# Stephen Collins’ cartoon highlights parents’ struggle with kids’ screen addiction



In today’s digital age, concerns over children’s screen addiction have become increasingly prevalent, prompting parents to seek solutions to mitigate the impacts of excessive screen time. A recent cartoon by Stephen Collins cleverly highlights this issue, depicting a concerned parent contemplating enrolment in a "linear TV summer camp" as a humorous strategy for tackling the problem. The cartoon serves as a satirical commentary on the extremes to which parents might go in an effort to curb their children’s screen habits.

The rise of screens—whether smartphones, tablets, or televisions—has been swift and profound. According to research by Children and Screens, well-structured digital usage is essential for fostering healthy habits. Their findings advocate setting age-appropriate limits and encouraging activities that promote active engagement rather than passive consumption. Feeling overwhelmed by these guidelines, many parents find themselves at a crossroads, as they grapple with the challenge of balancing technology use while ensuring their children maintain healthy developmental trajectories.

Practically speaking, summer provides a unique opportunity for families to embrace screen-free activities. Recommendations include planning outdoor excursions, crafting projects, and engaging in communal games that encourage social interaction and creativity. Such strategies not only provide a reprieve from screens but also allow children to form interpersonal bonds that are often undermined by the isolating nature of digital media. However, as suggested in various discussions surrounding children's screen time, achieving a complete withdrawal is unrealistic. Rather, the focus shifts to moderation and guiding children toward self-regulated usage.

Moreover, the implications of excessive screen time extend beyond mere lifestyle choices; they encompass significant cognitive and social ramifications. Research has documented concerning trends in children's behaviour, revealing potential difficulties in impulse control and social skills linked to extensive screen exposure. This aligns with findings from educational studies examining the effects of screen time on learning, illustrating the urgent need for mindful engagement with technology.

While Collins’ cartoon elicits laughter, it also underscores a poignant dilemma faced by modern parents: how to navigate the complexities of technology use amidst a culture that increasingly normalises screen dependency. As summer approaches and opportunities for adventure abound, the conversation surrounding screen time is likely to continue, with parents weighing the benefits against the risks, and seeking smart, balanced solutions for their children.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/picture/2025/may/30/worried-about-your-screen-addicted-kids-sign-them-up-to-linear-tv-summer-camp-the-stephen-collins-cartoon), [[2]](https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/picture/2025/may/30/worried-about-your-screen-addicted-kids-sign-them-up-to-linear-tv-summer-camp-the-stephen-collins-cartoon)
* Paragraph 2 – [[5]](https://www.childrenandscreens.org/learn-explore/research/coping-with-screens/), [[4]](https://www.parentmap.com/article/10-tips-weaning-kids-screens-summer)
* Paragraph 3 – [[6]](https://www.edweek.org/technology/students-are-addicted-to-screens-what-it-means-for-learning/2022/12), [[7]](https://www.thefreelibrary.com/What%2BSCREENS%2BARE%2BDOING%2BTO%2BOUR%2BKIDS.-a0593148768)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/picture/2025/may/30/worried-about-your-screen-addicted-kids-sign-them-up-to-linear-tv-summer-camp-the-stephen-collins-cartoon> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/picture/2025/may/30/worried-about-your-screen-addicted-kids-sign-them-up-to-linear-tv-summer-camp-the-stephen-collins-cartoon> - In this Stephen Collins cartoon, a parent concerned about their child's screen addiction considers enrolling them in a 'linear TV summer camp' as a humorous solution to the problem.
3. <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/ng-interactive/2023/may/26/the-summers-greatest-horror-getting-suncream-on-the-kids-the-stephen-collins-cartoon> - Stephen Collins' cartoon depicts the humorous challenges of applying suncream to children during summer, highlighting the common parental struggle.
4. <https://www.parentmap.com/article/10-tips-weaning-kids-screens-summer> - This article offers ten practical tips for parents to help reduce their children's screen time during the summer, including planning screen-free activities and setting clear boundaries.
5. <https://www.childrenandscreens.org/learn-explore/research/coping-with-screens/> - Children and Screens provides research-based advice on managing children's screen time, emphasizing the importance of setting age-appropriate limits and fostering healthy digital habits.
6. <https://www.edweek.org/technology/students-are-addicted-to-screens-what-it-means-for-learning/2022/12> - This article discusses the impact of increased screen time on students' development and social skills, highlighting concerns about its effects on learning and behaviour.
7. <https://www.thefreelibrary.com/What%2BSCREENS%2BARE%2BDOING%2BTO%2BOUR%2BKIDS.-a0593148768> - An article examining the negative effects of excessive screen time on children's brain development, including issues with impulse control and social interactions.