



AOP TECH PARENTS

Screen Time Updates from the AAP

Great Reads on Kids and Teens Screen Time



Looking for more resources on kids and screen time? Here are a few standout articles and resources for families with children of any age:

- [5 Simple Steps to a Healthy Family Media Diet](#)
- [The Secret to Raising a Safe, Smart Kid Online](#)
- [Easy, Free Browser Hacks to Make the Internet Safer for Your Kid](#)
- [Real Kids, Real Media Use](#)
- [Technology Addiction: Concern, Controversy, and Finding Balance](#)

Source: Common Sense Media

This fall, the American Association for Pediatrics released updated recommendations for young children and screen time. The previous guidelines had been released in the 90's - long before personal screens, iPads, and smartphones infiltrated our lives.

Overall, these guidelines recommend that children under 18 months old limit all, if any screen time. The notable exception for this was the use of FaceTime (or other communication means like Skype or Google Hangouts), which though should be limited, offered other benefits. For children 18 months through the toddler ages, the AAP suggests there can be benefits to certain kinds of screen time.

The AAP saw benefits for toddlers when two specific criteria were met. First, screen time should be with a parent or caretaker. This allows for connections to be made to the child's daily life and opens up communication. Second, content should be high quality! This sometimes means less "flashy bells and whistles" for the developing brains. Parents should look for content from trusted education sources, like PBS Kids, National Geographic Kids, or Scholastic. Developers like these focus on the learning rather than attention grabbing graphics.

Though the updated guidelines focus on babies and toddlers, there is much parents can take away from these guidelines:

- Establishing good family technology and screen time habits are important for all members of your family, regardless of age.
- Spending time together and being aware of the kind of content children are accessing is key.
- Academic technology time often differs from at-home entertainment technology time. Academic tasks are typically goal oriented and involve classroom support and follow up.
- There is a clear difference between active and passive screen time. Active screen time when kids - or adults! - are creating, reading, communicating, and engaging is preferable to passive screen time.
- Finding a balance that works for you and your children is essential!

Noe, Alva. "The Upshot Of New Screen Time Guidelines? Spend Time With Your Kids." NPR. NPR, Oct. 2016. Web. Nov. 2016.