



## Healthy Screen Time Habits for Babies, Toddlers & Preschoolers

Screen time in all forms can affect how children feel, learn, think and behave. The American Academy of Pediatrics encourages you to help your children develop healthy screen time habits early on.

How much time do your kids spend each day in front of a screen or using a screen instead of actively playing?



### WHAT IS SCREEN TIME?

Screen time is *any time* spent in front of a screen, such as a TV, computer, video game player, cell phone, or tablet.

Screen time is a sedentary activity. Very little energy is used during screen time.

### What Is Considered Healthy Screen Time?

#### For children younger than 2 years of age:

- ~ The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends no screen time for children under the age of two years.
- ~ Screen time should be very limited and only when an adult is standing by to co-view, talk, and teach. For example, video-chatting with family along with parents.

#### For children 18 to 24 months, *if you decide to introduce screen time:*

- ~ Choose high-quality programming.
- ~ Use media *together* with your child.
- ~ Avoid solo media use.

#### For children 2 to 5 years of age:

- ~ Limit screen time to no more than 1 hour per day.
- ~ Find other activities for your child to do that is healthy for his or her body and mind.
- ~ Choose media that is interactive, non-violent, educational, and pro-social.
- ~ Co-view or co-play *with* your child.

Young children  
learn best  
through play!



## Why Limit Screen Time?

Overuse of digital media may place your child at risk of:

- ~ Not enough sleep. Young children with more media exposure or who have a TV, computer or mobile device in their bedroom sleep less and fall asleep later at night.
- ~ Delays in learning and social skills. Children who have too much screen time in infancy and preschool years can show delays in attention, thinking, language and social skills. Keep in mind that parents who keep the TV on or focus on their own digital media miss precious opportunities to interact with their children and help them learn.
- ~ Obesity. Heavy media use during preschool years is linked to weight gain and risk of childhood obesity.
- ~ Behavior Problems. Violent content on TV and screens can contribute to behavior problems in children.

## Other Tips for Parents, Families & Caregivers:

- ~ Do not feel pressured to introduce technology early in your young child's life. Media interfaces are intuitive and children can learn quickly.
- ~ Monitor children's media. Know what apps are used or downloaded. Test apps before your child uses them. Play together and ask your child what he or she thinks about the app.
- ~ Turn off TVs and other devices when not in use. Background media can distract from parent-child interaction and child play, which are both important in child language and social-emotional development.
- ~ Keep bedrooms, mealtimes, and parent-child playtimes screen free and unplugged for children and parents. Turn off phones or set them to 'do not disturb' during these times.
- ~ Avoid exposure to devices or screens at least 1-hour before bedtime. Remove devices from bedrooms before bed.
- ~ Avoid using media as the only way to calm your child. Although media may be used to soothe children, such as during a medical procedure or airplane flight, using media as a strategy to calm may lead to problems with limit setting and a child's own ability to manage emotions.

Check out the American Academy of Pediatrics website tool to create a personalized family media plan:

[www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org)



**Young children learn functional life skills through hands-on, interactive experiences with other people. A child's first and most important toy is his or her parent. There is no app you can download or toy you can purchase that will ever be more important than the TIME you spend interacting with, talking to, and playing with your child !**

## So what are we to do during the bitter cold weeks of winter?

Check out these indoor places to play:

**Grand Forks Open Gym Opportunities** - Pack up your favorite sports equipment and lace up your tennis shoes for an afternoon of Open Gym sponsored by the Grand Forks Park District and Grand Forks Public Schools. The weekly open gym sessions are FREE to all residents and located at a gym near you. Participants must provide their own equipment and wear gym shoes. Locations:

- ❖ Phoenix, Kelly, Lake Agassiz & Century Elementary Schools (elementary age youth & adults only)
- ❖ Schroeder and Valley Middle Schools (all ages)

Open Gym is on Sundays from 1:00 - 4:00 PM each week. This is a FREE program.

**Midtown Kidtown** - An indoor play space for young children located in the Grand Cities Mall in Grand Forks. The play space is open during mall hours and FREE.

**First Season Community Center** - An indoor playground in Grand Forks for all ages and sizes (1122 7th Avenue South - Purpur Arena). Open Monday through Friday 10 AM - 3 PM, and Saturday 10 AM - 5 PM. \$2.75/child (adults are free with a child's paid admission). Call 701-746-2763 for more information.



## Check out these FREE Community Events and Activities

**February 16 at 2 PM:** FREE movie at the Grand Forks Public Library, "A House with a Clock in its Walls", Rated PG. Popcorn is provided; just bring your own beverage. All ages welcome but children under the age of 13 years must be accompanied by an adult 18 years of age or older.

**February 23 from 10 AM to NOON:** Family Day at the ND Museum of Art (261 Centennial Drive, Grand Forks), where children of all ages and adults come together to work on projects that help all understand the Museum exhibit or learn about techniques and materials. There is no admission or parking fee, although donations to cover materials are always welcome.



### How About These Indoor Activities ? - - What Can Be Done With Some Lines of Tape?

1. **Jump, of course !** Jump from the first line and see how far you can jump. Jump from line to line, or skipping over a line. Jump backwards. Jump with one foot. Depending on the age of your child, he or she may only be able to jump on one foot in place, or may need you to hold his or her hand while jumping on one foot.

2. **Stretch !** Starting with your foot on the first line, see how far you can stretch with your other foot while keeping your first foot in place.



**6 LINES OF TAPE** 5 easy gross motor activities

3. **Reach !** Start by standing on the first line and then bend over to touch the next line with your hands. Then walk forward *with* your hands, seeing how far you can reach.

4. **Measure !** Lay down and see how long you are. For older kids, write down their measurements and compare. For younger kids, just do it and giggle!

5. **Tape Roads !** Make roads out of the tape and then drive toy cars and trucks up and down the roadways. You can add additional details, like houses made of wooden blocks or Legos.

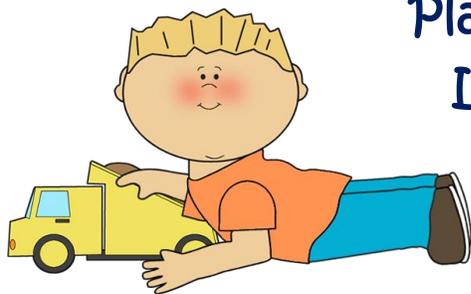
6. **Play Tic-Tac-Toe !** Make a gigantic tic-tac-toe board with tape. You can use rocks or toys to play the game. You can also turn this into a gross motor game using your bodies. This will get you and your child moving, stretching, and giggling. Using only hands, feet and the occasional head, two people can easily play a game of tic-tac-toe. Just be sure to put only one body part in each square. This activity is like a combination of Twister and tic-tac-toe.



7. **Movement Races !** You will need open, obstacle-free space for this activity. Mark one side of a room with a piece of tape to create a starting line and mark the other side of a room with a second piece of tape to create a finish line. Try some of the following gross motor ideas:

- ~ Run back and forth from line to line a certain amount of times.
- ~ Roll like a log from one line to the other.
- ~ Experiment with different animal walks: hop like a frog, walk like a crab, gallop like a horse, etc.

8. **Tape Letters and Numbers !** Practice making letters and numbers using only tape. Depending on your child's age, you may have to help cut or rip the tape into different sized pieces. Trace the letters with fingers to practice writing skills.



Play,  
Learn and Grow...  
Together!



**Parent/Teacher Conferences** are soon approaching! This is an opportunity to meet with your child's teacher to discuss your child's goals and progress.

Conferences are scheduled for:

Tuesday, February 12th from 4 - 7 PM, and  
Thursday, February 14th from 8 AM - 7 PM

There is no school for students on  
February 14th due to conferences!

Be on the look-out to schedule your  
child's conference.



**Check  
out our February  
HEAD START  
Parent Classes !**

**Wednesday, February 13th -**

"Cooking 101" - Slow Cooker Recipe: Freezer Prep Hearty Veggie Soup. A light breakfast will be served from 8:00-8:30 AM with class from 8:30-9:30 AM. Childcare provided. Sign up to win a slow cooker!

**Tuesday, February 26th -** Evening Parent Class - "Healthy Relationships for Children and Adults". Pizza served from 5:30-6:00 PM with class from 6:00-6:45 PM. Childcare provided. There will be a short Parent Committee meeting following the training. Sign up to win prizes!

**Wednesday, February 27th -** Morning Parent Class - "Social and Emotional Development". A light breakfast will be served from 8:00-8:30 AM with class from 8:30-9:30 AM. Childcare provided. Sign up to win prizes!

**Active Parenting: First Five Years**

*NEW SESSION STARTING !*

The first five years of life are critical to a child's development. Learn about:

- \* Attachment and Nurturing
- \* Children's Brain Development
- \* Preventing Behavior Problems
- \* Encouraging Positive Behavior
- \* The Importance of Self-Care
- \* Preparing for School Success

This four-week series is being offered to parents and caregivers of infants, toddlers and preschoolers by NDSU Extension. Childcare will be provided, and the class is FREE.

Wednesday from 3:30 - 5:00 PM.  
February 27th, March 6th, 13th and 20th

**Location: Head Start Main Site**

Facilitator: Laura Knox

Pre-registration required by  
calling 701-780-8229 or email  
linda.hammen@ndsu.edu

**Check out  
this class being  
offered by NDSU  
Extension !**

*... Reminder ...*

**There is NO SCHOOL on:  
Thursday, February 14th, and  
Thursday, February 21st**

**RED Day (Read Every Day)**  
at all Head Start sites !

**Thursday, February 7th**  
3:10 PM - 3:30 PM

**Please stay and read with  
your Head Start child !**

**Children can wear  
something RED that day !**



During our parent gathering in January we learned how we can help young children begin to develop math concepts and skills. Parents play a special role in helping children learn about math. Throughout the day as families talk, play, or carry out routines, children are learning. Some important things to consider:

- ~ Math experiences should provide for fun, shared times between parents and their children. Children will build a positive attitude toward math learning and toward learning in general.
- ~ Children need experiences handling and working with things. They need to look at, hold, count, stack, and explore the characteristics of things. While children are actively exploring, adults can "mathematize" their play. By introducing mathematical words and talking about the experience, parents help children understand the meaning of numbers, shapes, and other math concepts. For example, while children are playing with blocks, parents can describe blocks by using words such as curved, straight, longer, and shorter. Children hear new math vocabulary and deepen their understanding about characteristics of blocks at the same time.
- ~ Children need repeated experiences. Just as children enjoy hearing the same books over and over, they need to handle materials and do things again and again. Over time, children need to practice these experiences again, so they recall what they have learned. In this way, they deepen their understanding and develop new concepts.
- ~ Parent involvement in their children's learning is extremely important. It especially helps children's learning when parents use the language they speak best. When parents speak in their home language, they are more likely to have deep, meaningful conversations and use rich, descriptive words. This type of language helps children to deepen their understanding of ideas and concepts.
- ~ Parents can observe their children's interests and use those interests to build an understanding of math. For example, if a child goes to a slide in a park, adults can talk about position words like behind and on top of the slide. Children's interest in the outdoors helps them learn about math!

Here are some ideas for helping children learn math during everyday home routines:

#### GETTING DRESSED:

"**How many** buttons do you have on your shirt? Let's count them as I button you up." - Numbers -- Counting

"Here's a sock for this foot. That's **one** foot. Here's a sock for the other foot. That's **two** feet!" - Numbers -- Counting, Using one-to-one correspondence

"Do you want to wear your **short** pants or your **long** pants?" - Measurement -- Comparing sizes

#### SETTING THE TABLE:

"Will you help me? Each person gets **one** fork, **one** spoon, and **one** napkin." - Numbers -- Using one-to-one correspondence

"**How many** spoons do we need? Let's **count**." - Numbers -- Counting, Solving problems

"Give the **big** cup to grandma. I would like to have a **little** cup." - Measurement -- Comparing sizes

#### EATING A MEAL:

"Your sandwich looks like a **square**. If I cut it this way (corner to corner), what **shapes** will it make?" - Geometry -- Recognizing shapes

"**How many** pieces of cheese do you want?", "Do you want **one** or **two**?", "Let's count, **how many** raisins do you have?" - Numbers -- Counting

"You have **more** pieces of apple than I do." - Number--Comparing number of objects

#### PICKING UP TOYS:

"Let's put your cars **on** the shelf and the balls **in** the box." - Spatial Sense -- Recognizing positions or objects

"Can you please put **three** trucks here?", "There should be **six** dinosaurs. Will you **count** them and make sure they are all there?" - Numbers -- Counting

"You can put away the **square** pieces. Your brother will put away the **round** ones." - Geometry -- Recognizing shapes

