

# Balanced Media Menu

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:

- **American Academy of Pediatrics:**

<http://www.aap.org/en-us/advocacy-and-policy/aap-health-initiatives/Pages/Media-and-Children.aspx>

- **Canadian Paediatric Society Caring for Kids:**

[http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/limiting\\_screen\\_time\\_at\\_home](http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/limiting_screen_time_at_home) (English)

[http://www.soinsdenosenfants.cps.ca/handouts/limiting\\_screen\\_time\\_at\\_home](http://www.soinsdenosenfants.cps.ca/handouts/limiting_screen_time_at_home) (French)

- **Center on Media and Child Health:**

<http://cmch.tv/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/MEDIA-Tip-Sheet-Infants-Toddlers.pdf> (Infants)

<http://cmch.tv/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/MEDIA-Tip-Sheet-Preschoolers.pdf> (Toddlers)

<http://cmch.tv/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/MEDIA-Tip-Sheet-Grade-Schoolers.pdf> (Preschoolers)

- **Infants and Toddlers “Unplugged”: New Recommendations about Media Use from the American Academy of Pediatrics:**

<http://www.hanen.org/Helpful-Info/Articles/Unplugged--New-recommendations-about-Media-Use-fro.aspx>

