



# DIGITAL MEDIA AND VIDEO GAME USE

## -Recommendations by Age-

### Key Tips for All Age Groups

- Do not use technology to soothe children when they are upset, reward behavior you wish to see, or use tech to babysit.
- Green Time over Screen Time. Minimum of 1 hour of time outside per day is key to overall health and wellness.
- Become a mentor of healthy screen use, rather than only a monitor. Schedule tech-free times each day for all family members, including mealtimes, family time, movement time, and one full day on the weekend.
- Unstructured creative and rough-and-tumble play for 2-3 hours per day ensures ongoing, healthy development.
- Ensure technology is in a central living area and use occurs in the presence of an adult.

### For Ages 0-2

- No screen time, except for video chatting to maintain relationships with family and friends whom they cannot see in person.
- No passive TV watching.
- Skills essential for school success, such as impulse control, emotion regulation, and creative, flexible thinking, are best taught through unstructured and social play that doesn't include devices.
- No devices in the bedroom at any time.

### For Ages 3-5

- Maximum 1 hour per day of screen-based applications, including TV.
- Ensure it occurs in 20-minute increments, with movement between screen time segments.
- No multi-platform mobile devices (smartphone, laptop, tablet).
- Utilize desktop computer or adult laptop with parental controls.
- Pro-social and pro-school media only; media that encourages social cooperativeness and empathy for others.
- Includes video chat with family and friends and educational applications.
- Prioritize slow-paced, educational TV shows (e.g., Mr. Rogers, Sesame Street) over educational apps and streaming video platforms (Netflix, YouTube).
- No access to digital media applications such as video games, streaming videos (YouTube, Netflix).
- Side-by-side engagement between child-parent/caregiver while on screens. Talk about what your child learned to help them to translate information to daily life.
- No devices in the bedroom at any time.



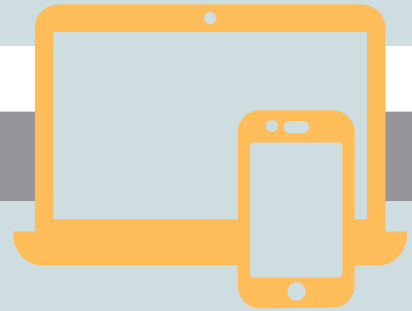
## For Ages 6-12

- 2 hours or less per day of entertainment-based applications.
- Be sure to create limits of 1 hour of use followed by 1 hour of movement.
- Do not provide children with mobile devices.
- Utilize desktop computer or adult laptop. Enlist parental controls if you are not able to supervise use at all times.
- Pro-social and pro-school media only; media that encourages social cooperativeness and empathy for others. No violence.
- No online video games, unless they are pro-social and a parent is engaged with the child during game play. Check ESRB.org for video game ratings.
- No devices in the bedroom at any time.
- Ensure technology is in a central living area and use occurs in the presence of an adult.
- Unstructured creative and rough-and-tumble play for 2-3 hours per day ensures ongoing, healthy development.



## For Ages 13-18

- Up to 2 hours per day of entertainment-based applications.
- Be sure to create limits of 45 minutes to avoid binge use.
- Match ONLINE entertainment time with OFFLINE time (art, music, movement).
- Age-appropriate video games – check ESRB.org.
- Keep school laptop and entertainment devices separate.
- No smartphone or computer in bedroom at bedtime; put in central docking area.
- Technology is turned off at least one hour before bedtime.
- Technology remains off for at least one hour after awakening in the morning.
- Replace online gaming with board games, offline gaming.
- Prioritize face-to-face socialization, when possible.
- Maintain and complete daily self-care routines before engaging in entertainment-based apps.



*Guidelines:*

*American Academy of Pediatrics and Digital Media Overuse Experts*



[digitalmediatreatment.com](http://digitalmediatreatment.com)