

# Understanding Screen time use during COVID-19

D E V E L O P M E N T A L P R O G R E S S C L I N I C

P R A C T I C A L A P P R O A C H E S T O M A N A G I N G  
S C R E E N T I M E U S E

## Understanding American Academy of Pediatrics Recommendations for screen time use

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) provides guidance to pediatricians and parents about recommendations for a variety of important issues related to the care of children. Current recommendations are: 1) No screen time for children under 2 yo; 2) For children 18-24 months limit to video chatting; 3) For children 2-5 yo limit to 1 hour.

### What counts as screen time?

We often don't think of all of the different devices that count as "screen time use". Screens include television, tablets, cellphone, iPads and video games.

### Is all screen time bad?

All screen time use is not bad. Quality is just as important as quantity. Too much of a good thing can also be bad for you. Kids look toward screens for entertainment, education, and just to pass the time. Kids even have their own version of YouTube!! You can balance some of the negative impact of screen time use by using the device with your child rather than having them use it alone. We also recommend putting limits on how much and where they can use screen time. (<https://www.common sense media.org/> )

**What is the big deal?** Society in general has become obsessed with use of electronics and technology. Children may not achieve the same benefits from using technology as adults. Children benefit from having interactions with adults and from creative play. Excessive screen time has several potential negative consequences including:

1. More isolation
2. Less creative play
3. Too much sedentary time/decreased activity
4. Linked to childhood obesity
5. Safety and privacy concerns
6. Potential for negative impact on vision (<https://www.chop.edu/news/health-tip/how-too-much-screen-time-affects-kids-eyes>)
7. Potential negative impact on attention (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6469768/> )

**Be reasonable!** We are in the middle of a global pandemic and things are not normal. Be reasonable and do not experience guilt if you child is on a device more than usual. Many parents are working from home and have other responsibilities. Your child may also need to use the device for school. These are all exceptions to the formal rules and recommendations

<https://www.mmhealth.org/community/news/how-does-screen-time-effect-infant-and-toddler-development/>

### QUESTIONS? CONTACT INFO

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DPC Website

<https://med.emory.edu/departments/pediatrics/>

## T U R N I N G S C R E E N T I M E I N T O A P O S I T I V E E X P E R I E N C E

\*\*Participate in screen time use with your child: Children of all ages benefit from adult oversight of screen time use.

\*\*Always know what your child is watching!

\*\*Try to find quality apps or programs for your child to watch

\*\*Use screen time to expose your child to something they otherwise would not see (ie. national parks, nature, music)

\*\*Try not to use devices as pacifiers. Come up with other ways to get your child to behave

\*\*Ask your child to explain to

you the games they are playing or shows they are watching. This encourages conversation and helps you understand their media consumption

\*\*Quality programming is very important.

\*\*Share in the use of screen time with your child!