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

For more ideas and resources to develop children’s social-emotional skills and healthy habits visit AcornDreams.com, a service of Wingspan, LLC

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