Most teens and kids have screens as a central part of their lives. There are advantages and disadvantages to this.

Some Advantages to Net/Text Communication
- Increased positive influence of peers
- More social interaction – more social skills
- Safety/ convenience
- Greater access to information
- Gives another option of communication with parents and teachers
- Fun!

Some Disadvantages to Net/Text Communication
- Negative influence of peers (e.g. conflict) magnified. This influence is often unsupervised.
- Predators/unwanted influences
- Debt
- Exposure to adult/inappropriate material- sexual, violent or depressive themes
- Less time spent on other activities – homework, family time/ physical activity/sleep

Sleep
- 10-13 year olds probably need around 9-10 hours sleep a night; teens probably need 7-10.
- Sleepiness is the most reliable system of sleep deprivation. When sleepy, kids and teens learn less well, remember less information, are more moody. Have trouble motivating themselves and concentrating and get sick more often.

Why don’t many kids and teens get enough sleep?
- They like staying up late.
- They have difficulty getting to sleep earlier in the evening than younger kids and adults.
- They nap during the day.
- They are slow to get moving in the morning and don’t exercise enough.
- They don’t have strategies to help relax themselves.
- They use phones and computers late at night which keeps them too alert.

Now What?
- Ask questions first. Get their thoughts, opinions and ideas – in an ongoing way, relaxed, casual, interested, specific questions.
- Build and teach problem solving strategies. Ask them for solutions to joint problems
- In the meantime, provide boundaries,
- Boundaries should be specific, monitored, reviewed and with built in choices. They should also be put in place with compassion.