

Midstate Messenger

MIDSTATE COMMUNICATIONS COOPERATIVE

September 2025

FREE eSports Tourney

The SoDak Circuit is back on October 11, 2025, and we're bringing the games you love plus new ways to play.

All the games you loved last year plus Dungeons & Dragons, free play stations, a Cosplay competition and more! It's all happening at South Dakota's free, all-ages esports event.

Create your Player Profile today:
<https://www.sodakcircuit.com/player-profile/>

**FREE ESPORTS COMPETITION
OCT. 11**



9 SIOUX FALLS CONVENTION CENTER
SODAKCIRCUIT.COM

September 1 - Offices Closed

September 5 - Disconnect of all accounts with a 30 day balance

September 20 - Bills due by 12:00 PM.

September 30 - October bills are mailed out and due October 20th by 12:00 PM



We're excited to invite all our Midstate Communications members to the 73rd Annual Meeting! Mark your calendars for **Thursday, October 2, 2025**, at the **Kimball High School Gymnasium** — doors open at 5:30 PM.

We'll kick off the evening with a complimentary BBQ pork meal to say thank you for being part of our community. After a brief business meeting, it's time for some fun — BINGO is back by popular demand, and of course we'll have our always-enjoyed door prizes to wrap things up.

Come connect with friends and celebrate how Midstate Communications continues to connect communities and empower lives. We look forward to seeing you there!

Take 9 Seconds for a Safer Click

Cyber threats are getting sneakier—and sometimes all it takes is a tiny pause to keep your personal info safe. That's the idea behind the Take9 campaign: before you click, download, or share anything online, just pause for nine seconds. Why nine? It's short enough not to feel like a chore, but long enough to give your gut a chance to whisper, "Hmm—this looks fishy." Here's what you can do during those nine seconds:

- **Think twice** before opening suspicious emails or links.
- **Check that sender's address**, look for typos. Does the request feel odd or urgent?
- **Finish tech updates**, use a **password manager**, and enable **multi-factor authentication** for extra protection.

Pause, reflect, and Take9.



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Healthy Tech Habits for the School Year

With kids back in school and schedules filling up, it's the perfect time to set routines that create a healthy balance between online time and everything else life has to offer. At Midstate Communications, we're proud to provide the fastest, most reliable fiber internet for learning, connecting, and having fun. But we also know that too much screen time can crowd out other important priorities.

Here are five practical tips to help your family build healthy tech habits this school year:

1. Start with a Conversation

Before setting limits, talk with your kids about their screen time. Share your concerns, but also take time to listen. Online activities often include positive things like connecting with friends, learning new skills, or exploring new ideas. By treating this as a team effort rather than a punishment, you'll build trust and create a plan that works for everyone.

2. Set Clear and Consistent Boundaries

Kids thrive on structure, and clear guidelines around screen time can make a big difference. Some families find success with schedules (certain times of day for devices), while others prefer setting daily or weekly hour limits. Use built-in device tools or apps to help track usage. The key is consistency—stick to the plan you've set together.

3. Schedule Other Priorities

Healthy routines aren't just about reducing screen time—they're about filling the day with meaningful activities. Block out time for homework, reading, outdoor play, and family time. Even a short daily break for fresh air or physical activity can help balance screen use. And don't forget to encourage in-person social time with friends, too!

4. Limit Notifications

Constant alerts are one of the biggest distractions for kids (and adults). Consider turning off—or at least silencing—non-essential notifications on their devices. Another option is to create “quiet times” where notifications are muted, such as after school, during dinner, or before bedtime. This small change can help kids focus and stay present.

5. Be a Role Model

Your kids are always watching—so show them what healthy tech habits look like. Limit your own screen time during family activities, put your phone away at meals, and demonstrate how to balance online time with real-life responsibilities and fun. When kids see you making the effort, they're more likely to follow your lead.

Finding Balance

Between school, activities, and time online, kids have a lot on their plates. By encouraging open conversations, setting clear rules, and modeling healthy habits, parents can help children find a natural rhythm that balances screen time with everything else that matters most. For more helpful tips on navigating the online world, follow Midstate Communications on social media!

