



June 2025 Newsletter

Navigating Screen Time: A Guide for Parents

Screens Are Everywhere—But How Much Is Too Much?

In today's digital age, screens are an integral part of our daily lives. From televisions and tablets to smartphones and computers, children are exposed to various forms of screen media. As a parent, determining the appropriate amount and type of screen time for your child can be challenging.

Understanding the Impact of Screen Time

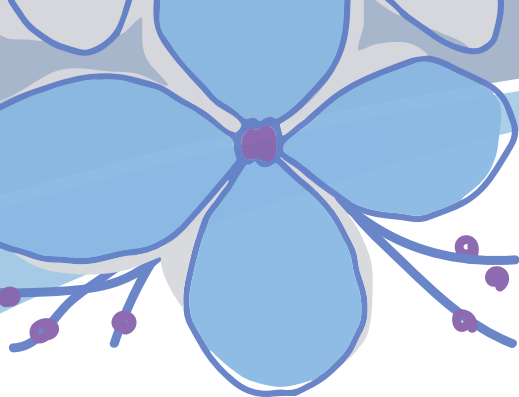
Research indicates that excessive screen time can negatively affect children's cognitive development, language acquisition, and social-emotional skills. For instance, a study published in JAMA Pediatrics found that infants who engaged in one to four hours of screen time daily at age one were at a higher risk of developmental delays by age two.



AAP Recommendations on Screen Time

The American Academy of Pediatrics provides the following guidelines:

- Children Under 18 Months: Avoid screen media, except for video chatting.
- Children 18–24 Months: Introduce high-quality programming, and watch it together to help them understand what they're seeing.
- Children 2–5 Years: Limit screen use to one hour per day of high-quality content, co-viewed with a parent or caregiver.
- Children 6 Years and Older: Place consistent limits on screen time to ensure adequate sleep, physical activity, and other healthy behaviors.



Create a balanced “Digital Diet”

Consider these strategies to manage screen time effectively:

- **Set Boundaries:** Establish screen-free times, such as during meals and before bedtime.
- **Lead by Example:** Model healthy screen habits yourself.
- **Encourage Alternative Activities:** Promote playtime, reading, and outdoor activities to balance screen use.



Quality Over Quantity

Not all screen time is created equal.

The content & context of media use are crucial:

- **Choose Educational Content:** Opt for programming that is age-appropriate and educational.
- **Avoid Fast-Paced or Overstimulating Shows:** Some children's shows are designed to be fast-paced with lots of background noise, which may not be beneficial for development.

Engage Actively: Watch programs with your child, discuss content, and relate to real-life experiences.



The 5 Cs of Media Use

The AAP suggests the “5 Cs” to guide media use:

1. **Child:** Tailor media use to your child's age, temperament, and developmental stage.
2. **Content:** Prioritize high-quality, educational content.
3. **Calm:** Ensure media use doesn't interfere with sleep or cause overstimulation.
4. **Crowding Out:** Be mindful that screen time doesn't replace essential activities like physical play & family interaction.
5. **Communication:** Discuss media content with your child to enhance understanding and critical thinking.

Final Thoughts

While screens are an inevitable part of modern life, mindful and intentional use can help mitigate potential negative effects on children's development. By setting appropriate boundaries, choosing quality content, and engaging with your child during screen time, you can foster a healthy media environment in your home.

****We understand that there are exceptions to every rule when it comes to children. What works for one family may not work for another – particularly with neurodivergent populations. For more resources and personalized guidance, consult your pediatrician or visit the AAP's [Media and Children](#) page.****



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