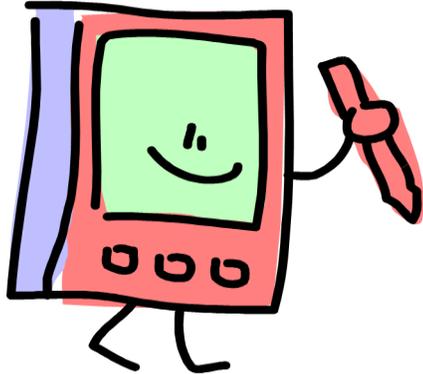




Helping Hands for Families

Children's Screen Time Less than 1-2 Hours a Day



If your child is age 2-5 it's best to limit his or her "screen time" to no more than 1-2 hours a day.

Screen time includes all sorts of electronic things: TV, DVDs, computers, tablets, gaming devices, recorders, cameras, smartphones, videos, etc. For children under age 2, the recommendation is no screen time.

With your guidance, your child's screen time can be quite beneficial. But more than 2 hours a day could spell trouble for his/her health and positive learning. Children develop, learn, and behave best with a balance of creative play, exploration, physical activities, reading, books, outdoor experiences, conversation, and interacting with people.

Screen time can be creative or exploring through **interactive apps**, or physical with **Wii games**. You can have parent-child conversations over reading an **e-book** together. **Skyping** is useful way to stay close and [\(continued next page\)](#)

Creative, Cold Weather Fun Indoors Ideas

True or False? Children get "stuck" in too much TV and would rather be playing. They probably won't tell us this but as parents we know better. And we know that too much screen time is a downer all around. What to do instead?

Let children help you with simple chores.

It may take longer to begin with but they will learn a life skill and feel like a big kid helping. Children can match socks or separate clothes. They can help carry things to the drawers when putting clothes away. They can help clean in the bathroom, especially if it means playing in water. Let them use the brush to scrub the toilet. To begin with they don't need the cleaner but as they master the use of the brush let them use the cleaner. You can pour it in, they scrub and flush! [\(continued next page\)](#)



Marquette County
Family Connections
Coalition (MCFCC)

Volume 9—Issue 1
Winter 2013-14

Marquette County Health
Department
608-297-3135

Marquette Early Learning
Center & Head Start
608-296-2141 x 2114

Marquette County
UW-Extension
608-297-3141

Family Health WIC
1-800-942-5330

Marquette County
Human Services
608-297-3124

Child Care Resource &
Referral
1-800-628-8534

Marquette County
Economic Support
608-297-3124

WorkSmart Employment
& Training Services
608-355-4806

Westfield School District
Family/School Liaison
& Guidance Program
608-296-2141

Montello School District
608-297-7617

Mission

The Marquette County Family Connections Coalition (MCFCC) mission is to link families with community agencies through communication and collaboration.

Limit Screen Time (continued)

interact with faraway relatives. Your goal is to make screen time useful and meaningful, and limit it to no more than 1-2 hours per day.

Did you know that a child's brain soaks up everything in his or her surroundings? Keeping violence and sexualized images away from your children is highly important - whether it's on an electronic screen or in real life. The same goes for stories, images or games that are traumatizing, degrading, intimidating or disrespectful.

Limiting screen time to less than two hours a day means your child will have a range of positive experiences. He won't get stuck in passive viewing. She won't see too many unhealthy food and beverage commercials. He'll learn to get along with people better. She'll develop creative interests and skills.

- * Establish "screen-free" zones at home by making sure there are no televisions, computers, cellphones, or video games in children's bedrooms, and by turning off TV and cellphones during dinner.
- * Limit screen time to no more than 1-2 hours per day for children age 2 and older, and 0 for children under age two.
- * Be aware of ratings for shows, movies, and games that their child is viewing on TV, computers, and game consoles to prevent inappropriate violence and content.
- * Choose a mix of creative, interactive, physical and educational play.

For more information on keeping kids safe around technology go to: www.healthychildren.org and search Media and Children.

Compiled by Sue Allen, Marquette County UW-Extension, and Joan Pulvermacher, Marquette County Health Department. Sources: The American Academy of Pediatrics, the National Association for the Education of Young Children and the Fred Rogers Center for Early Learning and Children's Media at Saint Vincent College.



Cold Weather Fun! (continued)

Read a book. Or let them tell you the story from the pictures.

Sorting and stacking. When you are in the kitchen let them play with the plastic dishes or separate the cans in the pantry.



Project Snowman. Have the kids gather items around the house like toilet paper, hats and scarves. Get into groups and transform one person into a snowman. Try not to melt!

Hop Scotch. Clear some area and create a hop scotch grid on the floor using tape. Make it a little harder and add some math to the fun. Use addition or subtraction to get the kids thinking.

Spy Time. Zigzag string around the house and have the kids try to go through the trap. Time them or do it backwards, create new and fun ways to get the kids active indoors.

Stack 'em! Get some play dough, raw spaghetti noodles and Cheerios. Have the kids stick a few noodles into a pile of play dough and put the Cheerios on the noodles. Try it with one hand at a time then switch.



If the weather is nice take the fun outside. Fill water bottles with food coloring and water. Have the kids create an art piece in the snow. Create rainbows, flowers, snowman or cars.

Snowman photos. When building a snowman leave the head off for a while and create a photo op. Place each other's heads there instead!

Compiled by Anna Weber, Marquette County Health Department and Mauri Prouty, Public Health Intern.