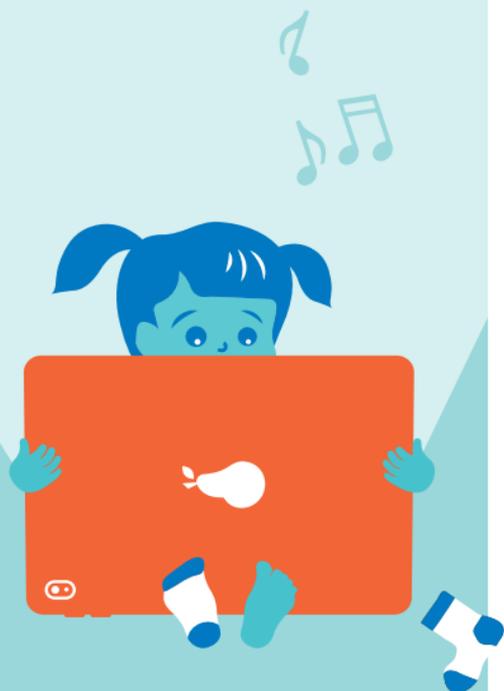


YOUNG CHILDREN AND DIGITAL DEVICES – A GOOD START

Guide to parents of
children aged 1– 5

What should i be aware
of when my child uses a
digital device?



Guidance from and shared experiences with parents can help give children a good introduction to the use of digital devices. This guide provides tips on how to deal with the use of digital devices in your family. It is normal to be uncertain about everything from screen time to the suitability of content for children aged 1 to 5. We hope you will find the advice in this guide useful.

ACCESS TO DIGITAL DEVICES

Nearly half of parents with children aged 1 to 5 report that their child has access to a television (54 per cent) or tablet (48 per cent). The proportion increases steadily with age, and one in every four (24 per cent) 4–5-year-olds have their own tablet. The youngest children typically watch films, series and TV programmes, in addition to YouTube or YouTube Kids. The proportion viewing content on these channels also increases with age.

Source: Young children and media 2020.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT BEFORE GIVING YOUR CHILD ACCESS

Most children have access to televisions and tablets, and many parents let their children use digital devices from a young age. Before doing so, you should familiarise yourself with the apps, websites and content that the child can use, and give consideration to where and for how long you are happy with the child using digital devices. Be aware, and use parental controls where necessary to restrict access and content. At the end of the brochure, you will find a QR code (link) that will take you to several useful websites.

STRIKING A BALANCE

Many parents wonder how much screen time their child should have. The World Health Organization recommends that children under the age of 2 should not use digital devices at all. For 2–5-year-olds, it is recommended that screen time is spent with an adult, and for a maximum of 1 hour every day, but preferably less. A minimum of 2 hours of active play/physical activity is also encouraged every day from the age of one.

No two families are alike, so we recommend that you find a solution that suits your family.



Does the child get upset when their device is put away? What can you do differently to ensure a smoother transition from screen to something else?

TIP 1: MAKE SURE THAT USING DIGITAL DEVICES IS NOT YOUR CHILD'S ONLY ACTIVITY

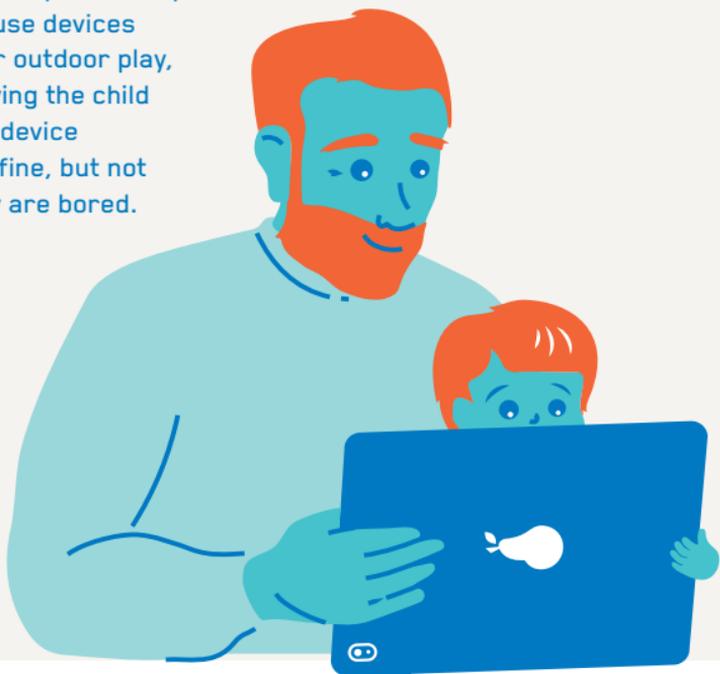
Children need to learn by doing and by experiencing things physically, not just through a screen. Make sure your child engages in physical activity every day.

TIP 2: DRAW UP RULES FOR SCREEN TIME

Be clear to the child about when they can use digital devices and for how long. It may for example be wise not to use devices during meals or outdoor play, or in bed. Allowing the child to use a digital device occasionally is fine, but not every time they are bored.

TIP 3: AVOID USE OF DIGITAL DEVICES JUST BEFORE BEDTIME

Children need time to 'round off the day' with you as a parent. A luminous screen can easily stimulate the child and make them restless. How about reading a book together or singing with the child?



CONTENT

Apps, videos, books and games can be both educational and entertaining, but it is important that the content is appropriate for the child's age. The age limits specified on films, TV programmes and games can be helpful, and you can also take into account the maturity of the child and their tolerance limit.

TIP 1: TEST YOURSELF FIRST

Before giving your child access to downloaded content, test it out to see if it is appropriate, if it will capture the child's interest and if it is easy to use.

TIP 2: ASK OTHER ADULTS

When selecting suitable films, apps or games, you can ask pre-school teachers or other parents etc. for advice. Raise the subject at a parents' meeting in your child's day care centre, or ask for help if you need it. Check age limits and follow these if you are unsure.

TIP 3: HELP YOUR CHILD MAKE INFORMED CHOICES

The youngest children will use the content that you find for them, but they may eventually

be exposed to content that is not suitable for children. Talk to your child about what content you think is and isn't appropriate, and explain why. At this age, it is the parents who need to make good choices for their child, but by talking to the child you can help them to understand and to gradually start making good choices for themselves.

Do you have rules for the use of digital devices in your family? Have you talked to the children about why adults' use of digital devices may differ from that of children?

PARTICIPATE WITH THE CHILD

It is important that you know what the child is doing, and it is good to look at content together to understand what the child likes. Find out what the child likes and is happy with, and discuss what they think about it along the way.

TIP 1: TALK TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT WHAT THEY ARE SEEING AND DOING

Discuss what your child is playing, or what the video they are watching is about. Be curious, not controlling. When discussing what they like to watch is the norm, the child is more likely to come to you if something happens that scares them.

TIP 2: SHOW THE CHILD HOW TO USE THE DIGITAL DEVICE, AND THINK ABOUT DISTANCE TO THE SCREEN AND SITTING POSITION

Young children have a lot to learn, including how different devices work. Although they learn quickly, not everything is intuitive for them. If the child will be using the device for quite a while, it is important that they have a good sitting position and are looking

at a large screen rather than a mobile phone.

TIP 3: BE A GOOD ROLE MODEL

Your own use of digital devices will serve as an example for your child. Think about where and how you use devices yourself. You can, for example, make an agreement not to use devices during meals or when having a conversation. Eye contact is very important when you are talking to each other.

Do you have an awareness of your own device use? Think about how and when you use devices when the child is present.

SAFETY ONLINE

When children access digital content, they can come across things that make them feel scared or unsafe. Safety starts with the framework you set around the child's internet use. Talk about what can happen, and show the child how to turn off the device if he or she is frightened by something.

1: USE PARENTAL CONTROLS

Parental control settings can reduce the likelihood of a child coming across harmful content, but nothing is 100% safe. Pay attention to what they are doing, it is you that is responsible.

2: SHOW THE CHILD SHORTCUTS

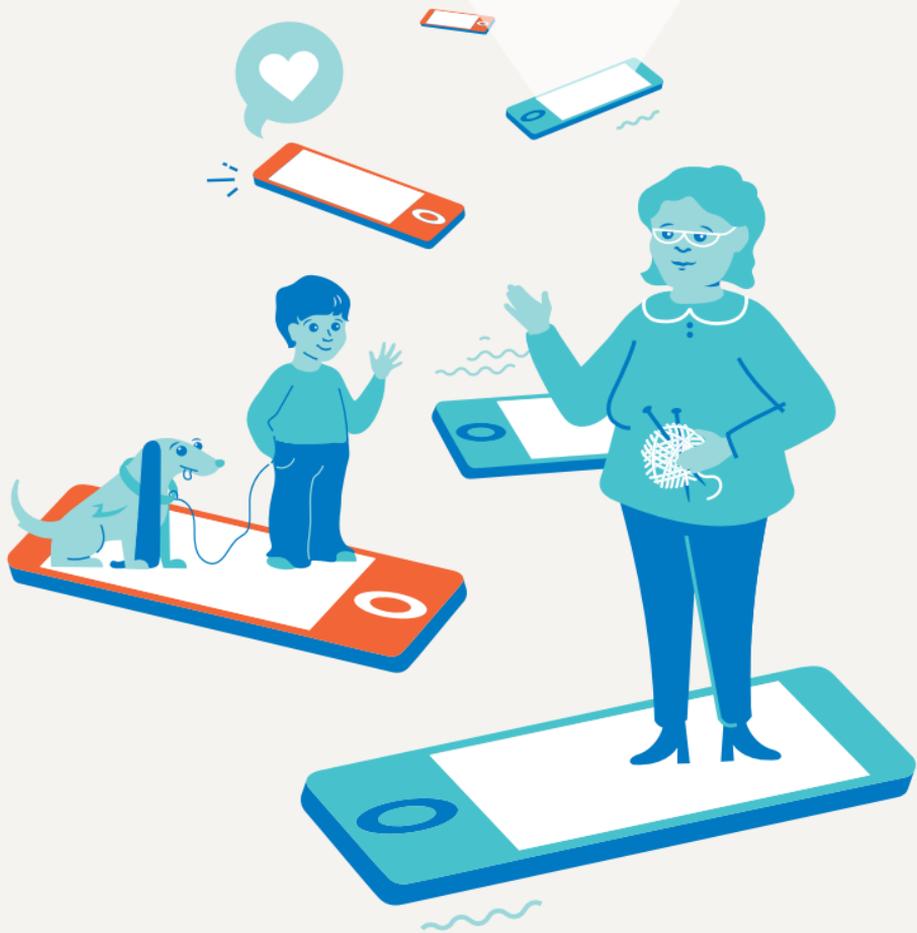
It is difficult to make agreements with very young children. Show them how to turn the device off quickly if they see something horrible or scary, and ask them to tell you right away.

3: HAS THE CHILD ACCIDENTALLY SEEN SOMETHING THAT SCARED THEM? COMFORT AND CALM THE CHILD, AND TALK ABOUT IT.

Children can come across content online that is not meant for them. Look at what they saw, and talk about how the child felt about it. Let the child speak freely, and listen attentively.

**What framework is right for your child?
Can the use of parental controls help
solve the problem?**





ENTERTAINMENT AND SOCIAL INTERACTION

Children like using digital devices because they are fun and because they can learn from them. They can also be used to stay in touch with others, such as grandparents.

Do you take the time to sit down and explore digital content with your child? And do you discuss what content they are accessing and what they are doing?

TIP 1: USE DIGITAL MEDIA WHEN RELAXING

After a busy day, it can be nice to relax with some digital entertainment, both for adults and children. Watch a film or play a game together.

TIP 2: BE CREATIVE AND CREATE SOMETHING

Use a digital device to create something with the child. Many apps allow the child to build something themselves, create music or engage in other creative activities.

TIP 3: STAY IN TOUCH

Many children have family and friends who live in another city or country. Digital devices can help children stay in touch with others.

And remember, a child's right to privacy takes precedence over a parent's desire to share photos of their child online.

For more information, an overview of resources and how to set parental controls, scan the QR code with your mobile phone and open the website:



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