Screenagers Patch Program

Smartphones, tablets, video games and computers are all technology devices, or "screens." We use these devices to connect with other people, to get things done, to find information and for fun. Today, screens are a bigger part of our lives than they ever were before. Because now people spend more time on screens than we used to, it's helpful to think and learn about how much screen time is healthy and useful in our lives and practice making smart choices about using screens.

When you complete the Screenagers Patch Program, you will:

• Be aware of how you, your friends and family members, are using screens today — how much time we spend and what activities we do on screens.

• Collaborate on decisions with your family and friends about when, why and how much to use screens.

• Learn how to and practice managing your own screen time, with your family's help.

• Share what you learn with other girls, your family and your community.

These activities together support the three keys to Girl Scout leadership: Discover, Connect and Take Action.

There are several choices of activities in each of the three categories below, **choose one from each.**

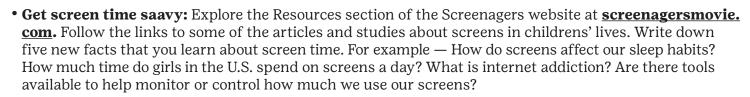### 1. A Closer Look at Screentime (discovery and awareness)

• **Screens are for...:** Make a list of what you do on screens. Also interview one friend and one family member and make lists of their screen time activities.

• **My screen time:** Make a guess — how much time do you spend on screens in a normal week? Then make a log of how much time you actually spend on a screen every day for one week. (To help, your parents can use an app to auto-track your daily

screen time. Find a list of available apps for this on the Screenagers website under Resources.) Is the total amount about what you guessed? More? Less?

- **My off-screen time:** What are your favorite activities that don't involve screens? Make a list and organize the activities in groups, such as sports, family time, friends time, creative time, alone time, inside time, and outside time.

- **Get screen time saavy:** Explore the Resources section of the Screenagers website at **screenagersmovie. com.** Follow the links to some of the articles and studies about screens in childrens' lives. Write down five new facts that you learn about screen time. For example — How do screens affect our sleep habits? How much time do girls in the U.S. spend on screens a day? What is internet addiction? Are there tools available to help monitor or control how much we use our screens?

- **Watch the film Screenagers** (about one hour long): Check the Screenagers website to see if there is a screening near you that you can attend. If not, consider collaborating with your school, community center or local Girl Scout troops to host a screening in your community. The Screenagers website tells you how to get in touch with the Screenagers team to bring the film to you.

2. Screens and Me (discuss, examine, think, plan, connect)

- **Try a "screen fast:"** Select an amount of time and setting — a week, an evening, a weekend, mealtimes, or at a gathering with friends — during which everyone puts their screens away. Notice if being off screens changes your behaviors. Do you make more eye contact, enjoy a different activity than you normally do, experience fewer distractions, or feel any different during or after your off-screen time?

- **Tech Talk Tuesday:** Participate in a Tech Talk Tuesday conversation with your family. Tech Talks are a time your family sets aside (about 15 minutes) to talk about how technology affects our lives. There are lots of Tech Talk conversation topic ideas on the Screenagers website.

- **Create a contract:** A Screen Time Family Contract is an agreement you make with your family about how and when you will and won't be on screens. Decide what the guidelines should be in your family, write them down, and have everyone sign it. For examples of contracts other families have created, see the Screenagers website.

- **Upsides/downsides:** Share in a peer group discussion what you feel is positive about what screen activities bring into your life and what can be challenging about it. What do you like and not like about how you are affected when you, your friends, your parents and other adults use screens?

- **Discuss Screenagers:** After you see the film, discuss what you noticed and learned. What stories did you relate to most? What stories or science surprised you? Did the film make you think about changing your own screen behavior in any way?

- **Screen time survey:** Talk to three friends and their families about how much and when they use screens. Ask your friends if their parents have screen time rules or not. Find out if they think having rules would be helpful. Share what you find out with your Girl Scout Screen Team.

- **Create and connect:** Share a screen activity with your parents to experience a "technology positive" together. Use an app or program to create something (art or video), video chat with a faraway family member, play a video game together, or teach your parents a new tech skill or app.

3. Screen Actions (enact a plan, make a difference, tell the world)

- **Map your day:** Think about a typical day and the times you spend on different free-time (not in school) activities, such as eating, sleeping, playing, reading, sports, and screens. Make a drawing or chart to show about how much time you spend on each. For example, it could be a pie chart, bar chart, time-line, or a jar filled with marbles, with a different-colored marble to represent each type of activity.

- **Tech-free home zone:** Designate a "tech-free zone" in one part of the house where family often gathers, such as the kitchen, dining area or living room. At the end of one week, check in with your family about how it felt to be in the zone, and whether it changed their behavior in any way.

- **Tech-free family time:** Schedule a fun family activity that gets you all together to play a board game, play charades, do a puzzle or attend a community event. Stick to the rule — no screens during family time, parents included. Check in afterward — how did it feel?

- **Tech-free outside time:** Go on a picnic, a bike ride, a hike, or to a grassy field for frisbee or blacktop to play ball. Bring your family and maybe even you friends, and ask everyone to leave their digital devices at home.

- **Contract check-in:** After two weeks of following your Screen Time Family Contract, talk with your parents or troop about how it is working for you. Then revisit your contract and adjust it if you need to.

- **Gaming for good:** Try a pro-social video game. Pro-social games involve collaborating with other players in a non-aggressive activity, exploring and building, or satisfying your thirst for adventure, competition or creativity without involving violence. You can find a list of pro-social video games to try on the Screenagers website under Resources, or find your own online. Spend your next gaming session with some new pro-social games and see how you like them.

- **Show what you know:** Present (with a poster, skit or song) what you have learned about how children your age in the US use screens today and how it can affect them.

- **"Minus One App" challenge:** Take your favorite app off your phone or personal device for one week. At the end of the week, check in with a friend about how that felt. Did you miss it? Could you live without it? Would you bring it back but use it less?

- **Campus action:** Talk to a school leader about screen guidelines at your school. Are smartphones allowed on campus? In class? At breaks? Think about the pros and cons of the guidelines. If your school doesn't have them, propose some. If they do have guidelines, are they working? Maybe you will decide to propose adjusting them based on this new information you've learned.

- **Campus action:** Inquire about whether your school teaches lessons about digital citizenship. If so, read the curriculum that is taught. If not, propose that the school or your teacher considers it. You can find information about digital citizenship curriculum toolkits at the Screenagers website under Resources.

- **Tech-tracking tech:** Install a mobile use tracking app on your phone for a day and compare/discuss the results with your group. Were you surprised to see how often or how much you used your phone? Do you think that level of use is a healthy fit for your life or would you like to adjust it?

The Screenagers Patch can be purchased in the GSNC Shop using the following link: https://gsnc.wufoo. com/forms/gsnc-patch-program-patch-request/