



Parental oversight important

Nick Togneri

TECHNOLOGY continues to grow at an explosive rate. But technology can offer a double-edged sword for parents and caregivers.

Makers of video games and apps extol their products' benefits, but some parents are not so sure.

One SCIS elementary school father of a 6-year-old girl and an 8-year-old boy said he tries to minimize the tech time his kids get. "I know that when they're older, technology is probably going to try consume them, so while they are young we try to get them focused on reading books and other non-digital activities," he said.

"I know that some parents let their kids spend too much time playing on them. That's not what we want for our kids."

Another parent, mother of two boys, ages 4 and 7,

does encourage her kids to use her iPad. "They probably get about one and a half hours of device time per week. Eighty percent of it is educational, and 20 percent is purely entertainment," she said. "There are apps to enhance reading, spelling, even Mandarin. Sometimes we use it as a reward for jobs well done, and it's great to see them actually go for the educational games."

A very tech-minded 9-year-old at SCIS had this advice for parents: "Don't you want your kids to have a good time? To feel excited and happy? There are billions of fun games and things to do ... at least a few them will be suitable!"

Everyone interviewed agreed, it's another part of the ongoing balancing act of parenting. Is there an app for that?

(Nick Togneri is SCIS-Pudong Lower School technology coordinator.)