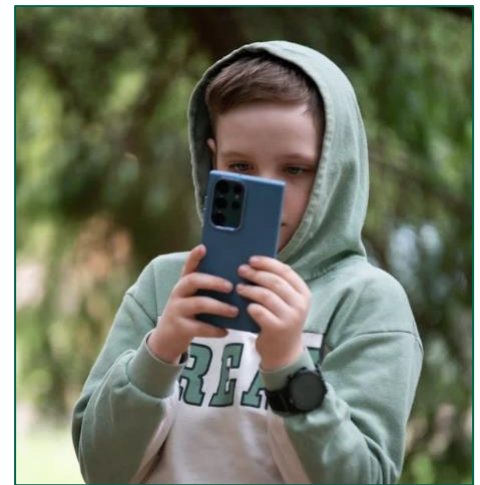


UNDERSTANDING THE EFFECTS OF SCREEN TIME ON CHILDREN



WHAT IS SCREEN TIME?

Screens are everywhere—TVs, tablets, phones, computers—and they’ve become a big part of our kids’ lives. Screen time includes any time spent using devices such as smartphones, tablets, computers, TVs, or gaming consoles. While technology can support learning and communication, excessive screen time can have negative impacts on a child’s physical, emotional, and social well-being.



American Academy of Pediatrics Recommendations for

SCREEN TIME



Up to 18 Months

Avoid using screens other than video-chatting.



18 to 24 Months

Choose high quality programs and watch and discuss with your children.



Ages 2 to 5

Limit screen time use to 1 hour per day of high quality programs.



Age 6 and Older

Place consistent limits on time spent using media. It should not take place of sleep, physical activity, or any behaviors essential to health.

TIPS TO PROMOTE HEALTHY SCREEN HABITS

Set Clear Limits

Create rules for screen use, such as no screens during meals or 1–2 hours before bedtime.

Encourage Active Alternatives

Promote outdoor play, sports, reading, or creative activities as screen-free options.

Designate Tech-Free Zones

Keep bedrooms, family dinners, and study areas screen-free.

Model Healthy Behavior

Practice mindful screen use yourself to set an example for your children.

Use Parental Controls

Monitor and limit access to age-inappropriate content and apps.

POTENTIAL EFFECTS OF EXCESSIVE SCREEN TIME

Physical Health

Increased risk of obesity due to sedentary behavior.
Eye strain, headaches, and sleep disturbances.

Mental Health

Higher levels of depression, anxiety and irritability.
Negative impacts on self-esteem due to social media comparisons.

Cognitive Development

Reduced attention span and difficulty focusing on tasks.
Poor academic performance linked to multitasking during screen use.

Social Skills

Decreased ability to read social cues and communicate effectively in person.



SIGNS OF EXCESSIVE SCREEN USE

- Less interest in physical activities or hobbies
- Difficulty sleeping or waking up tired
- Difficulty concentrating on schoolwork or tasks
- Irritability or frustration when not using devices

REMEMBER:

Technology is a part of life, but balance is key. By setting boundaries and encouraging diverse activities, you can help your child or teen build a healthy relationship with screens.

RESOURCES! For more information check out:

Books:

Parenting in the Screen Age: A Guide for Calm Conversations by Delaney Ruston, M.D.

Screen Damage: The Dangers of Digital Media for Children by Michel Desmurget

Online Resources:

[AACAP.org](https://www.aacap.org)



[HealthyChildren.org](https://www.healthychildren.org)



[Mayo Clinic](https://www.mayoclinic.org)

