



## Resources

### American Academy of Pediatrics

([www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org))

Information about physical, mental, and social health for all

### Common Sense Media

([www.commonsensemedia.org](http://www.commonsensemedia.org))

Nonprofit organization to help kids and families learn about and from technology and media

### Public Broadcasting Service

([www.pbskids.com](http://www.pbskids.com))

Appropriate programming for young children to learn

### Regional Center of Orange County

([www.rcocdd.com](http://www.rcocdd.com))

Private nonprofit organization which serves and supports people with developmental disabilities in Orange County. Contact RCOC for more information and a free assessment

### Sesame Workshop

([www.sesameworkshop.org](http://www.sesameworkshop.org))

Appropriate programming for young children to learn

## Positive Parenting Tips

To help promote strong executive functioning, you can:

### Infant (Birth to 1 year)

- Play peek-a-boo to help with memory and patience
- Hide a toy and encourage your baby to look for it
- Sing songs and encourage your baby to imitate hand movements
- Give your baby a chance to calm themselves. Learning to self-calm is an important skill

### Toddler (1 to 3 years)

- Sing songs that use the whole body (Hokey Pokey, If You're Happy)
- Play simple games that require your child to learn how to take turns
- Play matching and sorting games
- Plan family activities outdoors
- When your child fights with another, use it as an opportunity to play together and take turns
- Use consistent and easy words to target positive behavior (indoor voice, gentle hands, calm body)

### Preschool (3 to 5 years)

- Avoid fast-paced cartoons
- Have toys ready for imaginative and pretend play
- Give your child the option to choose activities
- Cook meals together
- Have your child help with simple chores. Make a to-do list and check them off together as you both do them
- Play games with clear goals that take time (scavenger hunt, puzzle, board games)
- Use a visual schedule to help remind your child of their routine



## Screen Time and Your Preschooler

### Executive Functioning



## Screen Time Recommendations

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends the following:

- You should avoid screen time for children younger than 18 months old
- You can begin introducing media to children 18-24 months old
- You can allow up to 1 hour per day for children 2-5 years old. Only allow high quality programming such as Sesame Street or PBS

Watch along with your child to monitor what they watch and help apply what they see. Ask questions about what they are seeing and apply it to your home life

### What is Executive Functioning (EF)?

EF is a set of skills we use to reach our goals. It includes 3 key functions: working memory, mental flexibility, and self-control.

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*EF skills are critical for learning and development. Skills can be taught through consistent practice*

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#### *Working Memory:*

The ability to remember a piece of information, make changes to it, and create new information. For example, remembering the rules to a game and whose turn it is.

#### *Mental Flexibility:*

The ability to adjust to new situations when something unexpected happens. For example, when a child's daily routine changes.

#### *Self-Control:*

Ignoring distractions and thinking before acting. For example, controlling their behavior when a toy is taken away or when parents say no.



### Why is EF Important?

Good EF skills help your child be successful in school and social settings. Children use EF during play and work. When playing a game, your child needs to know the rules (memory), wait their turn (self-control), and react to other children (mental flexibility)

### How does Screen Time Affect EF?

Too much or inappropriate (e.g., mature content) screen time can be harmful to your child.

TV shows that are beyond preschool age are typically fast paced. This has been shown to decrease children's abilities to remember, pay attention, and control their behaviors.

Smartphones and tablets give your child games at the touch of a screen. This instant feedback can cause young children to grow impatient more quickly. Simple tasks such as waiting in line, taking turns, and waiting until after dinner for dessert all become hard to do.