



What Researchers Say About Screen Time

There are many concerns about how screen time can affect your child's development:



Children learn language by talking with parents, other family members, and those who care for them regularly. The good news is that children under 12 months can learn new words from a children's show if their parents watch with them and use the new words many times.



Screen time can get in the way of parents and children interacting with and enjoying time with each other.



Screens are always changing, which may lead to short attention spans.



Children who are distracted by screens when they are upset may find it harder to learn how to settle and soothe themselves.



Too much screen time can lead to overweight children in preschool and beyond.



Screen time in the evening can make it hard for your child to fall asleep. Young children need sleep to thrive.



Babies and toddlers learn most when they are moving and doing and exploring and discovering with adults they love and trust.

Guiding Screen Time

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends the following:



Keep screens off around babies and toddlers younger than 18 months.



Limit screen time to an hour or less for older toddlers and 2-year-olds.



Choose high-quality shows and games.



Sit and watch with your child instead of just handing over a screen or tablet.



Be sure your child has plenty of time for active play outdoors and creative, hands-on play, and you have time together to talk and share *Everyday Moments*.



As Your Child Gets Older

Set and follow rules about how much screen time you will allow. Be sure your children know the rules. Giving a 5-3-2-1 minute warning or setting a timer can help your child know and prepare for when the time is up.



Choose what your child watches and does online.

Check out shows or visit websites before your child sees them. Does this programming reflect your values in terms of how people treat one another in regards to diversity of gender, race, culture, and ability? It is visually appealing? Is it appropriate for his age? Will it make sense to him? Will it frighten him? Will it engage him?



Watch together with your child.

Talk about what is happening and how the characters might feel. For example, you might ask your 2-year-old, "What do you see?" or you could ask your 3-year-old, "What do you think is going to happen next?"



Check with him often...

If you go off to do something while your child is focused on the screen – even if you have a lot to do while he is *busy* watching.



Ask if screen time is used in your child care?

If so, how is it used and how often? Add this time into the amount of time your child may be in front of a screen at home.