



# Wellness Committee Newsletter

February 2019

**The research is in...too much screen time has detrimental effects on young minds.**

## **CHILDREN SPEND TOO MUCH TIME WITH SCREEN MEDIA.**

- Sixty-four percent (64%) of **one and two year olds** are watching TV and videos, averaging slightly over 2 hours. Thirty-six percent (36%) have a television in their bedroom.
- Data varies on the amount of time **preschool children** spend with screen media. On average children between the **ages of two and five** spend **2-4 hours per day on screens**.
- **8- to 18-year-olds** consume an average of **7 hours of screen media per day**. For older children and adolescents, **excessive screen time** is linked to **increased psychological difficulties** including; **hyperactivity, emotional and conduct problems, difficulties with peers and poor school performance**.

## **SCREEN TIME IS AN IDENTIFIED FACTOR IN CHILDHOOD OBESITY.**

- Television viewing for **children age 3 to 5** is linked to **increased BMI**.
- TV viewing among **two to four year old children** predicts increased **intake of high-energy, low-nutrient foods**. There is also a link between TV and fast food consumption in preschoolers.
- For **each hour** of television viewing per day, children **consume an additional 167 calories**. Bedroom televisions are associated with obesity risk in children of all ages. Video games are also linked to weight gain and increased food intake.

## **SCREEN NEGATIVELY IMPACTS CHILDREN'S SLEEP.**

- Screen time for **children under 3** is linked to **irregular sleep patterns**. It is also linked to **sleep disturbance in 6 to 12 year olds**.

## **SCREEN TIME CAN UNDERMINE LEARNING FOR BABIES, YOUNG AND OLDER CHILDREN.**

- Screen time for **children under three** is linked to **delayed language acquisition**. It is associated with **problems in later childhood**, including lower math scores, reduced school achievement and physical activity.
- **Preschool children** who spend **more time with screens** spend **less time engaged** in creative play which is foundational for learning. They also have **reduced critical thinking skills**.
- **Children** with **2 or more hours** of daily screen time are more likely to have **increased psychological difficulties, including hyperactivity, emotional and conduct problems, and difficulties with peers**.
- **Adolescents** who watch **3 or more hours of television daily** are at especially **high risk** for **poor homework completion, negative attitudes toward school, poor grades, and long-term academic failure**.

## **RESEARCH SHOWS BENEFITS OF REDUCED SCREEN TIME.**

- Reducing screen time can help **prevent childhood obesity**.
- Children who spend **less time watching television** in early years tend to do **better in school**, have a **healthier diet**, be **more physically active**, and be better able to **engage in schoolwork** in later elementary school.
- Television viewing at a young age is associated with later behavioral problems, **but not if heavy viewing is discontinued before age six**.

For more information, please visit:

<https://www.screenfree.org/research-and-fact-sheets/>  
<http://www.AAP.org>