



Power down— no more than TWO hours of screen time a day

The Canadian Pediatric Society (CPS) recommends no more than 2 hours of recreational screen time from electronic devices, video games, and tablets combined. In addition, the CPS discourages any screen-based activities (e.g. TV, hand-held devices) for children under age 2.¹

Why are these limits recommended?

SCIENTIFIC RATIONALE:

- Only 24% of 5- to 17-year-olds meet the Canadian Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines recommendation of no more than 2 hours of recreational screen time per day.²
- Early exposure to television is associated with an increased prevalence of attention problems and delayed language development.³ Excessive exposure has also been shown to be associated with cognitive and social delays.⁴
- Children that have more than 2 hours of screen time per day are two times more likely to be overweight or obese than their peers that watch 1 hour or less per day.⁵
- Children with higher levels of screen time are at increased risk for emotional problems and poorer family functioning.⁶
- Screen time in youth may influence symptom severity of depression and anxiety⁷ with research showing a higher risk of depression when screen time exceeds 2h/day.⁸
- The use of media devices near bedtime is associated with inadequate sleep quantity, poor sleep quality, and excessive daytime sleepiness in children.⁹

1 Canadian Paediatric Society: Caring for Kids. How to promote good television habits. http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/promote_good_television_habits. Updated March, 2013. Accessed April 27, 2016.

2 ParticipACTION. The 2016 ParticipACTION Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth. <https://www.participaction.com/sites/default/files/downloads/2016%20ParticipACTION%20Report%20Card%20-%20Full%20Report.pdf>. Published June 16, 2016. Accessed October 21, 2016.

3 Christakis, D. The effects of infant media usage: what do we know and what should we learn? *Acta Paediatrica*. 2009;98:8-16.

4 Radesky, J., Christakis, D. Increased Screen Time Implications for Early Childhood Development and Behavior. *Pediatr Clin N Am*. 2016;63:827-839.

5 Shields M. Overweight and obesity among children and youth. *Health Rep*. 2006;17(3):27-42.

6 Hinkley, T., Verbestel V., Ahrens, W., et al. Early Childhood Electronic Media Use as a Predictor of Poorer Well-being. *JAMA Pediatr*. 2014;168(5):458-492.

7 Maras, D., Flament, M., Murrar M., et al. Screen time is associated with depression and anxiety in Canadian youth. *Prev Med*. 2015;73:133-138.

8 Liu, M., Wu, L., Yao, S. Dose-response association of screen time-based sedentary behavior in children and adolescents and depression: a meta-analysis of observational studies. *B J Sports Med*. 2015;0:1-8.

9 Carter, B., Rees, P., Hale, L., et al. Association Between Portable Screen-Based Media Device Access or Use and Sleep Outcomes A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis. *JAMA Pediatr*. Published online October 31, 2016. doi:10.1001/jamapediatrics.2016.2341