

# What you need to know about time management, media, and children/teens



Center on Media  
and Child Health  
ASK THE MEDIATRICIAN

How children and teens think about and understand their time is important to developing healthy routines and time management skills, now and into the future. This tip sheet will help you understand how media can positively and negatively affect children's understanding of how they use their time. Use this information as a guide to help you choose and monitor 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

- Media can be a healthy part of a child's life when balanced with other activities, like sleep, family meal time, social time with friends, outdoor play, reading books, and completing homework.
- Excessive media use can cause issues in children and teens, including problems with weight, sleep, anger management, and poor school performance. Some of these problems can last into adulthood if not addressed.
- Children who are likely to have or develop mental health issues are more likely to turn to media and may spend unhealthy amounts of time in front of screens.

## What you can do for your children and teens

- Help your child maintain a healthy balance of media and non-media activities in their daily lives.
- Be a time management role model. Make sure to have media-free times in your day, and show your children and teens that they don't need to be online at all times.
- Be mindful of your child's needs. Monitor their media use and set boundaries when needed.

### 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.