

Balanced Media Menu

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Healthy child development depends on knowing how much media and which types of media children should consume. Doctors offer these helpful guidelines:

Infants and Toddlers Up to 2 Years:

Board books, soft books, songs and playtime with adults

Serving Size: Generous Portions

Screen Media: TV, computers, tablets, video games, smart phones

Serving Size: None

Children 12 months old and younger cannot follow the changing scenes on a screen or a program's dialogue. Those who are 12-18 months old are not able to learn and remember information as well from a video as from a live person.

Preschoolers 2-4 Years:

Picture Books, children's music, songs and rhymes, playtime with adults

Serving Size: Heaping servings

Screen Media: Educational TV, high-quality educational apps and video games

Serving Size: One hour a day

Preschoolers need enough time for free play, family meals, play with friends and sleep. Prioritize screen media after these needs have been met.

School-Age Children:

Books, comics, graphic novels, magazines, music with age-appropriate lyrics, audio books, eBooks

Serving Size: Unlimited helpings

Screen Media: TV, computers, tablets, video games, smart phones

Serving Size: Two hours a day

Keep screens in public spaces in your house so you can talk together about information and social experiences they find on the Internet.

Parents and Caregivers:

Face to face interaction with your children — talking, reading, singing and playing

Serving Size: As much as possible!

Screen Media: TV, computers, tablets, video games, smart phones

Serving Size: Varies*

*Balance is the key. Try to limit your own screen time to when your children are asleep. You are the best role model of a healthy, balanced media diet.

Sources:

Please note that the following links may not be in an accessible format.

[American Academy of Pediatrics](#)

Canadian Paediatric Society Caring for Kids ([English site](#)/[French site](#))

Center on Media and Child Health ([Infants and Toddlers site](#)/[Preschooler site](#)/[School Age site](#))

[Infants and Toddlers “Unplugged”: New Recommendations about Media Use from the American Academy of Pediatrics](#)

Created by the KFL&A Children’s Literacy Committee