

Children and Recreational Screen Time

New guidelines recommend children only have a maximum of 2 hours screen time a day, this includes T.V viewing, playing game consoles (wii, xbox, playstation, ds, psp etc) and computer. It does not include the computer time spent doing homework. This guideline has been set to encourage children to be more physically active – particularly during day light hours.

It is found that children spend more time in front of a screen than any other activity other than sleeping. Compared with children who spend more than 2 hours in front of a screen are more likely to:

- Be overweight
- Be less physically active
- Drink more sugary drinks
- Snack on high sugar and fatty foods
- Have fewer social interactions

Tips for reducing Screen time

1. Know how many hours each day your child spends watching a screen
2. Make childrens bedrooms a screen free zone
3. Swap screen time for active time. Start slowly with 20 minutes a day
4. Set limits and stick to them. On most game consoles parents can place a limit on how much time is spent playing the console.

Source: CSIRO: 10 Steps for healthy families-Screen time

<http://www.csiro.au/resources/10-steps-for-healthy-families-ScreenTime.html>