











Family Media Guidelines

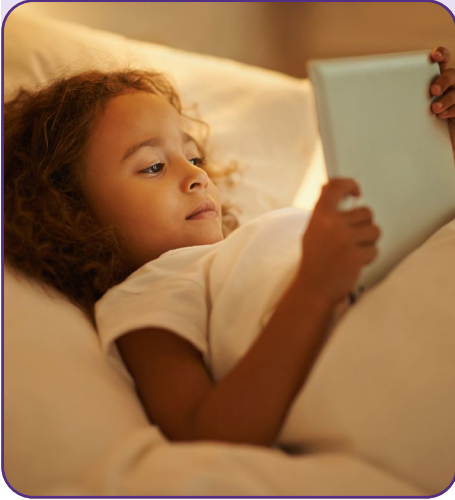
As a parent, try to ensure your child has plenty of time for active play outdoors and creative, imaginative play. Playing is a way for a child to learn about himself or herself, others, and the world around him or her; therefore, ensuring your child has ample time to play is critical. Allowing your child some monitored screen time may provide an opportunity for him or her to learn other skills, such as spatial awareness, problem solving, and hand-eye coordination and enjoy some "down time."

Some research has demonstrated that screen-based activities can help children develop language skills and connect socially with long-distance family members. However, additional research indicates that excessive screen time may lead to harmful outcomes for children such as increases in Body Mass Index, decreases in sleep, and delays in child development.

For these reasons, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) strongly advises parents to monitor and interact with their children during screen time. New screen-time guidelines have been developed for parents to use to help them ensure their children are also engaging in hands-on play, interacting with others, and sleeping. The information below intends to help you manage your child's screen time and develop a Family Media Plan.

Strategies for Managing Screen Time

-  Limit screen time to less than 2 hours per day. Provide specific times for active play.
-  Create spaces where screen time is not allowed, such as during dinner or social events.
-  Set rules regarding screen time, and be sure to stick to the rules. Give a 5-, 4-, 3-, 2-, 1-minute warning, or set a timer to help your child know and prepare for when his or her time is up.
-  Model appropriate screen time use for your child by limiting your media use. For example, turn your phone off, or set it to "do not disturb" during meals and family time.
-  Spend time with your child while he or she is watching or using a screen, and talk about what is happening and how the characters might feel. Ask your child, "What do you see? What do you think is going to happen next?"
-  Continue to check in with your child as he or she engages in screen time so you can monitor what he or she is watching and how long he or she is watching or playing.
-  Identify games or shows for your child to play or watch that are educational, age appropriate, and consistent with your values. Some questions to consider when selecting shows or games include the following:
 - Does this programming reflect your values concerning how people treat one another?
 - Is it visually appealing?
 - Is it age appropriate? Will it make sense to your child?
 - Will it frighten your child? Will it make him or her laugh?
 - Will it engage your child? Will it stretch his or her thinking?
-  Avoid using screen time to calm your upset child as this may cause him or her to have problems with managing emotions and setting limits.



Create Your Family Media Plan

We encourage you to make a Family Media Plan, which could help you determine and clearly present your attitudes and expectations about your family's screen time. The AAP has developed a Family Media Use Plan tool that can help families create a personalized Family Media Plan.

The AAP has also developed a Media Time Calculator that helps parents calculate how much time their child spends engaged in various activities (e.g., child care, physical activity, meal times) throughout the day. This information can be used to help you determine how much time your child has left for screen time.

You can find both tools here: <https://www.healthychildren.org/MediaUsePlan>

Resources

American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and Young Minds Policy Statement

The policy statement linked below discusses the literature related to children's use of television, videos, and mobile/interactive technologies. Guidelines for families on youth media use are also provided.

Link to website: <https://publications.aap.org/pediatrics/article/138/5/e20162591/60503/Media-and-Young-Minds>



Healthy Digital Media Use Habits for Babies, Toddlers, & Preschoolers

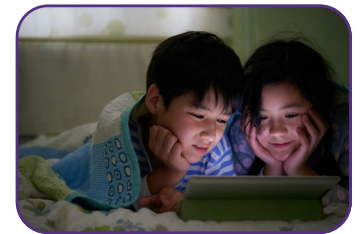
The web page, linked below, provides detailed information about healthy digital media use for young children. Media-use guidelines are discussed, and suggestions for the use of apps and digital books are considered. Tips for limiting media use and developing a Family Media Plan for parents, families, and caregivers are also examined.

Link to website: <https://healthychildren.org/English/family-life/Media/Pages/How-to-Make-a-Family-Media-Use-Plan.aspx>

Why Limit Your Child's Media Use?

This web page provides information on why media use should be monitored and limited. Facts and tips for healthy media use are discussed.

Link to website: <https://healthychildren.org/English/family-life/Media/Pages/The-Benefits-of-Limiting-TV.aspx>



Additional resources, skills, and strategies for parents are available at no cost through the online Thrive Initiative programming. Visit the Thrive website <https://thrive.psu.edu>, and sign up today!