



## Understanding Media Exposure and Screen Use in Children Birth to Three

### Potential Developmental Problems

- Delayed receptive and expressive language and social skills
- Decreased creativity and imaginative play
- Limited sensory exploration
- Difficulties self-soothing and coping
- Sleep disturbances and/or interruptions and delayed onset of sleep

### American Academy of Pediatrics' Recommendations

- Avoid digital media use in children younger than 18-24 months; except video chatting
- For children 18-24 months, if you want to introduce digital media, choose high-quality programming and use media together with your child. Avoid solo media use in this age group
- Do not feel pressured to introduce technology early. Children will figure out the devices once they do begin to use them
- For children 2 to 5 years old, limit screen use to 1 hour per day of high-quality programming. Watch/use together and explain what they are seeing and help them apply what they learn to their world
- Avoid fast paced programs, apps with a lot of distracting content, and any inappropriate content (violence, sexual, etc.)
- Turn off televisions and other devices when not in use
- Avoid using media/screen time as the only way to calm your child
- Monitor the content and what apps are used or downloaded. Test apps before the child uses them, play together, and ask what they think about the app
- Keep bedrooms, mealtimes, and parent-child playtimes screen free for children and parents
- No screens 1 hour before bedtime and remove devices from bedrooms before bed
- Create a Family Media Use Plan (<http://www.healthychildren.org/MediaUsePlan>) (<https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/138/5/e20162591>)

### Non-Media or Screen Use Strategies, Activities, Ideas, and Resources

#### Reducing Media and Screen Use

- First, ask yourself, "Am I a good role model for my kids when it comes to using devices."
- Make your own family media plan
- Model healthy screen/media use
- Educate yourself on electronics
- Create "Technology Free Zones"
- Set aside times to unplug



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## Non-Media or Screen Use Strategies, Activities, Ideas, and Resources Reducing Media and Screen Use

- Use parental controls
- Encourage other activities
- Make screen time a privilege
- Don't allow screen media in your child's bedroom
- Treat media as you would any other environment in your child's life
- Set limits and remove the devices
- Redirect media requests to other options (e.g., play time)
- Screen time shouldn't be alone time, participate together
- Participate in Face-to-Face communication
- Limit screen use and media exposure for kids under 2 years (i.e., video calls)
- Don't use technology as an emotional soother/pacifier
- Know the apps that you download for your kids
- Remember the maximum screen time suggestions do not need to be met, kids can utilize less time daily/weekly

## Websites and Resources

- <https://www.aap.org/>
- <https://commercialfreechildhood.org/resource/screen-free>
- <https://www.greatschools.org/gk/articles/managing-your-childs-screen-time/>
- <https://www.healthychildren.org/>
- <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/media/Pages/default.aspx>
- <https://kidshealth.org/PrimaryChildrens/en/parents/screentime-baby-todd.html>
- <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/childrens-health/in-depth/screen-time/art-20047952>
- <https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/series/screen-sense#resources-for-parents-and-caregivers>

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