

What you need to know about school, media, and children/teens



Center on Media
and Child Health
ASK THE MEDIATRICIAN

How children and teens think about and understand school is important to developing healthy attitudes about learning, now and into the future. This tip sheet will help you understand how media can positively and negatively affect children's beliefs about school and learning. Use this information as a guide to help you choose media that are best for your child.

What do we mean by media?

TV	Internet	Music
Movies	Social Media	Books
Videos	Video Games	Apps

Media use facts

- Different types of educational media can help children and teens build problem-solving skills, reading skills and, for younger children, general school-readiness skills.
- Media can help children with their learning, such as watching a video on dinosaurs, or chatting with teens in another country through social media.
- Media can distract from learning. Multitasking with media, such as texting while trying to do homework, can take away from children's ability to focus and complete their work.

What you can do for your children and teens

- Choose media that are designed to teach children skills that will help them achieve specific learning goals.
- Find media that engage your child's interests, and allows them to explore topics outside of the classroom.
- Set up a homework station where you can monitor children's media use and be available for any questions. Help keep them focused on tasks by eliminating distractions and reminding them of their goals.

Remember

Media are not the problem—it is how we use them that results in help or harm. Mindful and focused media use can be healthy for children and teens.