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# The American Academy Of Pediatrics Just Changed Their Guidelines On Kids And Screen Time

Article Guest Contributor Top

For years, the American Academy Of Pediatrics (AAP) has adopted an on/off switch mentality when it comes to children and screen time. It used to recommend that children, ages two and under, have absolutely no exposure to screens. For older kids, the AAP recommended limiting 'screen time' to just two hours a day. Now, [the guidelines have been changed](#) so that they reflect a more nuanced approach.

(read more by clicking here!)

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/jordanshapiro/2015/09/30/the-american-academy-of-pediatrics-just-changed-their-guidelines-on-kids-and-screen-time/-7d00905b137c>



# Babies and Toddlers: The Definitive Answers to Screen-Time Questions

When it comes to TV, movies, games, and apps for your little one, how much is OK, what kind is best, and when do you introduce everything? By [Caroline Knorr](#) 5/1/2016

**\*\*\*The most important thing is that time spent with screens don't replace time spent with their loving caregiver.** Try the ideas below in small amounts -- say, 15 or 30 minutes.

- Explore new words, ideas, sounds, and pictures online.
- Show kids a photo of themselves and name parts of their face.

Scroll through all your pictures, name the people, and talk about them.

**\*\*\*If I'm restricting screen media, what can I do to occupy my kid while I take a break?**

It can be exhausting building blocks, playing dolls, and digging in the sandbox all day with your toddler. Here are some ideas to help kids occupy themselves, so you can put up your feet (or get dinner started):

- Listen to music. Young kids love to shake, shake, shake to **all kinds of beats and sounds**. Encourage kids to move and shake to the music and to make sounds themselves.
- Have them "read" books. Just the act of **holding books and flipping pages** can prime kids for a future love of reading. They can pretend they're reading to a stuffed animal.

Play audiobooks. The act of hearing helps with language acquisition, imagination, and critical listening skills. Set up

a comfy space where your child can play with blocks or dolls while listening to an age-appropriate story.

**\*\*\*As your kids gets older:**

- Time limits.
- Content (scary stuff).
- Supervision
- Multiplayer games
- Tech-free zones. Keep family and social gatherings tech-free

**\*\*\*\*Which TV shows are best for very young children?**

TV shows that are short, gentle, have positive messages, and are ad-free (ideally) are **best for young kids**.

They enjoy programs with very simple messages they can relate to (such as getting dressed in the morning). Try any top picks from these lists: **Best Preschool TV**, **Sprout TV**, and **Disney Jr. TV**. And keep these tips in mind:

- Many half-hour shows, such as *Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood*, actually contain several shorter segments you can start with.
- Avoid scary stuff, explosions, people yelling, and cartoon violence.
- Look for shows with positive messages, such as the value of being a good friend.

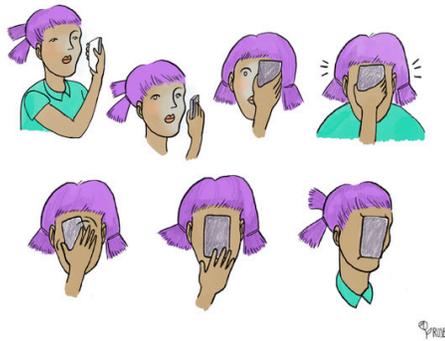
Do what you can to limit commercial exposure -- kids absorb those messages like a sponge.

<https://www.common sense media.org/blog/babies-and-toddlers-the-definitive-answers-to-screen-time-questions>

<http://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2016/01/06/461920593/kids-and-screen-time-a-peek-at-upcoming-guidance>

## Kids And Screen Time: A Peek At Upcoming Guidance

Here's a stark fact: Most American children spend more time consuming electronic media than they do in school.



*Rose Jaffe for NPR*

According to [Common Sense Media](#), tweens log 4 1/2 hours of screen time a day, seven days a week, 52 weeks a year. For teens, it's even higher: nearly seven hours a day. And that doesn't include time spent using devices for school or in school.

From babies with iPads to Chromebooks in classrooms, digital devices seem more ubiquitous every year. And one of the hottest issues today in both parenting and education circles is the proper role of electronic media in children's lives.

**There's research to support both the benefits and dangers of digital media for developing minds.**

Plenty of questions remain unanswered.

But those of us raising and teaching children can't afford to wait years for the final evidence to come in. That's why **the American Academy of Pediatrics plans to update its guidelines on media use later this year.**

Current recommendations are to avoid all screens for children under 2, and to allow a maximum of two hours per day of high-quality material for older children.

[https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0ahUKEwi\\_i8-os-DQAhUN3WMKHai7CrgQFggZMAA&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.aap.org%2Fen-us%2Fadvocacy-and-policy%2Faap-health-initiatives%2Fpages%2Fmedia-and-children.aspx&usg=AFQjCNHKEAsjvBJmetOH4rDUddSFVA2HCg&bvm=bv.140496471,d.cGw](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0ahUKEwi_i8-os-DQAhUN3WMKHai7CrgQFggZMAA&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.aap.org%2Fen-us%2Fadvocacy-and-policy%2Faap-health-initiatives%2Fpages%2Fmedia-and-children.aspx&usg=AFQjCNHKEAsjvBJmetOH4rDUddSFVA2HCg&bvm=bv.140496471,d.cGw)

# Media and Children Communication Toolkit

Media is everywhere. TV, Internet, computer and video games all vie for our children's attention. Information on this page can help parents and pediatrician understand and communicate about the impact media has in our children's lives, while offering tips on managing time spent with various media. Today's children are spending an average of seven hours a day on entertainment media, including televisions, computers, phones and other electronic devices. To help kids make wise media choices, parents should develop a Family Media Use Plan for everyone in their family.

Collected here are tools to help pediatricians and health professionals understand and implement the AAP recommendations on children and media, and to discuss the topic with parents and families.

Please feel free to share these resources in your social media networks, websites and other platforms.

## [AAP Recommendations](#)

- [Media and Young Minds Policy Statement](#)
- [Media Use in School-Aged Children and](#)

- Adolescents Policy Statement
- Children, Adolescents and Digital Media Tech Report
- News release: American Academy of Pediatrics Announces New Recommendations for Children's Media Use
- AAP News articles:
  - Policy addresses how to help parents manage young children's media use
  - Media use for 5- to 18-year-olds should reflect personalization balance
  - Technical report on youths' digital media use answers 25 clinical questions
  - Parent Plus: Family Media Plan helps parents set boundaries for kids

### Resources for Parents

*The AAP recommends that parents and caregivers develop a family media plan that takes into account the health, education and entertainment needs of each individual child as well as the whole family; and then follow the family media plan together, revising it when necessary.*

Create your personalized family media use plan here:  
[www.HealthyChildren.org/MediaUsePlan](http://www.HealthyChildren.org/MediaUsePlan)

Share our Family Media Use Plan tool by linking to it on your own website or on social media. Use the images below to create great looking links and posts. Simply embed the following URLs in the image of your choice:

[Family Media Use Plan in English](#)

[Family Media Use Plan in Spanish](#)