



SCREENTIME AND YOUR BABY



What Parents Need to Know



🔍 TYPES OF SCREEN TIME

Passive Screen Time

- Watching videos, TV shows, or apps where your child is a spectator. Example: A YouTube video of a stranger singing songs to your child.

Active Screen Time

- Interacting with others through a screen.
Example:
 - A live video call with a grandparent.
 - Watching a video of you talking, singing, or playing peekaboo with your baby.

👉 Active screen time is more engaging, personal, and supportive of communication than passive videos.

📖 WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY (AAP RECOMMENDATIONS)

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends:

- No screen time under 18 months (except live video chat).
- 18–24 months: If parents choose screen time, use high-quality content and watch together.
- 2–5 years: Limit to 1 hour per day, co-viewed with a parent.

👤 WHY IT MATTERS FOR DEVELOPMENT

- **Sedentary behaviors stick:** Research shows that more sedentary time as a toddler can set the stage for continued sedentary habits later in childhood and adulthood.
- **Sensory processing:** Screens rely mostly on the visual system—sight. Real-life play uses all senses.

🌿 SCREENS VS. REAL LIFE

Screens:

- Flat, 2-D images. | Limited to vision and hearing. | Fast, flashing visuals can overwhelm sensory systems.

Real-world play:

- The warmth of the sun ☀️, the cool breeze 🌬️, the smell of grass and flowers 🌸. | The feel of dirt, leaves, and toys in your hands. | 3-D depth that strengthens eye muscles and brain connections. | Opportunities for movement, balance, and coordination.
- 👉 Simply put: the outdoors offers a full-body, multi-sensory experience screens can't replicate.

✅ QUICK TIPS FOR FAMILIES

- Choose active screen time (FaceTime, videos of YOU) over passive videos.
- Follow the AAP guidelines for age and duration.
- Make screen time co-viewed and interactive, not alone.
- Prioritize play, movement, and outdoor experiences every day.

LEARN MORE: LISTEN TO/WATCH US



Website



YouTube



Spotify

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD

- Do your own research – Try searching Google Scholar for “screen time + autism symptoms” to see the science firsthand.
- Interested in finding screen content with lower stimulation scores? Visit: www.tvtantrums.com
- Consider using the Autism Treatment Evaluation Checklist before limiting screentime, as a baseline for behavior, and then 4 weeks after screen reduction or removal: <https://autism.org/autism-treatment-evaluation-checklist/>