

Healthy Kids in a Digital World

Remember
to unplug!

Unplug to **CONNECT**

Children need nurturing relationships!

Kids who spend less time with screens spend more time with their families.

Caring adults help children:

- Feel comfortable with themselves
- Have successful friendships
- Love learning

HEALTHY KID TIPS

Screen-free connections don't have to take a lot of time; they can easily happen every day:

- Chat on the way home from child care.
- Cook meals together. Kids love stirring and measuring.
- Share songs and stories during bath time.

No app or program is as interactive as a teacher, parent, or playmate.

Children benefit from connecting with nature, too

Watch clouds • Splash through puddles • Collect leaves

Unplug to **LEARN**

How do preschoolers learn best?

- Exploring with all their senses
- Through hands-on, free play
- Having lots of conversations
- When grown-ups read to them

Children who spend less time with screens:

- Do better in school
- Have more time for creative play and interacting with caring adults, two activities essential to learning

HEALTHY KID TIP

Choose books without added noises and moving pictures—let kids imagine their own. Digital features can interfere with story understanding, which is an important step toward literacy.

*Smart phones, tablets, e-books, TV, apps, digital games, videos...
Screen-free time is more important than ever!*



Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood

commercialfreechildhood.org

Unplug for **HEALTH**

Children who spend less time with screens:

- Fall asleep faster
- Sleep longer
- Eat healthier
- Get more exercise

Be a positive role model

Kids learn screen-time habits from parents and caregivers.

HEALTHY KID TIP

- Encourage outdoor, free play as often as possible—it helps develop strong, healthy bodies.
- Make bedtime routines screen-free—kids who use screens at night have more sleep problems.
- Keep screens out of bedrooms.
- Enjoy screen-free, family meals—they encourage healthy eating.

Given the chance, young children love to run, skip, jump, dance, and climb.

Unplug and **PLAY**

Children naturally create their own fun. But if they ever need help getting started, here are a few suggestions:

Alone or with a friend

- Draw with sidewalk chalk
- Dig in mud
- Make sheet tents for indoor camping
- Play dress-up
- Build with cardboard boxes

During chores

- Play “I Spy” at the grocery store
- Make sorting laundry a game
- Sing songs while cleaning up

Traveling and eating out

- Find cars in different colors
- Count stops until your station
- Draw on paper napkins and placemats

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screenfree.org

FOR MORE IDEAS

screenfree.org/screen-free-activities

Did You **KNOW?**

- There’s no evidence to support the popular view that children must start using screen technologies early on to succeed in a digital world.
- How children spend their time is important—lifelong habits and behaviors are formed in childhood.
- TV, digital games, and the internet can be habit-forming.
- Content matters: Even a little exposure to fast-paced, violent, sexualized, or commercialized games and programs can be harmful.
- The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends avoiding screens for children under 2 and no more than 1 to 2 hours of screen time a day for older kids.