



Gloucestershire Health and Care  
NHS Foundation Trust

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# Handy guide

## Screen Sense

For parents, carers, health visitors, public health nurses  
and community nursery nurses

## Screen sense

**Follow the screen sense guidance to help your child to:**

- promote healthy activity levels and weight for your child
- reduce sleep problems
- promote development of speech, social and physical skills.

**Under one** Babies under 4-5 months of age are not able to avert their gaze from a flickering light source and bright light from screens close to sleep time will disrupt sleep.<sup>1</sup>

Infants and toddlers should have no screen time except interactive video chat (FaceTime, Skype).<sup>2</sup>

Paediatricians recommend **1 hour** screen free time before bedtime-this includes bedtime videos.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Source: Cheung et al, 2017

<sup>2</sup>Sources: Australian Government Department of Health (2017), Canadian Paediatric Society (2017), American Academy of Paediatrics, Chassiakos et al, (2016)

<sup>3</sup>Source: The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH) 2019

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**Under two** From 18 months small amounts of high quality TV content is acceptable, provided a parent watches with the child.<sup>1</sup>

Infants and toddlers should have no other screen time except interactive video chat.<sup>2</sup>

Paediatricians recommend **1 hour** screen free time before bedtime - this includes bedtime videos.<sup>3</sup>

**Parents should act as role models when with their children - viewing suitable content together and otherwise avoiding screen use**

**Under five** For 2-5 year olds screen time should be limited to **1 hour** a day with parents present to interpret the content

Families should have a media plan to limit use of media.<sup>4</sup>

Paediatricians recommend **1 hour** screen free time before bedtime-this includes bedtime videos.<sup>5</sup>

**Research suggests that screen time shared with parents provides the most benefits for children (Public Health England 2012)**

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<sup>1/2/4</sup> Australian Government Department of Health (2017), Canadian Paediatric Society (2017), American Academy of Paediatrics, Chassiakos et al, (2016)

<sup>3/5</sup> The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH) 2019

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**Under five to Eleven** Restrict screen time (including TV, smartphones, tablets and video games) to no more than **2 hours** a day of **safe** content.

Paediatricians recommend 1 hour screen-free time before bedtime - this includes bedtime videos.<sup>1</sup>

Work towards open communication about online activity, rather than attempting to control it.<sup>2</sup>

## Useful websites

**Health Visiting** [www.ghc.nhs.uk/healthvisiting](http://www.ghc.nhs.uk/healthvisiting)

**Common Sense Media** [www.commonsensemedia.org](http://www.commonsensemedia.org)

**School Nursing** [www.ghc.nhs.uk/our-teams-and-services/school-nursing](http://www.ghc.nhs.uk/our-teams-and-services/school-nursing)

**Internet Matters** [www.internetmatters.org](http://www.internetmatters.org)

**Institute of Health Visiting** [www.ihv.org.uk](http://www.ihv.org.uk)

**Parent Zone** [www.parentzone.org.uk](http://www.parentzone.org.uk)

**Parenting for a Digital Future** [www.parenting.digital](http://www.parenting.digital)

**UK Safer Internet Centre** [www.saferinternet.org.uk](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk)

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<sup>1</sup> The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH) 2019

<sup>2</sup> Source: Hill, Smith, DR. A 2015, Self-harm: facts for parents