



Children's Vision and Screen Time

Children's use of digital media has increased dramatically, and begins earlier in childhood. High screen time use in children is associated with a risk for obesity, poorer school performance, poorer sleep quality, risky behaviours in older children, as well as delays in critical cognition, learning and social skills in younger children. The following steps outline recommendations for safe use of electronic screens for children.

Limit screen time

TELEVISION • COMPUTERS • TABLETS • SMARTPHONES • VIDEO GAMES



0-2 yrs
INFANTS AND TODDLERS

None, with the possible exception of live video-chatting (e.g., Skype, Face-Time) with parental support, due to its potential for social development.

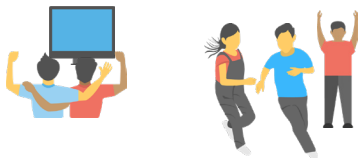
2-5 yrs
PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

No more than one hour per day of age-appropriate, educational, and supervised viewing.

5-18 yrs
SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN

Ideally, no more than two hours per day of recreational screen time. Individual screen time plans should be based on development and needs.

Take a break from the screen every 30-60 minutes



Breaks should include whole-body physical activity.

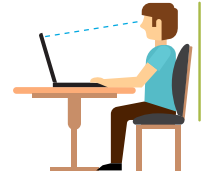
Encourage outdoor activity over screen time



Increased prevalence or progression of myopia (nearsightedness) has been linked with children spending fewer hours outdoors.

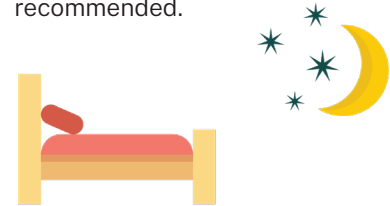
Position the computer to avoid eye strain

For computers, place the top of the display at the child's eye level, and then allow them to move the screen down into a comfortable viewing position as needed. Make sure that there is no glare or reflection on the screen.



Avoid using a screen one hour before bedtime

Screens in the bedroom are not recommended.



Ensure your child has regular eye exams

For more information, please see [Effects of Electronic Screens on Children's Vision and Recommendations for Safe Use: Canadian Association of Optometrists/Canadian Ophthalmological Society Joint Position Statement](#).