



American Academy
of Pediatrics



DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®



Age-Based Media Use Advice



18-24 MONTHS

1. MAKE A PLAN

Before you introduce screen-based media ...

Make family rules about how adults and kids use media and tech at home. Go to [HealthyChildren.org/MediaUsePlan](https://www.healthychildren.org/MediaUsePlan) to create a plan that works for your family. (Despite what you may hear from companies and advertisers, children — especially babies — do not need to learn to use technology right away. There's plenty of time for that as they grow!)

2. STRIKE A BALANCE

Play with your baby. Babies and toddlers learn best from loving caregivers, so include plenty of active and social fun in your toddlers' daily routine by reading, dancing, singing, and playing interactive games like peekaboo. If you want to use apps or videos with your baby, make sure you use them together.

Video-chat with long-distance family and friends. Toddlers will respond to voices and facial expressions even if it's through a device.

Create screen-free times and zones — for example, at bedtime, in the stroller, at mealtime, in restaurants, and at least one hour before bed.

3. BE A ROLE MODEL

Choose high-quality and age-appropriate media — especially books. If you do use screen-based media with your baby, make sure the content is positive and simple, and as much as possible, use it with your child. Go to www.commonsensemedia.org to find books, apps, and more.

Turn off the TV when no one is watching it, and — as much as possible — put away your own devices when you're with your child.

Use privacy settings online to keep photos and personal information about your baby private.

For helpful tips, visit [commonsense.org](https://www.commonsense.org)

Create a family media plan

[healthychildren.org/mediauseplan](https://www.healthychildren.org/mediauseplan)



2-5 YEARS

1. MAKE A PLAN

Make family rules about how adults and kids use media and tech before you introduce screens. Go to [HealthyChildren.org/MediaUsePlan](https://www.healthychildren.org/MediaUsePlan) to create a plan that works for your family.

2. STRIKE A BALANCE

Balance screen use with reading, being active, drawing, playing imagination games, and being with friends and family.

Limit screen entertainment to an hour a day. Don't forget 10-14 hours of sleep and at least an hour of exercise a day!

Create screen-free times and zones once you start using digital media — for example, at bedtime, in the stroller, at mealtime, and in restaurants.

Put devices to bed at least an hour before bedtime, and charge them outside of kids' bedrooms.

3. BE A ROLE MODEL

Choose high-quality and age-appropriate media. When you introduce screen-based media, make sure the content is positive and simple, and as much as possible, use it along with your kid. Use www.common sense media.org to find TV shows, books, apps, and more.

Support kids online. As kids begin to explore websites and digital games, sit with them to make sure they don't find inappropriate content. Look for ways to connect what they learn online with experiences offline.

6-12 YEARS

1. MAKE A PLAN

Make family rules about how and when media and devices will be used and which games, websites, and apps are OK to play, visit, and download. Go to [HealthyChildren.org/MediaUsePlan](https://www.healthychildren.org/MediaUsePlan) to create a plan that works for your family.

2. STRIKE A BALANCE

Balance screen use with reading and hobbies, as well as being with friends and family. Don't forget 9-12 hours of sleep and at least an hour of exercise a day!

Create screen-free times and zones for the whole family — for example, in the bedroom, at school, and during homework and mealtime.

Put devices to bed at least an hour before bedtime, and charge them outside of kids' bedrooms.

3. BE A ROLE MODEL

Watch and play high-quality and age-appropriate media together. Use www.common sense media.org to find TV shows, books, apps, and more.

Teach manners with devices, including putting away devices during conversations and meals (and model these behaviors, too!).

Talk about digital citizenship, which includes being safe and respectful online, as well as talking about any bullying or uncomfortable interactions with a trusted adult.

Consider parental controls that limit access to inappropriate content. Also, review privacy settings on kids' apps to make sure they're keeping photos and personal information private.

13-18 YEARS

1. MAKE A PLAN

Make family rules about what types of media are OK and why. Have conversations about mature content and pornography. Go to [HealthyChildren.org/MediaUsePlan](https://www.healthychildren.org/MediaUsePlan) to create a plan that works for your family.

2. STRIKE A BALANCE

Balance screen use with reading and hobbies, as well as being with friends and family. Don't forget 8-10 hours of sleep and at least an hour of exercise a day!

Create screen-free times and zones for the whole family — for example, at mealtime, in the bedroom, while driving, and during homework.

Put devices to bed at least an hour before bedtime, and charge them outside of teens' bedrooms.

3. BE A ROLE MODEL

Guide teens toward high-quality media. Watch and play together when possible. Encourage educational and creative games and apps that promote healthy social interactions. Use www.common sense media.org to find movies, books, apps, and more.

Teach manners with devices, including putting away devices during conversations and meals (and model these behaviors, too!).

Talk about digital citizenship, which includes being safe and respectful online, respecting others' privacy, and talking about any bullying or uncomfortable interactions with a trusted adult.

Review privacy settings with teens on their devices and social media platforms to make sure they're keeping personal information private. Talk about how to navigate requests to share photos, passwords, or other private information with friends.

For helpful tips, visit [common sense.org](https://www.common sense.org)



Common Sense is committed to making kids the nation's top priority. We are a trusted guide for the families, educators, and advocates who help kids thrive. We provide resources to harness the power of media, technology, and public policy to improve the well-being of every child.