

Looking at the research on screen time

Courtney Nugent and Lauren Supplee from Child Trends have released a research brief on [five ways screen time can benefit children and families](#). The brief looks at guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), and links to multiple sources of research on the topic, such as journal articles in the International Journal of Child-Computer Interaction and Infant and Child Development.

The five recommendations are as follows:

- Certain kinds of digital tools can support family interactions. For example, using video chat (Skype, Facetime, etc.) allows family members to connect with one another when in-person interactions may not be possible.
- It's important to support children's healthy development through co-viewing and co-playing. For example, it is important that parents answer and ask questions about the material they are co-viewing, point out important concepts, and blend the content they are viewing together into their daily lives and routines.
- Parents can choose high-quality digital content for their child's viewing. The brief notes that websites like Common Sense Media, PBS Kids, and Sesame Workshop can help parents decide which apps and programs are best for their children.
- Like physical tools, digital tools can promote school readiness. According to the brief, research suggests that preschoolers can learn best from well-designed e-books with limited distracting features (such as games and sounds), and when parents' questions focus on the stories themselves rather than the features of the electronic medium (such as pushing buttons).

Digital tools can support parent and child togetherness. For example, technology can elicit exciting topics for conversation and encourage family members to spend time with one another.

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