

NUTRITION

On Your Own

Self-Paced Lesson

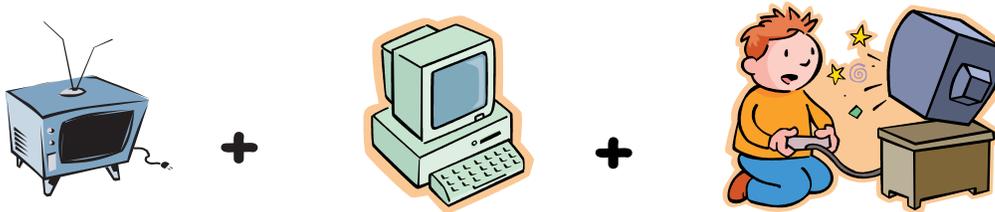
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Cut Back on Screen Time

What is screen time? It is the amount of time your child spends in front of the TV, computer, or playing video games each day.

Screen Time = TV + Computers + Video Games



The more screen time your child gets, the more likely she is to gain an unhealthy amount of weight.



Where Do You Picture Your Child?

Did you know?

- The average child will see 5,000 hours of TV by the time she enters first grade. During twelve years of school, a child spends more time in front of the TV than in the classroom. By the time she graduates from high school, a child has seen 360,000 ads on television.
- Advertisers spend billions of dollars on ads aimed at children. They spend the money because ads work. Products they sell to children include snacks, sweets, cereals, sodas and toys.
- Children who see a lot of violence on screen may be more likely to be violent by twenty years of age. In their twenties they may get involved in family violence, crime, or traffic violations.



How much screen time does your child need each day?

If your child is under two, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends **no screen time at all**. At this age it is best when your child spends time with the adults who are important in her life.

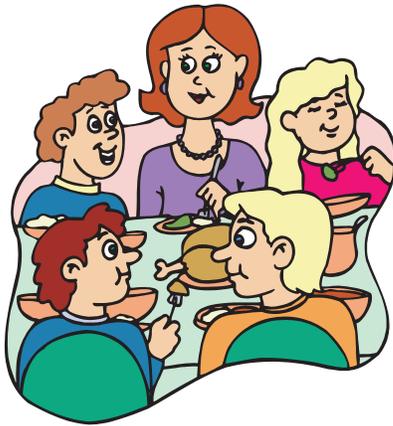
After two years of age, your child will do best with **at most two hours** of screen time a day. Pick TV shows for your preschoolers carefully. As your child gets older offer her more choices.



Here are some tips. It is never too late to give your child the best — Start now.

1. Turn the TV off during mealtimes.

Mealtimes should be for talking, eating and just being together.



2. Join your older children while they watch TV, play video games, or work on the computer.

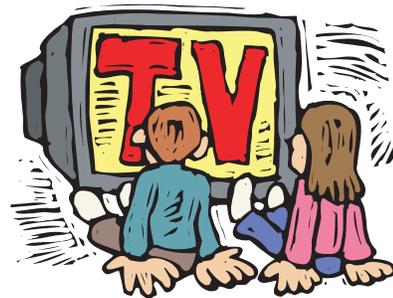
Your preschooler cannot tell fact from fiction. Anything she sees on screen is real to her. By being with your child you can teach her that ads are there to make her want to buy things. Talk about what you see. Let her know when the

information on the screen is true or false. Only watch shows with values that are best for your child.



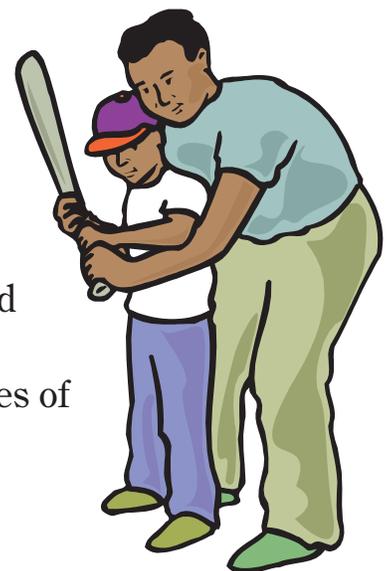
3. Keep TVs, video games and computers out of your child's bedroom.

Children who have a TV, computer or video game in their bedroom spend more unsupervised time in front of the screen. Keep TVs, computers and games in family areas. Your child will be more active. She will spend more time with family. She will also get *less* screen time.



4. Be a role model!

Set an example. Turn off the TV, read, or go for a walk. Have fun with your children. Go to the park, play a game or read with them. Time with your child will give her great memories of growing up.



◆◆◆◆◆ Things to Remember ◆◆◆◆◆

1. My child is _____ years old. The best amount of screen time for my child is _____ hours a day.
2. Screen time is the total amount of time my child spends (Check all that are true):
_____ looking through the car windshield.
_____ watching TV.
_____ using the computer.
_____ playing video games.
3. Children who spend too much screen time may (Check all that apply):
_____ put on unhealthy weight.
_____ want toys and unhealthy foods they see in ads.
_____ play more.
_____ be more violent in their twenties.

You can try this at home:

Keep a special box full of fun things for your child to do. Put crayons, paper, puzzles, books, clothes for playing dress-up, and other things your child enjoys in the box. Take the box out when your child needs to be busy while you do other things.



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