



**AAP Policy statement:**

**Media use in school-  
aged children and  
adolescents**

Megan A Moreno, MD, MSED, MPH

Professor and Interim Chair of Pediatrics, University of Wisconsin Madison

Co-medical director: AAP Center of Excellence on Digital Media and Youth Mental Health

# The AAP



- The American Academy of Pediatrics is an organization of 67,000 primary care pediatricians, pediatric medical subspecialists and pediatric surgical specialists dedicated to the health, safety and well-being of infants, children, adolescents and young adults.

# AAP Policy statement process

- Multistep
  - Policy proposal generated by council or committee
    - Undergoes review
      - Sufficient evidence, relevant to clinical practice, able to create recommendations
  - If approved, process includes
    - Extensive literature review
    - Framing of key points
    - Discussion to consensus on recommendations within initial committee
  - Once written, process includes
    - Review and feedback by other related committees within AAP
    - Then up chain of approval
  - Full process takes 12-18 months

# Previous AAP media policies

Encompassed  
children ages 0-18

Grounded in  
evidence and  
recommendations  
for broadcast media  
(e.g. TV)

2 hours a day

# 2016 AAP media policy changes

- Two policy statements
  - Media and young minds (0-5)
  - Media use in school-aged children and adolescents (5-18)
- No singular screen time limit
  - No definitive evidence to support one
  - Shift in emphasis on attending to age, developmental stage, and quality of media
  - Addressed rise in digital media
- Recognition of benefits and risks of media

# Media use in school-aged children and adolescents: **Benefits**

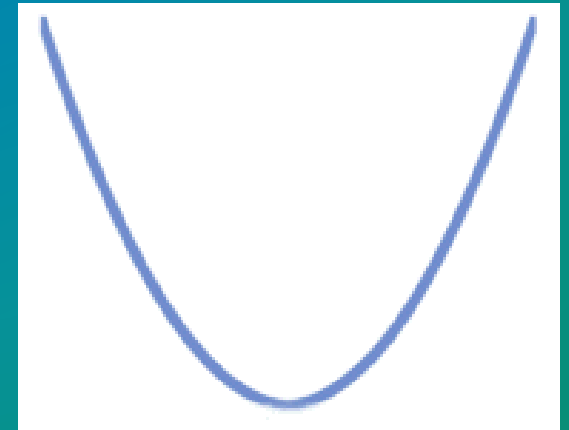
- **Benefits**
  - Exposure to new ideas and information
  - Interaction: promoting community participation and civic engagement
  - Collaboration on projects and school assignments
  - Connection to family and friends geographically separated
  - Access to support networks

# Media use in school-aged children and adolescents: **Risks**

- **Risks**
  - Overweight and obesity
  - Sleep
  - Problematic internet use/video gaming addiction
  - Multitasking
  - Exposure to risky content
  - Tech-specific risks: cyberbullying, sexting, online solicitation

# Media use in school-aged children and adolescents

- Social media and mental health
  - May not be linear relationship (U shaped curve)
  - Quantity may not be only factor (quality and interactions important)
- Privacy concerns
- Parent media use





# Media use in school-aged children and adolescents: **Conclusions**

- Effects are multifactorial and depend on
  - Type of media
  - Type of use
  - Amount and extent of use
  - Characteristics of the individual child
- Children growing up in a highly personalized media environment, so need to have a personalized media plan for the child

# Recommendations

- **Pediatricians**
  - Work with families and schools to promote understanding of the benefits and risks of media
  - Promote adherence to guidelines for adequate physical activity and sleep via a **Family Media Use Plan**
  - Advocate for and promote information and training in media literacy
  - Be aware of tools to screen for sexting, cyberbullying, problematic Internet use, and Internet gaming disorder

# Recommendations

- **Families**

- Develop, consistently follow, and routinely revisit a Family Media Use plan
  - Address what type of and how much media are used and what media behaviors are appropriate for each child or teenager, and for parents. **Place consistent limits on hours per day of media use as well as types of media used.**
  - Promote that children and adolescents get the recommended amount of **daily physical activity** (1 hour) and **adequate sleep** (8–12 hours, depending on age).
  - Recommend that children **not sleep with devices in their bedrooms**, including TVs, computers, and smartphones. Avoid exposure to devices or screens for 1 hour before bedtime.
  - Discourage entertainment media while doing **homework**.
  - Designate media-free times together (eg, family dinner) and media-free locations (eg, bedrooms) in homes. Promote activities that are likely to **facilitate development and health**, including positive parenting activities, such as reading, teaching, talking, and playing together.

# Recommendations

- **Families**

- Engage in selecting and **co-viewing media** with your child, through which your child can use media to learn and be creative, and share these experiences with your family and your community.
- Have **ongoing communication with children about online citizenship and safety**, including treating others with respect online and offline, avoiding cyberbullying and sexting, being wary of online solicitation, and avoiding communications that can compromise personal privacy and safety.
- Actively develop a **network of trusted adults** (eg, aunts, uncles, coaches, etc) who can engage with children through social media and to whom children can turn when they encounter challenges.

# Recommendations

- **Researchers, Governmental Organizations, and Industry**
- Continue research into the risks and benefits of media.
  - Prioritize longitudinal and robust study designs, including new methodologies for understanding media exposure and use.
  - Prioritize interventions including reducing harmful media use and preventing and addressing harmful media experiences.
- Inform educators and legislators about research findings so they can develop updated guidelines for safe and productive media use.

# Family media use plan 1.0

# Family media use plan 1.0

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the title 'AAP Media Plan'. The address bar displays the URL 'https://www.healthychildren.org/English/media/Pages/default.aspx'. The website header features the 'healthychildren.org' logo. A left sidebar contains three menu items: 'Home', 'Create Your Family Media Plan', and 'Media Time Calculator'. The main content area is titled 'Family Media Plan' in a large, bold, orange font. Below the title, there is a paragraph explaining that media should work within family values and parenting style, and that it can displace important activities like face-to-face interaction. This is followed by a paragraph stating that creating a personalized plan helps parents and users think about their media goals and rules. A note mentions that the information entered will remain private and confidential. A link is provided to find Spanish information. At the bottom, a 'Get Started' section contains two large buttons: an orange button for 'Create Your Family Media Plan' and a green button for 'Media Time Calculator', both with right-pointing arrows.

AAP Media Plan

https://www.healthychildren.org/English/media/Pages/default.aspx

healthychildren.org

Home

Create Your Family Media Plan

Media Time Calculator

## Family Media Plan

Media should work for you & work within your family values & parenting style. When media is used thoughtfully & appropriately, media can enhance daily life. But when used inappropriately or without thought, media can displace many important activities such as face-to-face interaction, family-time, outdoor-play, exercise, unplugged downtime & sleep.

By creating a Personalized Family Media Use Plan, you can be aware of when you are using media to achieve your purpose. This requires parents & users to think about what they want those purposes to be. The tool below will help you to think about media & create goals & rules that are in line with your family's values.

To make YOUR family's Media Use Plan, start by entering your family's information. This information will remain private and confidential.

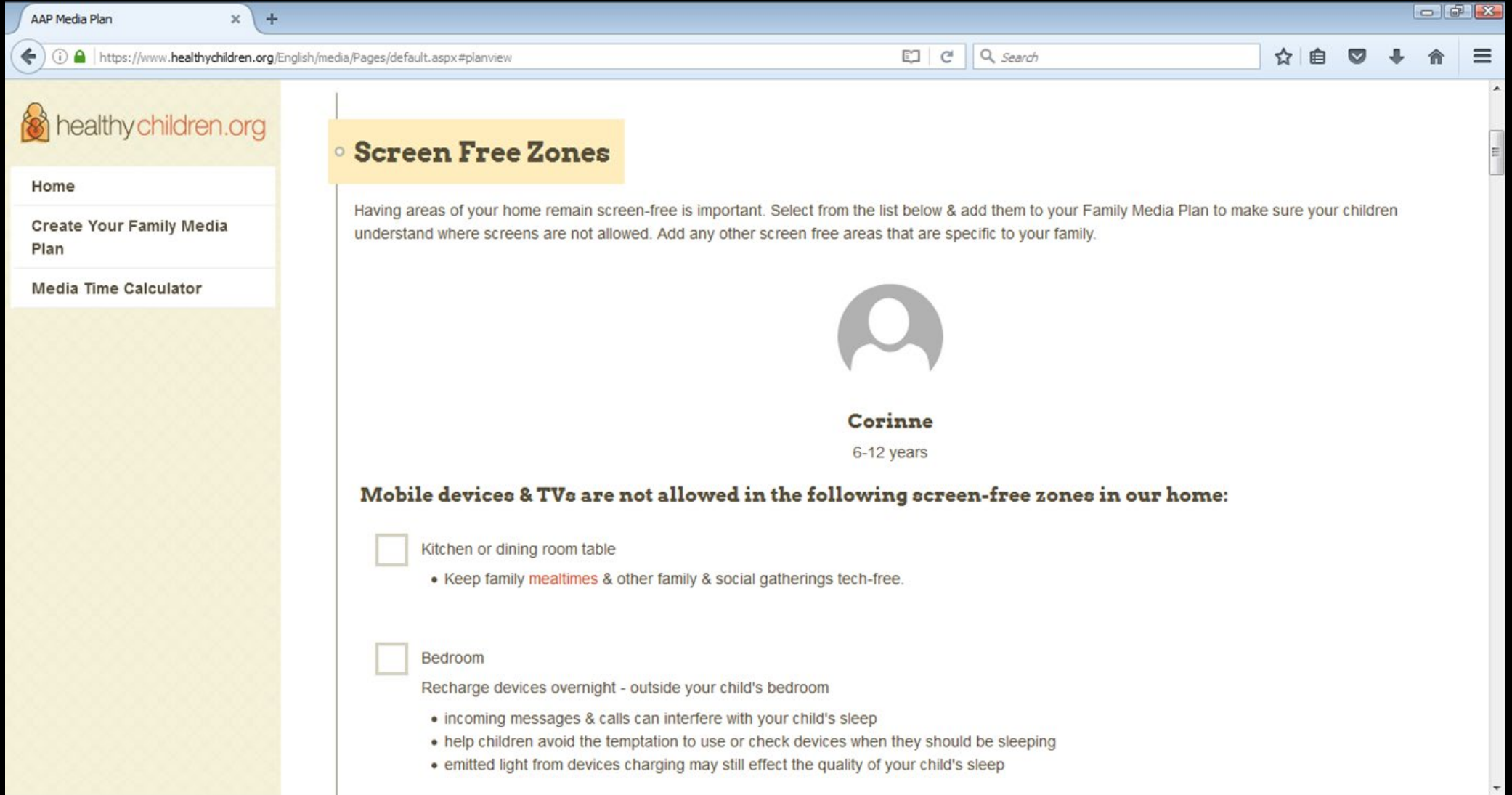
To find this information in Spanish, click [here](#).

### Get Started

Create Your Family Media Plan →

Media Time Calculator →


# Family media use plan 1.0



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the address bar displaying <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/media/Pages/default.aspx#planview>. The page features the **healthychildren.org** logo and a sidebar with links to **Home**, **Create Your Family Media Plan**, and **Media Time Calculator**.

## Screen Free Zones

Having areas of your home remain screen-free is important. Select from the list below & add them to your Family Media Plan to make sure your children understand where screens are not allowed. Add any other screen free areas that are specific to your family.

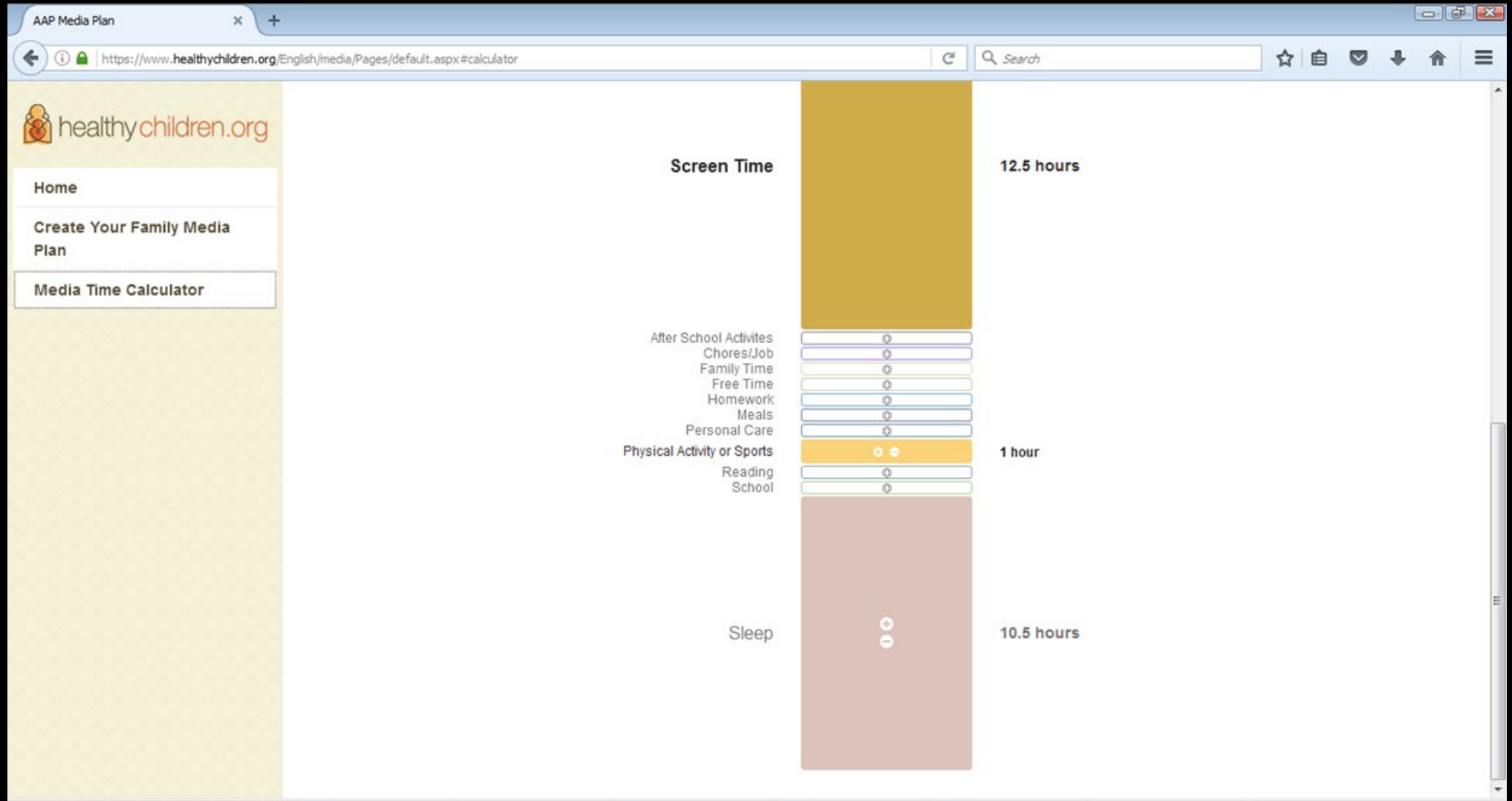
  
**Corinne**  
6-12 years

**Mobile devices & TVs are not allowed in the following screen-free zones in our home:**

- ☐ Kitchen or dining room table
  - Keep family **mealtimes** & other family & social gatherings tech-free.
- ☐ Bedroom
  - Recharge devices overnight - outside your child's bedroom
  - incoming messages & calls can interfere with your child's sleep
  - help children avoid the temptation to use or check devices when they should be sleeping
  - emitted light from devices charging may still effect the quality of your child's sleep



# Family media use plan 1.0



# Since 2016

- Policy reviewed in 2020
- Determined that recommendations still stand

# Since 2016

- **Effect of a Family Media Use Plan on Media Rule Engagement Among Adolescents: A Randomized Clinical Trial**
  - 1520 parent-child dyads
  - Online intervention, participants completed baseline survey and then were randomized into receiving Family Media Plan or control, follow up 2 months later
  - Outcome: Media rule engagement
  - Findings: No difference between groups in media rule engagement score

# Since 2016

- **Effect of a Family Media Use Plan on Media Rule Engagement Among Adolescents: A Randomized Clinical Trial**
  - Why?
    - Most people endorsed having lots of rules
    - May be harder to track or enforce (or remember)
    - Could not save or return to tool

# Family Media Plan 2.0

en  
ESPAÑOL

LOG IN | REGISTER

American Academy of Pediatrics  
DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™

Saved

## Family Media Plan

Media is everywhere, and managing it all can be tough. Creating a Family Media Plan can help you and your children set media priorities that matter most to your family. Come back to revise your plan as often as you need to, such as at the beginning of each school year or during summer and holiday breaks.

### Here's how it works


Since media habits are different for every household, the Family Media Plan can be customized to meet your family's needs. Make a full plan, or just choose a few parts that matter the most to your family.

The Family Media Plan includes:

- A list of media priorities to choose from
- Practical tips to help make the plan work
- Why it's important
- The ability to print or share your finished plan
- The option to save your plan and return as often as you'd like to make changes

To find this information in Spanish, [click here](#).

Continue  
1 of 11  
→



Create or Update Your Family Media Plan

Learn to Use the Family Media Plan

Already started your plan? Continue here.

First time here? View our video tour to get started.

en  
ESPAÑOL

LOG IN | REGISTER

American Academy of Pediatrics  
DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™



Home



Tutorial



My Family



Priorities



Media  
Balance



Communicating  
About Media



Kindness &  
Empathy



Digital  
Privacy &  
Safety



Screen Free  
Zones



Screen Free  
Times



Choosing  
Good  
Content



Using Media  
Together



Review



## My Family

+ Add Another Family Member

Back  
←



Family Member's Name \*

Age

0-24  
months

2-5 years

6-12  
years

13-18  
years

Adult



Family Member's Name \*

Age

0-24  
months

2-5 years

6-12  
years

13-18  
years

Adult



+ Add Another Family Member

Continue  
2 of 11





Home



Tutorial



My Family



Priorities

Media  
BalanceCommunicating  
About MediaKindness &  
EmpathyDigital  
Privacy &  
SafetyScreen Free  
ZonesScreen Free  
TimesChoosing  
Good  
ContentUsing Media  
Together

Review

settings, reporting and flagging inappropriate content and ongoing conversations about online behavior.



### Screen Free Zones

Having areas of your home remain screen-free benefits a child's health and development in many ways. A big part of this is understanding and agreeing as a family where screens are not allowed.



### Screen Free Times

Screens don't have to be in every moment and every space of our day, trying to grab everyone's attention. Carving out time for family conversations and play is really important for your child's health and development.



### Choosing Good Content

There are millions of shows, apps and video games trying to get your family's attention. Finding content that is a good fit with your family can take work. However, it's worth it to find media that gives your child creative experiences, positive role models and true enjoyment.



### Using Media Together

Not all screen time is created equal. Enjoying movie night, watching an educational video or exploring a learning app together, for example, turns screen time into family time. Using digital media together can build bonds, promote learning and show your child that you care about what matters to them.

[Select All](#)

**Tip:** Select just a few priorities to start. You can come back and add more goals to try later. Choosing priorities that motivate you the most can make it easier to stick with a **Family Media Plan**. Involving your kids in the choices may also help.

Back  
1 of 10  
←

Continue  
3 of 10  
→



# Where are we headed?

## Center of Excellence

- AAP was awarded \$10 million over five years from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), to establish a National Center of Excellence on Social Media and Mental Wellness
- *Center of Excellence: Creating a Healthy Digital Ecosystem for Children and Youth.*
- Co medical directors
  - Megan Moreno: Adolescent health
  - Jenny Radesky: Developmental and behavioral pediatrics
- Technical Expert Panel: educators, clinicians, youth, parent and community representatives, researchers, and industry representatives, and a diverse Youth Advisory Panel



# AAP Center of Excellence

**The Center's goals are to:**

- 1) improve pediatric mental wellbeing by reducing the risks and leveraging the benefits of social media
- 2) build the capacity of individuals who work with youth to mitigate social media's impact on mental wellbeing and promote healthy social media use, and
- 3) synthesize and promote the evidence base and best practices for healthy social media use via communication, guidance, and other resources.

# AAP Center of Excellence

