

## Using screen time well

- Show your child what you are doing on screen - let them help you text or send a picture
- Let them take photos, or you could take photos of them. Talk about the photos. You could even make your own book!



- Play suitable games for this age group. e.g. sorting games (3 - 5 year olds need to watch TV programmes designed for them. They will learn very little from watching programmes for older children or adults.
- Watching DVDs can be better than television, as hearing the same words makes it easier for children to learn from them. It is good for them to watch the same thing over and over again!



## Tips for parents and carers

# Screen Time

Children can learn an amazing amount through good use of screen time, and need to be able to use it for the future. But what they are doing and the time they spend on screen needs to be carefully managed or it could be harmful to them.



It is recommended that children aged 3 - 5 don't spend more than 1 or 2 hours a day altogether on screens

"Screen time" includes time spent on computers, tablets, phones and watching television.



We are still learning about the effects screen time has on children – but there are signs that **too much** screen time is linked to

- Poor speech and listening
- Poor physical development
- Problems playing with other children
- Poor health, including being overweight
- Children watching things that could disturb or upset them
- Children not doing well at school
- Eye problems
- Addictive behaviour in the future



## What can you do?

Take control over **what** they are doing on screen

Make sure it is suitable for their age group and that they are learning from it.



Enjoy watching a programme or playing a game together

Screen time is a great babysitter for busy parents

but they'll learn a lot more if you ask them questions and you'll see what they are up to.



Children can easily get addicted to screens – it's good to be firm now so they don't get into a habit of using them too much.



Set clear limits and rules for the **amount** of time they spend on screen

You could try setting a timer or say at the start, "You've only got until..." Make sure you stick to what you say. It's best if children don't spend more than 30 minutes at a time on screens.



Make sure they have plenty of time **doing other activities**

Children need to be **doing a wide range of things** at this age – developing their muscles, playing with things, going out and finding out about the real world, talking to other people and developing their language.



Set a good example and take a break from the screen yourself.

Run about, play a game with them or make something – you'll enjoy it too!

It's best not to let them watch screen on their own in their **bedroom**, or for an hour **before bedtime**

It will stop them sleeping well.



It's good to have times when you are all free of screens and just have attention for each other (this includes the adults!)

Children of this age need you to talk to them a lot. They need your full undivided attention some of the time to feel valued and to thrive. Mealtimes might be a good "screen free time".

