

# Establishing a Healthy Media Diet

Cari Ebert, M.S., CCC-SLP



- Be thoughtful about how you use screen time with young children – try not to use technology as a digital babysitter
- Create regular tech-free times as part of your daily routine (no screens during dinnertime, for example)
- Schedule tech-free outings occasionally (to the zoo, park or pool) – not every event has to be documented with pictures
- Help children balance play with physical activity, screen-based play, hands-on experiences, early academics and quiet times for reflection
- Make screen time interactive by talking about what children are seeing and encouraging them to use their minds and bodies as much as possible to maximize learning
- Help children bridge the gap between content they see on screens and their real-life experiences
- Be sure children have plenty of outdoor playtime
- Avoid having the TV on in the background – turn the TV off when no one is watching
- Engage in face-to-face interactions with children (limit their face-to-screen interactions)
- Avoid using screens as part of the bedtime routine
- Be mindful of and limit your own screen media use – children learn by watching others
- No app or other screen media will be as effective as live interactions with caregivers, siblings and peers