

Infant and Toddler Interactions with Technology

The Facts:

- 47% of babies and toddlers watch TV or DVDs for nearly 2 hours/day. That is twice as much time viewing screen media as spent reading books.
- 20% of children in upper income homes have a TV in their bedroom, compared to 64% of children from lower-income homes (Rideout, 2011)¹.

***The American Academy of Pediatrics encourages
zero screen time for children under 2 years old.***

Studies show positive and negative associations with screen media and preschool children. It is important to consider the following factors when using screen media with young children:

Cognitive Considerations

- Importance of Coviewing (0-3 yrs+)
Enhances understanding of vocabulary, oral language development and overall comprehension of concepts

- Video Deficit Effect (0-3yrs)
Inability to understand as much from screen content as from real-life interactions

- Symbolic Thinking (after 19 months)
Ability to understand images as symbols, not distinct objects

Think about the . . .

CONTENT

Does it encourage active engagement and caregiver-child interactions?

Is it developmentally appropriate?

CONTEXT

Are caregiver-child interactions happening before, during and after?

CHILD

Is the child interested and engaged in content?

IF you are choosing to use screen media, here are some suggestions²:

9 - 18 months: simple, one-scene narratives that teach labels for objects and help extend children's vocabulary.

18 months: encourage physical engagement, like singing and clapping

2.5-3 years old: more complex stories and narratives can be used to help children recall characters' actions, consequences and improve overall comprehension skills when viewed and discussed with a caregiver

To Learn More Visit: [Zero to Three](#), [Common Sense Media](#), [American Academy of Pediatrics](#), [National Association for the Education of Young Children](#), [Commercial Free Childhood](#)

¹ (upper income= >\$75,000, lower income=<\$30,000); Rideout, V. (2011). *Zero to eight: Children's media use in america*. Retrieved from <http://www.commonsensemedia.org/sites/default/files/research/zerotoeightfinal2011.pdf>

² Wartella, E. (Performer) (2012). *Turning on or tuning out: The influence of media on young children's development featuring ellen wartella, ph.d. Zero to three: Little kids, big questions*. [Audio podcast]. Retrieved from https://s3.amazonaws.com/ztpodcastseries/podcast/Ellen_Wartella_FINAL.mp3?s_src=podcast&s_subsrc=media