

Title: Screen Freedom: Toolkit for Closer Partnering

Round Table with Shara Drew, from Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood. Jean Rogers, M.S.Ed., Director, Kids Media Diet, author of *Kids Under Fire*. Jacques Brodeur, from Edupax, Quebec, Canada.

Abstract A primary component of any media education program should be turning off screens in order to reflect upon, and critically examine, media content and consumption. One major problem with screen-time reduction initiatives is inspiring large numbers of students to participate (and thus achieve the educational benefits associated with screen freedom). Various programs to reduce children's screen time have been implemented in the United States, Canada and France. This session will include presentations about the most successful components of these programs and will discuss benefits sustained over the short- and long-term. It will discuss key research underscoring why media educators need to inform parents and students about the impacts of screen exposure on children's health; describe the interests we are serving by keeping young citizens (and their parents) ignorant of the damages caused by screen overexposure; and highlight best practices for fostering change in screen habits. Drawing from lessons learned from the SMART program (*Student Media Awareness to Reduce Television*) and others, this roundtable discussion will provide tools and strategies for preparing students for screen-time reduction; gaining parents and teachers' collaboration; and mobilizing communities to support kids' efforts to reduce screen exposure.