

SWS Media Guidelines

What do we mean by (electronic) media?

- TV, videos, movies, youtube
- computers, internet, cell phones, i-phones, smart phones, ipads, email, instant messaging, texting
- facebook, twitter, instagram
- recorded music, radio, mp3 players, ipods
- internet and computer gaming, arcade games, nintendo, playstation, Wii, xbox etc, handheld games

SWS Media Guidelines

Our media guidelines aim to support the objectives of Waldorf education and child development, and to be workable in the homes and lives of school families in our current times. Our goals for the students at SWS include:

Early Childhood

A child in ECE programs should not be exposed to any electronic media in daily life. Exposure to radio and recorded music is best limited and age-appropriate. The younger the child, the more vitally important this is. No media, particularly on nights preceding and following school days. We are very grateful for your support in creating a media-free sanctuary for young children.

Grades One to Four

A child in this age group should still not be exposed to electronic media in daily life. Exposure to radio and recorded music is still best limited and age-appropriate. No media, particularly on nights preceding and following school days. We are very grateful for your support in continuing to create a media-free sanctuary for the children in this age group. We are very grateful for your support in creating a media-free sanctuary for children.

Grades Five and Six

At this age, it may be appropriate to begin allowing your child some media exposure. Carefully monitored introduction to age-appropriate movies may occur occasionally, preferably at home and not at the movie theatre. However, watching videos of themselves (e.g., in class plays) and using electronic media or technology to create movies, videos, artwork, etc., is not recommended for this age group. Still no media on nights preceding and following school days. Computers and TVs should be located in a shared space in the home, not in a child's bedroom.

Provide rules for media usage – content, times, and amount of use need to be decided by parents. Prohibit access to any website where the child may post his or her personal information, including instant messaging and e-mailing.

Review all media content before hand, watch with the children and discuss it afterwards. Encourage media time to continue to be a part of family time.

Grades Seven and Eight

Media exposure must be limited, age-appropriate and closely supervised and guided by parents. Media exposure can take place on weekends and vacations. However, still no media during the school week and no media on nights preceding school days.

Computers and TVs should be located in a shared space in the home, not in a child's bedroom.

Provide rules for media usage – content, times, and amount of use need to be decided by parents. Prohibit access to any website where the child may post his or her personal information, including instant messaging and e-mailing.

Review all media content before hand, watch with the children and discuss it afterwards. Encourage media time to continue to be a part of family time.

Encourage regular study habits in a quiet environment, without a backdrop of recorded music or video.

Limit time spent listening to ipods and other portable music players. Screen music for content and lyrics. Observe PG-13 and R-ratings for movies. Rock concerts are not yet appropriate.

Conversations between the class teacher and class parents are crucial to creating a common ground around the use of media by students, as teachers have experienced that varying levels of media exposure among classmates are socially divisive and erode social interaction at school.

Furthermore, it is crucial that parents educate themselves on the use and abuse of social media, particularly on issues such as cyber bullying, sexual exploitation, internet exposure, loss of privacy, and the addictive nature of video and computer games.

Cell phones and i-phones. New research has indicated that these phones can affect brain activity. Furthermore, these phones now provide unlimited internet access and act as a status symbol. We kindly request parents, other family members and visitors to our school to teach by example and refrain from using their phones (and other electronic devices) on school grounds, whenever possible.

Cameras during performances

We understand that you want to capture the joy of your children's performance; however we kindly appeal to our audience not to take photos or record the performances. The activity of photographing or filming detracts from the experience and the focus of the children and of the audience. Being photographed or filmed changes the nature of the event into a performance that is being done for a device rather than for people. We strive to have the children and the audience experience and celebrate a live performance. In consideration for the children and your fellow audience members, if you must take photos or record the performance, please take a seat at the very back of the school hall. We thank you in advance for your kind cooperation in complying with these requests. - SWS Faculty.

Please strongly consider these media guidelines and your teacher's recommendations, in making choices around your child's exposure to media. Thank you for your cooperation and crucial support.