



# Less Screen Time, More Play Time

In today's high-tech world even our youngest children are spending more and more time with screens – watching TV, playing video games, and using computers, tablets, and smartphones. All this screen time takes children away from the active play and person-to-person interactions that help develop their creativity, problem-solving, language, and social skills.

Health experts recommend limiting young children's screen time to 2 hours or less each day.

Limiting screen time can be challenging; change can be hard! But the benefits for young children are worth the effort. Even small changes can make a difference.

## Think About and Plan Family Screen Time

- Consider your personal screen time when your child is present. Adult use of screens can be distracting for children, and interferes with their concentration and play.
- Figure out how much screen time your child REALLY has throughout the day. You may be surprised when you add it up.
- Decide how much daily screen time is okay for your child. Plan how and when your child can have screen time. Young children do well with consistency.

## Tips To Make It Easier

- Tell your child about the new screen time plan. There may be a period of adjustment. Use music, books, blocks, quick walks, and extra attention to help your child learn the new routine.
- Set a timer to mark the beginning and end of planned screen time. A 5-minute warning can help children transition.
- Keep screens off during mealtimes.
- Create "Busy Baskets" with items like stickers, markers and paper, a special toy, or books. Bring out a Busy Basket ONLY when you need a few minutes - like making dinner or getting dressed. Put them away between uses to keep them special.

Even in our high-tech world, low-tech toys and activities, and personal relationships are still the best building blocks for a child's bright future.

**Eat Healthy ♦ Be Active ♦ Build a Bright Future**

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For more ideas and resources to develop children's social-emotional skills and healthy habits visit [AcornDreams.com](http://AcornDreams.com), a service of Wingspan, LLC

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