If your child spends a lot of time on screens and you are worried about their:

- language skills
- sleep
- weight

you may need to limit their screen time.

What can you do instead with your child?

To reduce screen time, you can do some of the following with your child.

- Play with sand, water or Play Doh.
- Sing nursery rhymes.
- Read books with pictures or sounds.
- Role play using toys and be, for example, a kitchen cook, builder or nurse.
- Play games where you take turns like bowling, hide and seek or card games.
- Sit and chat to them.

Your child copies what you do. If your child sees you having less screen time and doing more fun activities, this will encourage them to do the same.

Speech and Language Therapy
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HSE Dublin North City and County
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For more information see:
www.mychild.ie and www.makeastart.ie

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A parent's or guardian's guide to screen time

Children aged 0-5 years

Turn off and tune in to fun!

safefood   HSE   hi

How much screen time is appropriate for my child every day?

Children aged 0 to 18 months
Try to avoid using any screens with them, other than video calls with family.

Children aged 18 months to 5 years
If you are using screens with your child, watch the programmes or other digital media with them. Try to limit their screen time to less than one hour a day.

When you use screens with your child, chat to them about what you are seeing and hearing. It helps them to understand how they relate to their world.

Which programmes are suitable for my child?

Educational TV programmes, apps and games. See www.mychild.ie and www.commonsensemedia.org for advice on which programmes are suitable for your child.

Too much time on screens and tv might lead to ...

Delayed language skills
Too much screen time can limit the number of words and sentences toddlers use.

Sleep problems
Too much screen time can lead to poor sleep. This can affect your child's mood, behaviour and concentration.

Weight problems
Too much screen time can lead to weight problems for your child.

Less family time
Too much screen time for a child means they spend less time talking with you, their brothers and sisters and others. The more your child talks the more words they will have.

Less time reading
Your child may spend less time looking at or reading books.

Encourage your child to play, be active, sleep and connect with others.
This will support your child's development.