

Be a Technology Role Model

Children learn by copying others' actions. When you use a phone, tablet, or computer, your child will be very interested in your device because he/she sees that screen time is important to you. Screen time is a complex topic. Talk with your librarian, doctor, or child care provider about what works for your family.



A Few Ideas to Try

Let your child lead the way if you read and play together on a screen. Take breaks and make eye contact with your child. Repeat the sounds and words you hear and talk about what you see on the screen, just like you do when reading a book together.

- Look at family photos or videos together.
- Use Skype or FaceTime as a way to talk to faraway family members.
- Read ebooks or story apps together—Sandra Boynton's books make great apps!
- Look for apps that encourage open-ended play and creativity—try apps by Sago Mini, Toca Boca, or the Fred Rogers Center.
- Choose apps that focus on playing and learning, not time limits or earning points.

Screen Time Should Be Together Time

Your baby learns more from your voice and touch than any piece of technology. As your child's eyes, ears, fingers, and brain develop, feed her/him a healthy media diet. Make learning language—sounds, rhythms, and words—part of your playing and reading relationship.

There are many screens and devices in our lives, but there is no evidence that screen media has any positive benefits for children under age 3. It may even be harmful when it reduces the amount of time your child spends doing her/his favorite thing—interacting with you!

Make a family media plan for deciding how screen time happens. Just as you choose which books to share with your child, you can make intentional choices about what is on the screen, balancing screen time with other activities, and following your child's interests. You are your child's most important teacher, so make screen time about playing and reading together.

