



12-14
years old

Digital Safety
Basics

Multitasking: The Modern Juggling Act

MULTITASKING AND YOUR KIDS

- ▶ The average 8- to 18-year-old crams more than 10 hours of media use into 7.5 hours of media time every day (Kaiser, 2010).
- ▶ Every year, kids spend more and more time using two or more forms of media simultaneously.
- ▶ The impact of multitasking differs by what kind of multitasking your child is doing.
- ▶ Experts disagree on some aspects, but all agree that multitasking prolongs the time it takes to do individual tasks, such as homework.
- ▶ Research shows that multitasking affects kids' ability to filter and retain information.

WHY MULTITASKING MATTERS

Being able to process several things simultaneously in a media-rich world is an important skill. When kids are constantly being interrupted by messages, phone calls and texts, multitasking can help them manage it all. However, because multitasking can come at a cost to kids' attention spans, there are important things to consider.

TIPS FOR MANAGING MULTITASKING WITH KIDS OF ALL AGES

- ▶ **Encourage your kids to read more.**
Reading can help counteract the impact of multitasking. The more children read, the better they can become at reflection and analysis.
- ▶ **Start good habits early.**
Establish boundaries at a young age. Turn off technology during homework, meals, etc.
- ▶ **Practice what you preach.** Set an example to demonstrate how to multitask.
- ▶ **Keep distractions to a minimum.**
Try to help your kids do one thing at a time. For older kids, make sure social networks and chatting happen after homework is completed or at timed intervals.
- ▶ **Pay attention and connect the dots.**
If you see grades slipping, make the connection between multitasking while doing homework. If your children begin handing in work late or if they are staying up to complete homework, consider turning off the internet, mobile phones or the TV, and see if the situation reverses itself. Grades can be a strong indicator as to whether or not multitasking is taking a toll on your child.



Common Sense Media is the nation's leading independent, nonpartisan organization dedicated to improving the media lives of kids and families.

© 2012 Common Sense Media Inc.

© 2012 AT&T Intellectual Property. All rights reserved.
AT&T and the AT&T logo are trademarks of AT&T Intellectual Property.



Stay
connected.
Stay safe.

