

RESOURCES

“Media and Children
Communication Toolkit”

<https://www.aap.org/en-us/advocacy-and-policy/aap-health-initiatives/pages/media-and-children.aspx>

“7 Parent Tips to Unplug and
Play”

<http://www.commercialfreechildhood.org/resource/real-life-strategies-reducing-children%E2%80%99s-screen-time>

“Parents can be media mentors by choosing good content; co-viewing and co-using with children to help them apply what they learn on screens to the world around them.”

Policy addresses how to help parents manage young children’s media use.

American Academy of Pediatrics, October 2016

<http://www.aappublications.org/news/2016/10/21/MediaYoung102116>

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Deaf Education at a glance...



KANSAS SCHOOL
FOR THE DEAF
OUTREACH

LIMITING SCREEN TIME CREATES OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL SKILLS

As technology advances, children begin to experience the world differently. They have easy access to smart phones, tablets, computers, and more. Online information, games, pictures, and books are as close as their pocket or backpack. And parents often feel pressure to expose their children to technology at a young age, thinking it will make their children “smarter.” While we understand this is the new reality for children as well as adults, it is still wise to know the implications of too much screen time for children. This is especially relevant for Deaf/Hard of Hearing children who are often at risk for communication and social/emotional delays. Delays in these areas can lead to less developed “soft skills” which are crucial to academic and professional success.

Research shows that language is best learned through human interaction. While technology can augment learning in later years, it cannot replace relationship-based communication. The American Academy of Pediatrics states that the youngest language learners (under the age of two) have difficulty transferring digital knowledge to the “real world.” Instead, they learn best through “hands-on exploration and social interaction with trusted caregivers to develop their cognitive, language, motor, and social-emotional skills.” For older children, there is a growing body of evidence that too much screen time negatively impacts learning and social skills and can lead to attention problems. For all children, screen time displaces play time and social interaction, communication opportunities and relationship building.

Ways to limit screen time:

- Make meals “screen-free” for all participants, including parents. This includes turning off “background” screens, such as televisions. Focus this time on connecting with other family members and building practical social and communication skills.
- Do not use screens as a method for calming your child. Find other ways to teach your child to self-calm and self-soothe. Talk about feelings and how to manage emotions. Set reasonable boundaries and consequences for inappropriate behavior.
- For all children, provide ample opportunities for unstructured play and social activities. This allows children the chance for social communication and incidental learning.
- Be aware of what your child is watching on their device. Watch a TV program together. Find an app that is made for two or more users. Talk about what children are learning or playing on their device. Use the content as a jumping off point for social communication.
- Avoid exposure to screens for babies under 18 months. Limit screen time to one hour for children ages 2-5 with only high quality programming.
- Families of older children should “set media use limits that factor in other health-promoting activities such as physical activity, sleep, family meals, school and friends.” Media use should be high quality.
- Develop a Family Media Use Plan: <https://www.healthychildren.org/MediaUsePlan>

KSD Outreach Mission: To provide the highest quality of services, resources, and support to children ages birth-21 who are deaf/hard of hearing by collaborating with their families, their communities, and the professionals that serve them.