



I love summer time! There is so much good about having weeks of exploration and downtime. BUT I feel like summer can easily turn into endless, mindless hours of TV, iPad, and general junk screentime. It's almost TOO easy right? Too easy for mom (if you're me...) and too easy for our kids. So my post today is about motivating us all to take charge of screentime this summer with these three tips: minimize, mindfully use, and model healthy habits.

MINIMIZE

In summary the American Academy of Pediatrics suggest no screentime for 0-18 months (except video chats), 1 hr or less for 2-5 year olds, and limited use for school-age children. *here's the problem: Parents are not listening to or following these recommendations.*

What to do: visit healtychildren.org to create a family media plan that works for your family and try your best to minimize screentime. Remember, young kids learn better from face-to-face interactions than they do from screens!! Minimize screen time and maximize face-to-face interaction, family-time, outdoor-play, exercise, unplugged downtime & sleep!!!

MINDFUL USE

Here is hands down the best advice I have heard in regards to choosing screentime opportunities: before giving your child a device or turning on the TV complete this sentence: **"Let's watch or play *this content, at this time, for this reason*"**

CONTENT: meaning all apps, videos, programs are not made equal!! Help your child select content that is high quality and noncommercial.

TIME: meaning think about the time your child is spending, time they are not actively playing, interacting, being outside, sleeping, etc. Choose your screentime time wisely!

REASON: Think about WHY you are letting your child watch that screen. Be purposeful in what games/videos you choose and why.

MODEL HEALTHY HABITS

Spend too much time online? Yeah, me too! Here are some ideas to help us make better choices of how we spend our own time:

- Choose healthy alternatives, such as reading, outdoor play and creative, hands-on activities.
- Turn off our devices at home during family time.
- Turn off screens when not in use and avoid background TV.
- Be present and engaged when screens are used and, whenever possible, co-view with our children to help them learn.

Resources: <https://www.cps.ca/en/documents/position/screen-time-and-young-children>
<https://www.aap.org/en-us/advocacy-and-policy/aap-health-initiatives/Pages/Media-and-Children.aspx>

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