

More Screen Time For Lil' Ones Means They Learn Less Overall

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Parents should limit how long kids watch video devices such as TVs, computers, phones and other digital gadgets with screens, especially if the children are younger than 2, according to guidelines issued by the *American Academy of Pediatrics* and reported by [The New York Times](#).

The new guidelines are less strict than the previous ones, but they still stressed that kids learn better and more from real interactions with people and things rather than from what they see on these video devices—even counting videos that are playing educational games, and even counting grown-up shows that happen to be playing in the background.

“This updated policy statement provides further evidence that media—both foreground and background—have potentially negative effects and no known positive effects for children younger than 2 years,” policy guidelines said.

The evidence the guidelines cited arrives from studies that show parents interact less with children when the TV is on and that kids are distracted by it—even when it’s on in the background. What’s more, the guidelines stressed that this, and parents’ screen-watching habits, may lead to developmental delays in kids and, more specifically, discourage a child from learning to talk.

In addition, pediatricians warned parents about using educational videos because kids younger than 2 don’t understand the images on the screen.

What pediatricians did recommend is that parents allow their kids to have unstructured playtime and that parents spend more time talking with their children.

And grown-ups beware. TV viewing doesn’t only affect children; the amount of time you watch the boob tube may also affect how well you sleep. [Click here](#) to read more.