

Consequences and Management of Screen Time for Children

The American Academy of Pediatrics estimated that the seven hours per day kids spend on entertainment media have the following negative consequences:

1. Interferes with learning social interaction.
2. Decreases creativity.
3. Childhood obesity.
4. Interrupted sleep patterns.
5. Behavior problems, and
6. Information overload.

The article recommends parents do the following:

- Hold off giving children electronics until at least age 2 years.
- Regulate access by keeping electronics out of the bedroom.
- Offer options to combat boredom, like cooking or baking together, drawing pictures, reading books, playing a board game, or playing outside. Encourage children to find their own ways to beat boredom.
- Be a good role model by showing children there are other things to do besides looking at screens (have conversations, play games, get outside, tell stories, or read).
- Practice interval training by helping kids realize the benefit of focusing on one thing at a time. For example, 30 minutes of homework time, then 10 minutes of Instagram, then back to homework.
- Take a technology break, and stick to your guns when the break is on.

Taken from the Milwaukee Journal / Sentinel article, *"Health officials say too much screen time is harmful for children, so...What can parents do?"* September 30, 2014

Cited within the article: Lori Cook of the Pediatric Brain Injury Programs at the Center for Brain Health at the University of Texas at Dallas, Cassie Morrison of the Child Life Team at Medical City Dallas Hospital, Alice Ann Holland, PhD, at the Children's Medical Center Dallas, and the Archives of Pediatric & Adolescent Medicine.