



# AUTISM AND SCREEN TIME

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## Me

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- Adjunct Graduate Professor UTC & SAU
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# What To Expect

- What We Will Not Be Covering: Screen Time Causes Autism
- Define Screen Time and Subtypes
- Pros & Cons of Screen Time
- Current Recommendations
- Questions To Consider
- Q & A

# Definition & Subtypes

- "Screen time" is a term used for activities done in front of a screen, such as watching TV, working, or playing video games on a monitor, phone, PC, laptop, or tablet. Screen time is typically a sedentary activity.

- Common Subtypes of Screen Time:

## **1. Active:**

Let's the individual interact with the media (i.e. game consoles, phone, tablet, and some tv apps).

## **2. Passive:**

Anything that requires no interaction with media (i.e. Instagram, YouTube, Tic Tok, Instagram, Snap Chat)

## **3. Educational:**

This can be active or passive and includes any time that is used towards learning or educational purposes.

# Pros & Cons

## ◦ Pros:

- Parenting Tool (reward manage beh.)
- Social Outlet
- Soothing
- Manage Anxiety & Stress
- Learning (educational & personal)

## ◦ Cons

- Over Used Parenting Tool
- Only Social Outlet
- Sensory Overload (overwhelming)
- Anxiety/Depression
- Obesity
- Sleep
- Inappropriate Content

# Common Recommendations

## Recommended Daily Use

|                   |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| 3-5 years .....   | 0.5 – 1 hour/day  |
| 5-7 years .....   | 1 – 1.5 hours/day |
| 7-12 years .....  | 1 – 1.5 hours/day |
| 12-15 years ..... | 1.5 – 2 hours/day |
| 16+ .....         | 2 hours/day       |

\*\*\*One study shows an average 7.5 hours a day\*\*\*

# Recommendations Continued

- Never make abrupt or “over night” changes!
- Build a schedule and track use
- Set alarms
- Be a role model – make it obvious
- No screen time during meals or “family time” (including phones)
- Indoor activities: board games, puzzles, scavenger hunt
- Increase physical activity!!! Walking, hiking, outdoor photography, sports, etc.
- Try new ideas (i.e. media fasts)

# Questions To Consider

- What are each family members screen time habits?
- What type of media is being consumed? Educational? Passive? Active?
- How does my loved one react with each type of media? Without media?
- How much sedentary time? How much physical activity?
- Who is this benefiting?





# Q & A

Let's Discuss

# Resources

- Peake, J. (2019). *Screen time for children on the autism spectrum*. Altogether Autism. <https://www.altogetherautism.org.nz/screen-time-for-children-on-the-autism-spectrum/>
- Kaneshiro, N. (2019) *Screen time and children*. MedlinePlus. <https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000355.htm>
- Wahl, B. (2012) *Autism and Screen Time*. Seattle Children's. <https://theautismblog.seattlechildrens.org/autism-and-screen-time/>
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- Mayo Clinic Staff (2019). *Screen time and children: How to guide your child*. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/childrens-health/in-depth/screen-time/art-20047952>