

MEDIA PLAN

MU DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION
ELLEN JORDAN, MA, CFLE-P
COLLEEN COLANER, PhD

SCREEN TIME & FAMILIES:
MANAGING CHILDREN'S ONLINE LIVES

NAME:

18-24 MONTHS OLD

ADAPTED FROM THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF
PEDIATRICS "FAMILY MEDIA PLAN" TOOL

SCREEN FREE ZONES

Having areas of your home remain screen-free is important. Select from the list below & add them to your Media Plan to make sure your children understand where screens are not allowed. Add any other screen free areas that are specific to your family.

Mobile devices & TVs are not allowed in the following screen-free zones in our home:

Bedroom

Recharge devices overnight - outside your child's bedroom

- Incoming messages & calls can interfere with your child's sleep
- Help children avoid the temptation to use or check devices when they should be sleeping
- Emitted light from devices charging may still effect the quality of your child's sleep

Kitchen or Dining Room Table

- Keep family mealtimes & other family & social gatherings tech-free.

Stroller

Other: _____

SCREEN FREE TIMES

As part of the daily routine, make devices like TVs, phones, computers, games or other electronics off limits at specific times. Dinnertime & before bedtime are important ones, but more extended breaks from technology each day may also be needed, especially for families with very young children.

We will not use mobile devices or other screens during the following times:

- While in the car, except for long trips
- Family time
 - Family time may be whenever the family is together or it may be during specific times such as when in the car together or when walking to school together.
- Meal time
 - Do not watch TV or use mobile devices at meal time.
 - It is associated with obesity & weight gain in children.
 - It discourages from family interaction.
- One hour before bed
 - Using a mobile device or watching TV before bed can interfere with a child's sleep. When using screens in the evening:
 - Turn the brightness on the screen down
 - Don't play or watch media that are intense or scary in the evening
- Other: _____

CHOOSE & DIVERSIFY MEDIA

Choose Media that is Worth Your Time:

More than 80,000 apps are labeled as educational, but little research has demonstrated their actual quality. Products pitched as "interactive" should require more than "pushing & swiping."

Look to organizations like Common Sense Media for reviews about age-appropriate apps, games & programs to guide you in making the best choices for your children.

Diversify Your Media:

Use media in a way that promotes interaction, connection & creativity. Different types of media may each have potential benefits, so media use is best diversified so that not all of one's time is spent doing one particular activity.

When we have recreational screen time, we will:

- Co-view (watching media with a parent or adult)
 - Co-viewing allows for interaction & discussion
 - Younger children learn better from media, educational shows & videos when they are co-viewed & there is parent-child interaction.

- Co-play (playing video games & using apps with a parent or adult)
 - Younger children learn better from media when they share the experience with an adult.
 - Helps parents to stay connected with their children & teens.
 - Allows parents to have better sense of how their child is spending his or her time.

- Other: _____

CHOOSE & DIVERSIFY MEDIA

Choose Media that is Worth Your Time:

More than 80,000 apps are labeled as educational, but little research has demonstrated their actual quality. Products pitched as "interactive" should require more than "pushing & swiping."

Look to organizations like Common Sense Media for reviews about age-appropriate apps, games & programs to guide you in making the best choices for your children.

Diversify Your Media:

Use media in a way that promotes interaction, connection & creativity. Different types of media may each have potential benefits, so media use is best diversified so that not all of one's time is spent doing one particular activity.

When we have recreational screen time, we will:

- Watch "educational" shows & use apps that have been reviewed & vetted by trusted sources to actually be educational such a PBS or Common Sense Media
- NOT spend lots of time watching fast-paced shows or apps with lots of bells & whistles
 - These types of shows & apps may affect brain development & make it harder for children to concentrate later in life.
- NOT use media as a babysitter
- Use media to connect me to others
 - Video chat with friends or relatives
- Limit background media
 - This is distracting to me & limits the "talk time" I have with adults
- Other: _____

BALANCING ONLINE & OFF-LINE TIME

Media & digital devices are an integral part of our world today. The benefits of these devices, if used moderately & appropriately, can be great. But research has shown that face-to-face time with family, friends & teachers, plays a pivotal & even more important role in promoting children's learning & healthy development. Keep the face-to-face up front & don't let it get lost behind a stream of media & technology.

By decreasing screen time, we will have more time for:

- Looking at books, going to the library
- Playing outside
- Playing dress-up or make believe
- Playing with friends
- Playing with blocks, Legos & puzzles
- Being with my family
- Other: _____
- Other: _____

SAFETY FIRST

Keep your child safe by treating media as you would any other environment in your child's life.

We will follow these digital safety rules:

- Do not give out personal information online
- Review Privacy Settings on all sites with your children
- Do not share private photos online
- Review Privacy Settings on all sites with your children
- Other: _____

SLEEP & EXERCISE

All children need plenty of sleep & exercise each day.

We will get enough sleep & exercise by doing the following:

- Get 11-14 hours of sleep (including naps)
- Turn off the TV or mobile device one hour before bedtime
 - The blue light from the TV or mobile screen can interfere with sleep
 - Vibrating & audio alerts can wake children & teens from sleep
 - Children & teens may wake up to use devices in the middle of the night or early in the morning
- Other: _____

PARENT-CHILD SCREEN TIME AGREEMENT

The below signatures indicate that:

- We understand the importance of the screen time boundaries set in this media plan.
- We will let these boundaries guide our behavior with screens.
- We agree that these boundaries are in the best interests of our whole family and will help us use screens responsibly.

Parent Signature: _____