

[IMAGE]

Even Toddlers Get Too Much Screen Time

By Editorial Staff

We've spoken at length about the amount of time adolescents, teens and yes, adults spend consumed with "screen" activities - television, computer / laptop, tablet and mobile phone. We've also talked about some of the health risks associated with excessive use, particularly in children, including musculoskeletal pain, lower test scores and even expression of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) symptoms.

Unfortunately, the negative health impact of excessive screen time starts can start young – very young. Recent research suggests toddlers who spend too much time in front of TVs, tablets and smartphones are more likely to suffer when it comes to problem-solving, communication and similar skills when they get to kindergarten.

Published in *JAMA Pediatrics*, the study found that 2-year-olds with more screen time than their peers were more likely to score lower on developmental screening tests at age 3 compared to 2-year-olds with less screen time. Researchers noted the same pattern when comparing screen time at age 3 with developmental tests at age 5. Screening tests at both ages evaluated markers such as communication, fine and gross motor skills, social skills and problem-solving abilities.

By the way, children participating in the study averaged 17 hours of weekly screen time at age 2 and 25 hours a week at age 3. Compare that with the seven-hour weekly limit (one hour a day) advised by the American Academy of Pediatrics, and it's clear children of all ages – and adults – have a major screen time problem. [Click here](#) for great ways to limit screen time, even in our technology-based world.

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