

Structures for Schools:

- All students sign a [Responsible Use Policy](#) (sample from Yokohama International School), which highlights the importance of balance and responsibility
- To help clearly define the expectations for balance (and to set clear boundaries), **no laptops are allowed at break**, and laptop use is only allowed in the **CLC workroom** during lunch (otherwise students are not allowed to use their laptops during lunch).
- To get started well, offer **orientation** days at the beginning of the school year where to discuss the Responsible Use Policy, Digital Citizenship and Balance at length in a variety of contexts, (at YIS this was an introduction to our [CLC](#)) Include mandatory parent information session for middle school parents and all middle and high school students (voluntary for high school parents).
- Provide an overarching Digital Citizenship curriculum, (at YIS, we called this [Digital Dragons](#)), to be taught through subject areas in middle school.
- Have a **Digital Citizenship Week**, to revisit the major themes of the Responsible Use Policy through a variety of activities and discussions.
- Start a [Student Tech Team](#), at YIS they regularly produced short **video tutorials**, to highlight important aspects of effectively using the laptops. Recently, they highlighted a number of productivity apps like “Self Control” which was one of the ways that students could help manage distractions.
- Implement [homework calendars](#) in all middle school tutor groups, where all major assessments will be added as events in a shared calendar for each tutor group. Parents and students can then subscribe to these calendars to have the reminders pop up on their mobile devices.
- Developing a **digital student planner** to help students manage their assignments in an efficient way.

- All of these topics are important points of discussion within **Tutor/Advisory/Homeroom program** at all grade levels.

Structures for Home

Setting Limits:

- Set time limit per day for total screen time, and gradually allow the child more control over how they allocate that time.
- Set a specific time, or set of times, when the computer can be used.
- No computer use after a certain time.
- No technology at the dinner table.

Developing Time Management:

- daily work schedule planning
- Use a kitchen timer to help students understand how long they've been online. Set a reasonable amount of time, and put the computer away afterwards. It only takes a few times with this technique before the amount of time becomes routine.
- Make use of apps that help build time management skills like:
 - [YIS Student Tech Team Tips](#)
 - [A great list from UWC](#)
 - [A great list from AIS, Singapore](#)
 - [Self Control](#)
 - [How to Learn Time Management with the Pomodoro Technique](#)

- [Pomodoro Techniques with a Mac](#)
- [Pomodoro App from iTunes \(free\)](#)
- [Study Buddy App from iTunes \(99c\)](#)
- [Impetus App from Android Store \(free\)](#)
- [ViewPure](#) YouTube: View YT videos without ads

Take Advantage of Tech Breaks: Research shows that knowing you have specific time set aside to check social networking sites actually helps students focus better, so Dr. Larry Rosen recommends 25 minutes of homework time, then 5 minutes of a tech break, then study again.

- [Could Checking Facebook in Class Help Students Focus?](#)
- [How a Tech Break Can Help Students Focus](#)
- [The Amazing Power of “Tech Breaks”](#)

Family Agreements:

- sign a contract between parents and children with clear and agreed consequences for breaking the agreement
- laptops only in family areas, no bedrooms
- encourage the child to meet their friends in person
- encourage social time in family on a fixed schedule
- [Example Contract from a YIS family](#)
- [Amended Contract \(updated March 2012\)](#)

Monitoring:

- regular monitoring of comments made/received
- checking the history regularly

Regular and open conversations with your child are always the best way to make these strategies successful.

Some further resources:

- [Common Sense Media: 5 Ways to Help Kids Find Balance](#)
- [Common Sense Media: Setting Computer Limits](#)
- [Common Sense Media: Managing Multi-tasking](#)