



SUMMIT
EARLY LEARNING

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Screen Time for Young Children



Children use all of their senses when exploring and learning about the world around them. When children build with blocks, they will discover what happens if the blocks are not balanced correctly, giving them a chance to rebuild using tactile, problem-solving, and fine motor skills. When building with friends, they learn to take turns, share, cooperate with others, and build self-esteem and friendships. If toddlers and preschoolers are watching how to build with blocks on a screen, someone else is problem-solving for them.

What is considered screen time? Anything that has a screen on it – TV's, phones, tablets, computers- including screens associated with video games. There are times when we may want to allow children to watch TV or allow them to play video games, because we are busy and need time to get a few things done. When allowing toddlers and preschoolers time in front of a screen, however, we can help them choose shows or games that will benefit them.

Studies show when children are given too much screen time, it is linked to behavioral disorders, developmental delays, sleep disorders, anxiety, and other mental health disorders. Children and toddlers need face-to-face reciprocal dialogue for the basis of social interactions, and to help build positive relationships with others. Too much screen time takes away physical contact with others.

Children can become addicted to screen time, and when the screens are taken away, this can cause tantrums, irritability, anger, and agitation. They may have trouble sleeping. This may be the time to wean your children off the screen by setting limits, encouraging alternative activities, and creating a screen-free bedroom for them.

According to the Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, children should be limited on their screen time each day. Their suggestions are:

- Under 18 months, it is suggested to limit screen time to video chats.
- 8 to 24 months should be limited to educational programming.
- 2 to 5 year-old children should have a 1-hour limit for non-educational screen time.

What are some ways to be involved with your child and screen time? Ask your child(ren) to teach you how to play the game. Watch the shows with your children, and talk about what they are seeing, pointing out what could be a good choice or a not-so-good choice. Have open face-to-face communication with them. When a show is finished, is there a way you and your child(ren) can do the same activity?

There are some positive effects of using screen time. For example, hand-eye coordination and finding games such as the Giggle game (<https://sesameworkshop.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Giggle-Game-ENG.pdf>) where you cut out squares, color them, and then label them with various activities such as: make a silly face, walk backwards, hop on one foot, etc. Lay the cards on the table, and take turns flipping them over and doing the activity.



TIPS TO SAVE ON UTILITY USE

Keeping the lights on isn't cheap — never mind the air conditioning, furnace and hot water heater. In fact, the typical family spends more than \$1,400 per year on utilities, according to the Energy Department. Tweaking your usage can lower your bill by as much as 25%. Try these effective ways to save money.

Heating and Cooling

Home heating and cooling are the biggest culprits behind hefty utility bills — and the best places to look for cost-cutting opportunities.

- Check seals on windows, doors and appliances: Make sure your fridge and freezer are well sealed to keep the cold air where it belongs. The same goes for doors and windows. A bad seal allows energy to seep out, draining your wallet in the process.
- Fix leaky ductwork: Improve the efficiency of heating and cooling systems by repairing leaky heating, ventilation and air conditioning ducts.
- Give your thermostat a nudge: Set your thermostat back 10 to 15 degrees when you're asleep or away from home. Doing so for eight hours can lower your annual heating and cooling costs by around 10%. A programmable thermostat does the work for you.
- Adjust your fridge and freezer temperature: Set your fridge to 38 degrees and your freezer between 0 and 5 degrees. This will keep your food fresh, but your fridge and freezer won't need to work as hard to maintain the temperature.

Water

Hot water is the second-largest expense in powering most homes, according to the Energy Department. Cutting back on your hot water usage — in the shower, laundry and dishwasher — can make a sizable dent in your overall energy bill.

- Take shorter showers: Trimming two minutes off your shower time can cut your water usage by five gallons.
- Replace your showerhead: An efficient showerhead can reduce your water usage by 2,700 gallons per year. Look for one with the WaterSense label, which is certified to meet efficiency criteria set by the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Don't wash clothes in hot water: Stick to warm or cold water when you do laundry and cut your per-load energy usage by at least half.



- Fix leaky faucets: That drip, drip, drip isn't just annoying, it wastes gallons of water.
- Adjust the temperature on your water heater: The default temperature setting on water heaters is typically 140 degrees. Lowering it to 120 degrees can reduce your water heating costs by up to 10%. Leaving town for a few days? Turn your water heater to the lowest setting to conserve energy usage.
- 3. Purchase energy-efficient appliances: If you're in the market for a new washer, dishwasher or water heater, buy an energy-efficient model to yield long-term savings. A dishwasher with the Energy Star label is required to use 3.5 gallons of water or less per cycle, compared with the more than 10 gallons used by some older models. Prioritize appliances that run most often, like the fridge, HVAC system, water heater, dehumidifier, TV, washer and dryer.
- 4. Ask about discounted rates: Some utility providers offer cheaper rates during certain times of the day, making laundry and other energy-intensive chores 5% to 25% less expensive during off-peak times.

Power and lighting

Keeping the lights and electronics on accounts for roughly 11% or more of a home's energy usage.

- Swap out your lightbulbs: Save \$75 per year by swapping out the bulbs in your five most-used light fixtures with compact fluorescent or LED bulbs that bear the Energy Star label.
- Install dimmer switches: Dimmers let you set the brightness in a room to suit your needs, setting the mood and saving electricity.
- Use smart power strips: Some electronic gadgets never truly power off; instead, they sit in standby mode using a trickle of power that can add up over devices and time. These are usually — but not exclusively — items with a remote control, because the remote sensor needs power while waiting for your input. Plug these electronics into a smart power strip, which cuts off the current when the devices aren't in use.
- Do an energy audit: Utility providers will often conduct a home energy audit, sometimes for free, and can identify additional ways to reduce your energy usage.



ACTIVE PLAY

Tips for Families from the National Center on Early Childhood Health and Wellness



NATIONAL CENTER ON
Early Childhood Health and Wellness

Healthy Habits Start Early

Good activity habits begin early in your child's life. As early as infancy, you can help your child grow lifelong healthy play habits. Your child learns from you, so while you help him be active, try to do the same activities!

Play Time Can Be Active Time!

For Your Infant

- Keep your baby active with tummy time and time spent out of the swing or bouncy chair. This will give him plenty of chances to stretch, reach, and kick so he can reach important milestones like crawling and sitting up.
- Avoid putting a TV in your baby's room. The more YOU talk to and play with your baby, the more likely he is to be healthy as he grows.

For Your Toddler

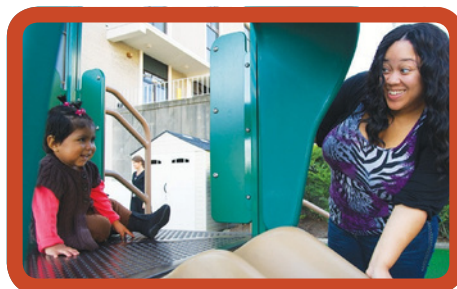
- Even very active toddlers need physical activity. Keep moving by dancing, jumping, and walking together.
- Try to limit screen time to 2 hours or less a day.
- Children who have lots of active play time outside and indoors are more likely to stay healthy and active as they grow up.

For Your Preschooler

- Help your child to stay active and learn at the same time by spending time outdoors.
- Try to limit TV, video games, and computer time to 2 hours or less a day. Children who watch more than 2 hours of TV a day are more likely to be overweight as they get older.

For Yourself and Your Family

- When you spend time being active, your child learns healthy habits from you.
- Set playtime, mealtime, and bedtime routines to make daily life easier to handle.
- Talk with your child's pediatrician, early care and education staff, and other parents to get ideas for making playtime active time.



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GROWING HEALTHY

There are lots of ways to grow healthy but you don't have to do them all at once.



IDEAS FOR LIVING A HEALTHY ACTIVE LIFE

- 5** Eat at least **5** fruits and vegetables a day.
- 2** Keep screen time (like TV, video games, computer) down to **2** hours or less per day.
- 1** Get **1** hour or more of physical activity every day.
- 0** Drink **0** sugar-sweetened drinks. Replace soda pop, sports drinks and even 100% fruit juice with milk or water.



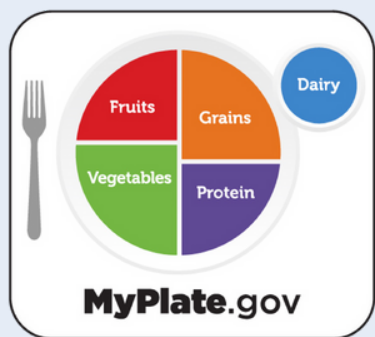
NATIONAL CENTER ON
Early Childhood Health and Wellness

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Encouraging Excellent Eating Early

Interested in giving your small child a taste for healthy eating right from the start? Kids can react strongly to the foods they are offered – healthy or not! They may push them away, refuse to open their mouth, shake their head, or more. What is a parent or caregiver to do?

Nobody's perfect, but with a few child-feeding tips and advice on how to set a positive tone for balanced, healthy eating, anyone can be a child-feeding pro!



MYPLATE CAN HELP!

Make every bite count with MyPlate by offering a variety of nutritious options from each food group – fruits, vegetables, grains, dairy, and protein foods – including those that provide unsaturated fats and are low in added sugar and sodium. From apples to avocados, corn tortillas to queso fresco, and pork to parsley, you can offer your child a variety of colors, textures, and flavors.

Once you know what to feed, it's time to master how to do it. Read on for our best tips to help small kids build healthy plates.

SETTING THE TABLE FOR SUCCESS

Mealtime is family time. Even ten minutes of eating together can increase children's fruit and vegetable intake. Start this habit with your baby or toddler by bringing them to the table with you!

Your child may only be eating baby food but include them at meals to increase their exposure to table food by seeing the foods you eat.

It can take up to 15 exposures before a food is "trusted" and tasted. Use the exposure time to describe the food.*

Tasting is just the first step – it can take 10 to 15 more exposures before they like the food. This means it could take 30 exposures in total before your child enjoys the food.*



If your child eats the same foods as you, ensure their food has no added sugar or sodium. If adding these to your food, set aside their portion first.

Each exposure can look different. Meats, like pork, can be ground or shredded while vegetables, like avocado, can be cubed or mashed.

*Scaglione, S et al. Factors Influencing Children's Eating Behaviours. Nutrients 2018,

MEALTIME IN ACTION

This pork looks juicy, feels soft, and is warm!



The tortilla is crispy, what colors do you see on it?

The vegetables are different colors, which ones do you see?

This avocado is green, sounds squishy, and feels smooth.

GOING BEYOND 'YUCK' and 'YUM'

What does it look like?

Colorful	Goopy
Dry	Bumpy
Juicy	Shiny
Runny	

What does it feel like?

Chewy	Wet
Creamy	Mushy
Crunchy	Smooth
Dry	Sticky

What does it taste like?

Neutral	Sweet
Spicy	Tart
Sour	

What does it smell like?

Strong	Spicy
Fresh	Fishy
Minty	

What temperature is it?

Cool	Hot
Cold	Warm
Freezing	

What does it sound like?

Crunchy
Crispy
Sizzling
Squishy

POWERFUL WORDS TO USE DURING MEALTIME

“Good job trying a new food!”
“Wow! Did you notice everybody likes different foods on their plate?”
“What vegetable would you like to eat tomorrow?”

REFUSING FOOD? TRY THESE NEUTRAL PHRASES

“We can try this fruit together again another time.”
“Next time, would you like to try your potatoes soft and smooth like mashed potatoes instead of roasted in pieces?”
“When you are ready, you can give it a try.”

TIPS TO REMEMBER WHILE YOU PRACTICE YOUR NEW POWER LANGUAGE

- As a parent or caregiver, you decide what, when, and where the child eats; the child decides if and how much they will eat.
- Introduce new foods with current favorites – this may help acceptance.
- Small children don't eat a lot of food at a time, so they do not need to eat a certain amount at each sitting.
- Add 1-2 tablespoons of each food at the table on your child's plate. Follow their lead, if your child eats a food, offer more - one tablespoon at a time.
- Because they eat small amounts at a time, make every bite count with healthy choices.

