

Government of Alberta announcement:
"To safeguard student mental health and reduce distractions, personal mobile devices will no longer be permitted during class time and access to social media sites will be restricted." Effective September 1, 2024.

Take proactive steps to help your family prepare for the new device-free policy.

- Learn about the new policy and implementation plan in your child's school; and talk with your children to prepare.
- Convey a positive attitude about the change and focus on the benefits.
- Brainstorm ways to communicate during school time when needed and create the habit of planning.

Focus on the benefits of device-free classrooms:

Students learn better without phones.

Research shows that when phones:

- are away, test scores increase.
- are present, students who are already struggling, struggle more.

Students have improved mood and mental health without phones. Benefits include:

- Increased self-control and ability to focus.
- Improved ability to self-regulate.
- Reduced symptoms of depression and anxiety.
- More in-person time with friends, peers and mentors helps improve their mood.

Tips for device-free success:

- Although students may still have access to their phones on their breaks, create the habit of planning each day without text messages or phone call reminders. Plan ahead for pickup times/locations, appointments or other activities. This will instill responsibility and help them develop valuable executive-functioning skills.
- Help your children memorize your phone number and other emergency numbers. If they need to reach you while they are at school, they can call from the school office or ask their teacher for assistance.
- Call the school office if you need to relay a message to your child vs texting or calling their device.

Tips to encourage healthy cell phone and device habits:

- Set aside devices during mealtimes and focus on conversations.
- Make common areas where family and friends hang out together, device-free to promote positive interactions.
- Put away your own devices when your children are around and want to interact with you. Give them your full attention – they will appreciate you for it, and you will set a great example.
- Encourage everyone to put their devices away at least an hour before bedtime and keep them out of the bedrooms.

MORE RESOURCES

Search online:

[Screenagers](#)

[Away for the Day](#)

[MyHealth.Alberta.ca](https://myhealth.alberta.ca)

Information on mental health, community supports, programs and services in your area:



Addiction Services Help Line
1-866-332-2322

Mental Health Help Line
1-877-303-2642

