

# Screen Time

[fyi.uwex.edu/parentingthepreschooler/](http://fyi.uwex.edu/parentingthepreschooler/)

## Tips on Screen Time

- ◆ Use screen time for interactive and creative activities. Read an e-book together with your child on a tablet; paint, color, or draw pictures together using safe, child-friendly web sites.
- ◆ Minimize commercial time. Try recording programs you trust and fast-forward through commercials or mute commercials when watching live shows.
- ◆ Have active screen time. Dance to YouTube videos; play video games that demand jumping, hopping, stretching, and other movement.
- ◆ Choose educational shows and games. Visit the library and ask for suggestions of educational DVDs or television shows you can check out; ask your child care provider to recommend

learning games young children can play on a tablet or smartphone.

### **Balance with screen-free activities!**

- At home: paint, color, or draw pictures; read a book together; make muffins, cookies, or bread; do a craft project; sing songs together.
- Outside: go on a picnic; jump rope; play in the leaves or in the snow; dig in the dirt and plant some seeds.
- In the neighborhood: go to a garage sale; take a walk; play at the park.



Photograph by Paula Cartwright

**Keeping preschoolers entertained** can be a difficult task due to their high energy levels. Build healthy habits by guiding high-energy preschoolers to screen-free activities they enjoy.

# “How Much Screen Time?”

Aim for quality screen time rather than a specific amount of time. Play a touch screen game together. Talk about a television show while watching it. Toddlers learn best when they interact with other children and adults. Some screen time can be educational, but it is important not to go overboard. Other environments and learning experiences are important, too.



Photograph by Carmen Saucedo

## How does too much screen time affect children?

Too much screen time has negative impacts on preschool children's health and wellbeing.

- ⇒ Television viewing among 3- to 5-year-old children is linked to being overweight and obese.
- ⇒ Children who spend more time watching screens interact less with their families, which means they have fewer opportunities to develop creativity, problem solving, reading, and learning skills.

## How can you make screen time a learning experience for children?

Make screen time social! Use digital screen devices (tablets, smartphones, computers) as a time for children to interact with parents, sisters, brothers, other relatives, and friends.

- ⇒ Studies show children over 3 years old can benefit from carefully monitored screen time experiences that share high quality information.
- ⇒ Active, hands-on, and engaging activities while using technology are usually the most effective.

## Limiting screen time now has lasting benefits for later.

Turn off the TV and digital devices more often and keep them out of children's bedrooms.

- ⇒ Children who have less screen time at a young age tend to do better in school, engage more fully in their classroom activities, eat healthier, and be more physically active.

## UW-Extension Family Living Programs

"Raising Kids, Eating Right, Spending Smart, Living Well"



For more information, please contact your county UW-Extension office:

<http://counties.uwex.edu/>

[Link To References](#)

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