

Media Time: How Much Is Too Much?

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In a world where children are "growing up digital," it is important to help them learn healthy habits around using the many forms of media available to them. You may wonder, "Is my family too wired to technology?"



There can be [adverse effects](#) to too much media time, including things like sleep and behavior issues, lower cardiovascular fitness and higher rates of obesity, and more. It's important not to let media time interfere with the time your child spends having open opportunities to learn through play, and the time you get to bond as a family. Active play is the most effective method for your child to learn and grow and contributes to the cognitive, physical, language development, social, and emotional well-being of children and youth.

So how do you help children maintain a healthy balance between screen time and other activities?

- **Set limits on screen time** according to the [age of the child](#).
- **Make it fun!** Encourage active play time before media time. Have "Media-free Mondays" or create tech-free zones in your home.
- **Be on the same page.** Communicate with your partner, other caregivers in your child's life, even your extended family, about your desires to develop healthy media habits.
- **Be creative!** Does your child have a favorite TV character? Instead of watching a show, engage your child's imagination and spend quality time together reading books about that character, drawing pictures or writing stories of new adventures about that character.
- **Be an excellent role model.** When your child's having media-free time, so should the [entire family](#)!
- **Develop a [Family Media Use Plan](#).**
- **Do media time together!** Use a resource like [Common Sense Media](#) to help you choose family-friendly shows, movies, apps and games that you can all enjoy and have fun engaging with each other!