

Screen time



Smart phones, tablets, television, video games and other devices are a normal part of life for most families. Although these can be helpful and entertaining, we need to understand the impact they can have on children.

Research has shown:

- Children aged 6 months to 2 years who have 30 minutes of screen time each day have a much higher risk of speech and language delays. (1)
- Babies who are exposed to screen time have more difficulties sleeping (2)
- Screen time increases the likelihood of delays developing motor skills (4)

We recommend:

- Children under 18 months of age do not have any screen time.
- Children aged 2-5 years have a maximum of 1 hour per day of screen time. This should be spent with parents, who explain what the child is watching and apply it to the child's world.
- For children over 6, make consistent rules about limits and when screens can be used. Ensure screen time does not interrupt sleep, physical activity or family time.
- Ensure you have screen free time together to talk and play.
- Make screen free areas of the house, such as the bedroom. (3)

References

(1) *The ASHA Leader*, August 2017, Vol. 22, 16.
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(2) *Daily touchscreen use in infants and toddlers is associated with reduced sleep and delayed sleep onset*, Celeste H. M. Cheung, Rachael Bedford, Irati R. Saez De Urabain, Annette Karmiloff-Smith, & Tim J. Smith, *Scientific Reports* 7, Article number: 46104 (2017)

(3) *American Academy of Pediatrics*, 2016, <https://www.aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/aap-press-room/pages/american-academy-of-pediatrics-announces-new-recommendations-for-childrens-media-use.aspx>

(4) *Relationship between screen-time and motor proficiency in children: a longitudinal study*, Geneviève Cadoret, Nathalie Bigras, Lise Lemay, Julie Lemire. *Early Childhood Development and Care*, 25th July 2016, <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03004430.2016.1211123>



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