

## Raamit ruutuajalle

### Screen time boundaries

We live surrounded by digital devices i.e. screens. Screen time means the time spent on television, computer, mobile phone or game consoles. On the screens, we can search information, be educated and entertained.

Recommended screen time guideline for children:

- For children under school-age, screen time should be limited to a maximum of one hour.
- Screen time is not considered necessary for children aged 12 months or younger.

In day to day life, screen time plays only a minimal role in comparison to exercise, play, sleep and meal-times. Time spent in other activities is much more valuable to a child's development than time spent sitting in front of the screen. A child learns all important basic skills in interaction with a parent. The parent sets an example to the child in screen time behaviour.

The stimuli on the screen may over-excite the child's developing nervous system, possibly exacerbating concentration on other activities. If you, as the parent, notice the screen time provoking repeated strong emotional reactions or challenges with concentration in your child, it might be a good idea to talk about it and re-evaluate the length and content of the screen time. Do pay attention to the age rating of programmes and games. The rating system is based on the Act on Audiovisual Programmes in order to protect children.

Determining the correct screen time may require persistent and determined approach from the parent. A screen time agreement, drawn up together with the children, teach them to comply with rules and regulations in other areas of life, too. A parent, who respects and complies with rules and regulations in their screen behaviour, sets a good, responsible example to the child. If screen time issues are challenging, the nurses at the child health clinic and staff at family counselling or early education will support you in the process.

#### SCREEN TIME TIPS FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

- Draw up a screen time agreement on times and behaviour for the whole family
  - when and what to watch or play
  - agree on situations and functions when screen-time is off-limits
    - *at dinner table, evening and morning routines, car drives...*
- As a parent, pay attention and be interested in the items you child sees and experiences on the screen. Have the courage to set boundaries.
- Talk already in advance with the child about what to do if he or she sees or experiences something scary, unexpected or thought-provoking on the screen.
- Set the alarm clock or a timer to give an alert in the end of the screen time
- Agree on a place at home where you keep your devices outside screen time.
- On a rainy day in summer, films and educational games are a good way to chill out.
- Mums and Dads, when you come to pick up your child from day care, you are about to have the most important encounter of your day - leave your phone behind.

#### THINGS TO THINK ABOUT AT HOME:

Summer is here soon, let's enjoy the opportunities to engage in our interests and physical activities.



Challenge your family to have a day without a screen! Could your family enjoy a weekend without the screen?

Links for tips

Neuvokas perhe [Children and screen time - Neuvokasperhe](#)

The Mannerheim League for Child Welfare (MLL) : [The right amount of screen time - the Mannerheim League for Child Welfare \(ml.fi\)](#)

National Audiovisual Institute (Kavi) [Age ratings - Kavi](#)



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