

April 2006



## Turn your screens off and your activity level up!

The research is compelling. "Over the past 20 years the prevalence of childhood obesity in Canada has increased between 300-500 per cent. Research demonstrates an increase in TV watching, video game use and Internet use and also suggests that Canada may be a world leader in the childhood obesity epidemic" (Dr. Mark Tremblay, Director for the Foundation for Active Healthy Kids, 2002).

### Suggestions for limiting Screen time include:

- Be patient. If you can live through 20 minutes of whining, your children **WILL** find something to do
- Send the kids outside until dinner time
- Make a list of all the things your family loves to do besides watching TV/playing video games, and keep it posted somewhere
- Take photos of your children doing creative things and keep them visible
- Go for family walks and have fun as a family
- Have children earn screen time, e.g., 60 minutes of outside play buys 60 minutes of screen time
- Sign up for "**Turn off the Screens**" week every April, through your school or as a family



For strategies on how to manage TV, video games and computer, visit Child & Family Canada at [www.cfc-efc.ca](http://www.cfc-efc.ca), Media Awareness Network at [www.media-awareness.ca](http://www.media-awareness.ca), [www.tvturnoff.org](http://www.tvturnoff.org) or contact *Health Connection*.

**For health-related information, call York Region Health Services  
Health Connection at 1-800-361-5653 or visit [www.york.ca](http://www.york.ca)**