

Santa Fe TV Turn Off Coalition's

HEALTHY SCREEN GUIDELINES for Parents

TV, Videos and DVDs, Video and Computer Games

BABIES AND VERY YOUNG CHILDREN, AGES 0 – 2

Watch None

Babies and very young children grow well when they talk, listen and play with real people. They learn through all of their senses—touch, smell, taste, sound and sight. They need time to move their growing bodies and explore their new world. Doctors recommend that children not view any screens until at least 3 years of age.

YOUNG CHILDREN, AGES 3 – 7

Watch Less: 0 - 2 hours/day: Set rules to limit time spent watching shows. Younger children may enjoy some screen time, but make sure they still have lots of time to talk, play, move and read. Screens such as TVs should not be in bedrooms where they can't be supervised.

Watch Better: Choose shows that have little or no ads, violence, sex, or drug use. Look for shows with positive social messages that agree with your values. Videos and DVDs allow more control. They also have fewer ads than TV.

Watch Smarter: You can begin to help your child understand that what is shown is not real. Discuss what would really happen if someone did what was shown on the screen. You can also explore better ways to solve problems.

Watch Together: Watch shows with your child so you share the experience. When you watch together, you can also monitor what your child sees.

CHILDREN, AGES 8 – 12

Watch Less: 0 - 2 hours/day: Set rules to limit watching, such as after homework and chores are done, on the weekends, or after dinner. Don't let watching get in the way of school, reading, sports, or fun.

Watch Better: Work with your child to select shows that have little ads, violence, sex, or drug use. Look for shows with positive social messages that agree with your values. Videos and

DVDs allow more control. They also have fewer ads than TV.

Watch Smarter: Talk to your child about what they are viewing. Ask what would really happen if someone did what was shown. Explore how ads encourage children to buy things that they don't need. Discuss the values being shown.

Watch Together: Watch shows with your child so it is a shared experience. It also helps to watch together so that you can monitor what your child watches.

TEENS, AGES 13 – 18

Watch Less: 0 - 2 hours/day: Talk to your teen about how they want to fit screens into their lives. Ask questions about the impact of media time on friends, school, reading, sports, arts, etc.

Watch Better: Encourage your teen to choose shows that have fewer ads. Suggest shows in which violence, sex, and drug use are shown for a reason, not just for thrills. Videos and DVDs allow more control and fewer ads than TV.

Watch Smarter: Teach your teen the skills to analyze hidden messages and ad techniques. Talk about how and why the media raises expectations and leaves people dissatisfied.

Watch Together: Watch shows with your teen. Learn about what they like and be together.