time with family as ways to cut down on screen time.

—The Healthy Reporter staff