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Denise G. Doria, OTS
Thomas Jefferson University

Michele Mathew, OTS
Thomas Jefferson University

Mary Muhlenhaupt, OTD, OTR/L, FAOTA
Thomas Jefferson University

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Implications of Screen Use in Young Children's Occupations

Denise Doria, OTS; Michelle Mathew, OTS & Mary Muhlenhaupt, OTD, OTR/L, FAOTA

Thomas Jefferson University, Department of Occupational Therapy

Introduction

OTs need to address both the duration and quality of screen media children use, to promote their development and participation in healthy occupations.

Trends in Media Use

- 2/3 children and teens report their parents have “no rules” about media time (Strasburger et al., 2013)
- By 8 y/o, children are engaged in nearly 8 hours screen media each day (Strasburger et al., 2013; Lillard & Peterson, 2011)
- Children spend an average of 40 hrs/wk engaged in television, movies, and/or video games, which is more time than they spend in any other activity besides sleep (Gentile, Reimer, Nathanson, Walsh, & Eisenmann, 2014).
- 39% of children < 8 y/o live in homes where the television is left on all or most of the time, whether or not anyone is watching (Strasburger, Jordan, & Donnerstein, 2010).
- Conversely, when parents establish media rules, media use ↓ by ~3 hours (National Institutes of Health, 2013)



Impact on Development

Attention

- **TV:** Early television exposure (ages 1 and 3) associated with attention problems at 7 yrs (Christakis, Zimmerman, DiGiuseppe, & McCarty, 2004)

Executive Functioning

- **Fast-paced TV:** 9 mins of viewing → immediate negative effects on 4 y/o (Lillard & Peterson, 2011)

Physical Health

- ↑ screen time in early childhood is associated with ↓ time spent in physical activities & ↑ likelihood of being overweight or obese. (Gentile et al. 2014)

Play

- **Background TV:** ↓ toy play episode length and attention (Linebarger & Walker, 2005)

Sleep

- 90% of studies: adverse association between screen time and sleep (Hale & Guan, 2014)
 - Computer use (94%), Video Games (86%), Mobile Devices (83%), TV (76%)
 - **Interactive** has less adverse effects on sleep than **passive** screen time
- ↑ arousal levels depend on type of screen media → affect child's ability to fall and remain asleep. (Hale & Guan, 2014)
- **Tablet use:** 2 hours exposure to bright screens contributes to ↓ melatonin (Hale & Guan, 2014)

Social Skills

- **Media violence:** is a causal factor in real-life violence and aggression (Strasburger, Jordan, & Donnerstein, 2012)
- Children showed disruptive behaviors when caregivers used a **mobile screen device** during mealtime (Radesky et al., 2014)

Educational TV - Positive Impacts

- ↑ vocabulary, school performance, & narrative language (Linebarger & Vaala, 2010)
- In adolescence → greater creativity, academic achievement, and decreased aggression (Anderson et al., 2001)



Recommendations

AAP: > 2 years old, < 2 hours recreational screen time/day

NASPE Active Play Guidelines: toddlers and preschoolers - at least 60 minutes/day; should not be sedentary > 60 minutes at a time

- Discuss media use and “screen time diet” with family/caregiver - include child
- Establish media limits in child's weekly routines and during family time, with family/child co-viewing encouraged

Parents should actively mediate content and time (Gentile et al., 2014)

- Facilitate conversation during commercials
- Emphasize interactive, educational, and culturally diverse programming (ie: Sesame Street)
- Reduce/eliminate fast-paced TV, media during mealtime and before bedtime
- Discourage media use when friends are visiting

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See additional references on reverse

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Denise Doria, OTS, Michelle Mathew, OTS,
& Mary Muhlenhaupt, OTD, OTR/L, FAOTA
Thomas Jefferson University, Department of Occupational Therapy
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