



## Why should we limit young children's screen time?

### What is screen time?

- watching television and DVDs
- playing on computers and using the internet
- playing electronic or video games
- playing games or watching things on mobile phones, smart phones or tablets.

### Why should screen time be limited?

Too much screen time means not enough time for children to be active. When children are not active enough they miss out on opportunities to:

- develop and strengthen important movement skills like running, catching and jumping
- mix with others and develop social skills like taking turns and making friends.

Children are naturally very active. It is not normal for children to be sitting for long periods of time.

### Australian recommendations suggest:

#### ***Children under the age of 2 years should have no screen time***

This is because screen time for this age group can:

- have negative effects on eye development
- have negative effects on social and language development
- reduce the amount of time children can stay focused.

Some people think that 'educational' programs aimed at under 2's can help children learn things but there are no educational or developmental benefits from children watching these programs.

#### ***Children aged between 2-5 years should have no more than 1 hour of screen time each day***

More than 1 hour of screen time for children aged 2-5 years can:

- slow down ongoing language development
- reduce short term memory and concentration
- have negative effects on social skills
- mess up sleep patterns
- increase the risk of unhealthy eating habits and becoming overweight.

There are times when it is tempting to sit children in front of screens. All parents and carers need breaks but too much screen time not good for your child. Swap some screen time for other activities.

For more information about limiting screen time visit the website [www.movewelleatwell.tas.gov.au/families](http://www.movewelleatwell.tas.gov.au/families)