



## Learning Session 5: Reducing Screen Time & Celebrating Success

Early Childhood Health Promotion  
and Obesity Prevention

National Early Care and Education  
Learning Collaboratives (ECELC) Project




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- **Gretchen Swanson Center for Nutrition**
  - For the evaluation component of this national effort



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# Learning Session 5 Objectives

**At the end of the Learning Session, participants will be able to:**

1. Describe best practices for reducing screen time and identify change opportunities within their program;
2. Use storyboard presentations to show at least one change within their program that supported healthy eating, physical activity, screen time, and breastfeeding support;
3. Be able to identify local organizations/agencies that support early childhood providers ; and
4. Be prepared to continue their Action Plan to support implementation of best practices for healthy eating, physical activity, screen time and breastfeeding support in their program.



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# Learning Session 5



\*Go NAP SACC is a Nutrition and Physical Activity Self Assessment for Child Care for ECE settings comparing their current practices with a set of best practices

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# Healthy Kids, Healthy Future Quiz

## Healthy Kids, Healthy Future Checklist Quiz

The Healthy Kids, Healthy Future best practices are listed on the left. Please check the box under the statement that best describes your current situation.

Date Completed: \_\_\_\_\_

Best Practices	Yes, fully meeting this best practice	Making progress on meeting this best practice	Ready to get started on meeting this best practice	Unable to work on meeting this best practice right now
<b>Answer if you serve TODDLERS or PRESCHOOLERS</b>				
Drinking water is visible and available inside and outside for self-serve	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
100% fruit juice is limited to no more than 4-6 oz. per day per child and parents are encouraged to support this limit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sugary drinks, including fruit drinks, sports drinks, sweet tea, and soda, are never offered	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Children 2 years and older are served only 1% or skim/non-fat milk (unless otherwise directed by the child's health provider)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fruit (not juice) and/or a vegetable is served to toddlers and preschoolers at every meal (French fries, tater tots, and hash browns don't count as vegetables)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fresh fries, tater tots, hash browns, potato chips, or other fried or pre-fried potatoes are offered to toddlers and preschoolers no more than once a month (Baked fries are okay)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chicken nuggets, fish sticks, and other fried or pre-fried forms of frozen and breaded meats or fish are offered to toddlers and preschoolers no more than once a month	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Answer if you serve PRESCHOOLERS</b>				
All meals to preschoolers are served family style so that children are encouraged to serve themselves with limited help	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Healthy Kids, Healthy Future Quiz Page 1 of 2



Presenting Storyboards



## What is Screen Time?

- **What is screen time?**
  - TV, DVDs, videos
  - Computer time
  - Smart phone, tablets
  - Video games
  - Virtual reality headsets



## What are the concerns about screen time?

- While watching television may be an enjoyable activity, children lack the ability to gain educational value from it
- Moderation of screen time is key for healthy development and staying active
- Instead of spending time watching screens, children should be engaging in physical activity and or educational activities



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## Screen Time Rationale

- Gets in the way of exploring, playing, and social interaction
- Children who spend more time watching TV are more likely to be overweight or obese
- For children 8-16 months, every hour of viewing is associated with 6-8 fewer words learned
- More hours of viewing at age 3 can lead to decreased cognitive test scores at age 6



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## Make the Most of Screen Time

- **Technology is everywhere, so if it is used for *no more than 30 minutes per week* in your program choose strategies that support children's development**
  - Make screen time interactive – talk about what you're viewing and ask children to act out what they see
  - Point out new words, letters, and concepts
  - Discuss the issues the main characters face and how they overcome them
  - Help the child connect what they're viewing to the real world
  - Have children take turns using a device to teach them about sharing



## Make the Most of Screen Time

- **Choose strategies for including screen time that support children's healthy development.**
- Screen time should be playful and support creativity, exploration, pretend play, active play and outdoor activities. Ensure that:
  - Screen time does not take the place of healthier activities.
  - Children are at a developmentally appropriate level to engage in the technology.
  - Children explore the use of the various technologies available to them before use.



## Interactive Screen Time

- Interactive screen time = television programs, internet, tablets, e-books, applications (apps) and other content intended to encourage active and creative use to enhance social development among children and adults
- Interactive screen time strategies that support children's healthy development:
  - Talk about what you're viewing, ask children to act out what they see
  - Point out new words, letters, and concepts
  - Discuss the issues characters face and overcome
  - Help children connect what they view to the real world
  - Have children take turns using a device to teach them about sharing



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## Intentional Screen Time

- Intentional screen time = ECE providers using screen time in a purposeful, thoughtful, and appropriate way to enhance and extend curriculum, meet learning standards, and support individual children's learning
- **Intentional screen time practices that support children's healthy development**
  - Plan ahead
  - Think about and set learning goals
  - Preview and evaluate the media selection
  - Select media that will help children make connections with their peers and community
  - Offer breaks that transition the activity on the screen to a hands-on, real world activity.



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## Select Media With Intention



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## Best Practices for Screen Time

- **Don't allow any screen time for children less than two years.**
  - Babies and even toddlers (up to two years old) shouldn't get any screen time at all, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics
  - Activities that are active, social, and engage a child's senses – such as touching, exploring, and playing – are much more beneficial for brain development than watching television



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## Best Practices for Screen Time

- **Limit total screen time in ECE for children two years and older to no more than 30 minutes per week for educational or physical activity purposes only.**
  - The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends one hour or less of total screen time each day for children older than two
  - On average, preschool aged children watch about 4 hours of screen time, with the majority of it being watched at home
  - It's best to minimize screen time in ECE, to no more than 30 minutes per week to reduce the total amount of time children spend in front of screens
  - Many programs choose not to have any screen time for any children

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## Best Practices for Screen Time

- **Screen time should not be utilized during meal or snack time**
  - Socializing during meals and snacks is an important part of children's healthy development and is an opportunity for positive role modeling
  - Time during meals should be spent modeling appropriate eating behaviors and habits, encouraging children to try new foods, talking about nutrition, and supporting the development of children's gross and fine motor skills (e.g., self-serving of food)

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## Best Practices for Screen Time

- **Ensure that any screen media used is free of advertising and brand placement**
  - Advertising influences the food consumption of young children, and for everyone one-hour increase in TV viewing per day, children drink more sugar-sweetened beverages, eat more fast food, and consume more calories overall
  - *Be sure to review all media prior to use to make sure it is free of all advertising and branding*

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## Best Practices for Screen Time

- **Educate parents on how to reduce screen time, or teach media literacy education\* two times per year or more** \*Education opportunities can include special programs, newsletters, or information sheets
  - Many parents are not familiar with current screen time recommendations for children
  - It is important to educate parents about screen time, but also to partner with them to ensure children are not being exposed to too much screen time throughout the day
  - On average, children under two spend about 45 minutes in front of screens daily, and preschool aged children spend about 4 hours a day in front of a screen daily, most of which occurs at home.

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## Screen Time In the Classroom

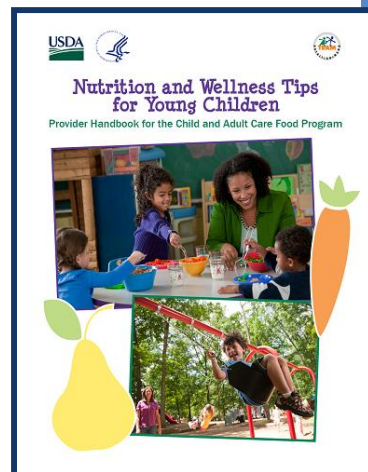
- **Digital technology can support dual language learners**
- **Various forms of technology can be beneficial when working with children with special needs**
- **Include cameras, phones and radios in exploratory centers**
  - Children have the opportunity to explore various forms of technology and can enhance gross and fine motor skill development



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## Ways to Cut Down on Screen Time

- ***Nutrition and Wellness Tips for Young Children: Provider Handbook for the Child and Adult Care Food Program Activities to Limit Screen Time:***
  - Play music: have children create their own dances
  - Organize puzzle time
  - Conduct a “pretend play” activity
  - Draw, color, create a sculpture or use playdough
  - Provide a sack of special activities: put together a box containing activities children do not normally engage in



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## "Go, Slow, or Whoa" Activity

- **If the statement is:**
  - **Recommended**, participants will **RUN** in place
  - **Limit**, you will **MARCH** in place
  - **Not recommended**, you will **STAND** in place



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## Early Learning Standards Physical Activity Break



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## Challenge: Screen time is needed as a distraction

- Screen time helps keep children distracted while performing necessary tasks, like setting up for lunch or cleaning.
- Solution #1: When cooking and cleaning, engage children by having them imitate your actions
- Solution #2: Provide opportunities for self-directed play
- Solution #3: Use nap time to complete tasks



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## Challenge: Child preferences for screen-based activities

- Preschoolers plead for permission to watch television and do other screen-based activities.
- Solution #1: Cover or hide screens so they are out of sight
- Solution #2: Enthusiastically suggest promote alternative activities that promote physical activity
- Solution #3: Identify age appropriate, educational programming
- Solution #4: Role model screen-free behaviors



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## Challenge: Parents not aware of the importance of limiting screen time

- Parents may not be aware of the effects of screen time on child development and may be pushing your program to offer more screen-based activities
- Solution #1: Educate parents with newsletters and workshops
- Solution #2: Post information about screen time on the class bulletin board or Facebook page
- Solution #3: Encourage parents to practice screen-free mealtimes or participate in a 'screen-free week' at home

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## Screen Free Moments: Promoting Healthy Habits



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Part C:  
Extending  
Your  
Learning -  
Staff,  
Families and  
Program  
Policies

## Families and Screen Time

- **Best practices to keep in mind include:**
  - Set expectations. Communicate physical activity and screen time policies when children enroll, and regularly throughout the year
  - Provide education to families on developmental milestones, ways to support physical activity, and how to reduce screen time
  - Give families regular feedback on their children’s progress related to gross motor skill development and developmental milestones
  - Work with families to adapt activities for children with physical or developmental disabilities





## Reducing Screen Time at Home

- **There are many ways to work with families to reduce screen time at home. Here are five examples:**
  1. Hold an annual family training at your child care center
  2. Recommend activities that promote interaction between parents and their child and among family members.
  3. Provide activity ideas that do not require direct participation of a parent
  4. Provide suggestions for how families might adjust their home environment to help limit screen time
  5. Encourage families to limit screen time to quality, educational programming

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## Staff Wellness and Screen Time

- **There are many ways that you and your staff can cut down on your personal screen time use:**
- Log your personal screen time and set goals to cut down!
- Turn your phone off from time to time to take mental breaks
- Turn off the TV during mealtimes
- Focus on other activities
- Find different ways to unwind (e.g., listening to music)
- Take up a new, active hobby.
- Plan screen-free activities with family and/or friends



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## Screen Time Policy

- **Have comprehensive screen time policies**
  - Written policies help everyone to have a clear and shared understanding of how your program supports reducing screen time
  - Be sure to regularly communicate policies for screen time to families along with all other program policies.



## Screen Time Policy

- **To be comprehensive, policies should include these best practices:**
  - Don't allow any screen time for children less than two years.
  - Limit total screen time in ECE for children two years and older to no more than 30 minutes per week for educational or physical activity purposes only.
  - Screen time should not be utilized during meal or snack time.
  - Ensure that any screen media used is free of advertising and brand placement.
  - Educate families on how to reduce screen time or teach media literacy education two times per year or more.



# Sample Screen Time Program Policy

Here are some examples of electronic devices policies from Louisiana centers:



### EXAMPLE 1:

It is the intent of the [CENTER NAME] to provide your child with many opportunities to investigate the world around them with concrete, hands-on learning activities while in school.

Screen time is any time spent in front of a screen, including a TV, computer, video game player or tablet.

We feel that age-appropriate screen time should be limited to no more than 15 minutes at a time at school for children age three and older.

Our children under the age of three will not have access to screen time.

Television programs may be offered no more than once a month for a maximum of an hour at a time. Movies will be occasionally allowed for 3 and 4-year-old preschool classes. All movies will be G-rated. Children will always be given other options and not forced to watch movies.

All screen time opportunities provided to preschool classes will be age-appropriate, commercial-free, and educational. When screen time opportunities are offered, the teacher will talk with children about what they are seeing and learning.

We feel young children learn best with hands-on activities using all their senses throughout the day.

### EXAMPLE 2:

Electronic devices are prohibited for children under age 2 and older children are limited to 2 hours per day.


### EXAMPLE 3:

The use of media, such as television, films and videotapes, computers and handheld electronic devices is limited to developmentally appropriate programming. Media are used to supplement curriculum or as a special event rather than as part of the regular daily routine.

- No child should be required to view the program – provide other options or activities for those not interested.
- Staff should discuss what is or was viewed with children both before and after view to develop critical thinking and viewing skills.
- Staff should provide appropriate "hands on" learning experiences for the purpose of embedding the concepts of the media in other developmentally appropriate ways.
- Electronic device activities are prohibited for children under age 2.
- Supervisors will ensure appropriate time limits for viewing and that viewing material is a part of the overall lesson. Individual or combined use of electronic devices should not exceed one hour per day for any child.




**Action Plan Worksheet**



**Start Date:** January  
**ECE Program Name:** ABC Child Care Center  
**Goal:** Limit screen time in our program and adopt a new screen time policy.

Child	Family	Program Staff	Program Environment	Program Policies
<p>Children under 2 years receive no screen time in the classrooms (Ongoing beginning January, Teachers).</p> <p>Children ages 2 years and older are limited to no more than 30 minutes per week in the classroom (Ongoing beginning January, Teachers).</p> <p>Screen time is used for educational or physical activity purposes only in the classroom (Ongoing beginning February, Teachers).</p> <p>Screen time is interactive and playful, supports creativity, exploration, pretend play, active and outdoor activities (Ongoing beginning February, Teachers).</p>	<p>Provide tip sheets to families regarding screen time (February, Program Director, Staff, Teachers).</p> <p>Create informational bulletin board with tips, suggestions, pictures of alternative activities for children other than screen time (February, Program Director, Staff, Teachers).</p> <p>Plan a "free screen night" parent/caregiver activity (March, Program Director, Staff, Teachers).</p> <p>Provide updated parent handbook to parents with new screen time policy (March, Program Director, Staff, Teachers).</p>	<p>Attend staff meeting to learn about screen time best practices (January, Program Staff &amp; Teachers).</p> <p>Begin using monthly screen time log to keep track of screen time in each classroom (February, Teachers)</p> <p>Interactive screen time will be planned ahead. Teachers will set learning goals, preview material, and help children to make connections to learning (February, Teachers)</p>	<p>Remove and store televisions in classrooms out of sight of the children (January, Teachers, Program Staff).</p> <p>Include cameras, phones, radios, etc. in exploratory centers for children to explore, learn, and enhance fine motor skills (January – February, Teachers).</p>	<p>Research screen time best practices and prepare for staff meeting (January, Program Director).</p> <p>Conduct staff training on screen time best practices (January, Program Director).</p> <p>Develop a monthly screen time log to keep track of screen time for each classroom (February, Program Director)</p> <p>Research screen time policies for ECE programs (February – March, Program Director).</p> <p>Write screen time policy for the program and include the updates in staff and parent handbooks (March, Program Director).</p>


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## Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education (SNAP-Ed)

### What is it?

- Program that supports nutrition education for eligible participants
- State regulated
- Educates and encourages participants to make healthy food choices
- Provides information, training, and additional resources

### How can it help me?

- Encourages participation in food and nutrition assistance programs
- Provides parent education
- Offers tools and resources to distribute to families
- Encourages partnerships with community organizations



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## Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP)

### What is it?

- Program designed for individuals with limited resources in acquiring the knowledge, skills, and attitudes useful in establishing nutritious diets
- Offers programs including
  - Adult EFNEP
  - Youth EFNEP
  - Program Delivery

### How can it help me?

- Offers workshops to educate families on:
  - Food safety
  - Nutrition
  - Physical activity
  - Buying food on a budget
- Provides tools and resources to help individuals and families lead healthier lives



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## Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

### What is it?

- Program that provides nutritious foods, education and counseling, screening and referrals to participants
- Target population are low income, nutritionally at risk pregnant women, breastfeeding and non breastfeeding women post-partum women, infants and children

### How can it help me?

- Provides funds for women and children for supplemental nutritious foods
- Offers one-on-one nutrition counseling to participants
- Provides referrals to other health and social services if needed



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## Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

### What is it?

- Federally-funded program administered by the State
- Provides partial reimbursement for meals for infants and children enrolled in ECE programs who serve children in low-income areas

### How can it help me?

- Save money on food purchased for meals
- Receive resources on nutrition and healthy eating
- Supports healthy child development
- If feeding a mother's breast milk, CACFP participating programs can receive a reimbursement



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## Quality Rating & Improvement System (QRIS)

### What is it?

- Standards that are designed to assess, improve, and communicate the level of quality of ECE programs and communicate ratings to the public
- Standards can be county- or statewide
- Uses a rating scale to assess level of quality

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### How can it help me?

- Increase the quality of your program
- Potentially receive incentives for participation
- Save costs through enrollment in financial assistance programs
- Have continued support through technical assistance



## Child Care Aware of America

### What is it?

- An agency that works with state and local Child Care Resource and Referral agencies (CCR&R) to ensure that all families have access to affordable child care and assistance to locate them

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### How can it help me?

- Increase enrollment
- Provide staff training
- Assist in developing a business and management plan
- Serve as a marketing tool





## Licensing Regulations

### What is it?

- A set of **minimum** guidelines regulated by the state that monitor the health and safety of licensed:
  - Child care programs
  - Family child care
  - Community based programs
  - Faith based programs
  - Head Start programs
- 49 ▪ Supported by the state

### How can it help me?

- Maintain a child care license when in compliance
- Provides technical assistance
- Informs parents of requirements that must be met



## Early Intervention Programs

### What do they do?

- Designed to address the educational and developmental needs of very young children with disabilities and those experiencing developmental delays
- Provides free developmental evaluations of children under three

### How can it help me?

- Provides support to children with developmental delays
- Assists in finding special educational services for children
- Works with families to provide resources and support
- Provides resources and training to staff





# Trainer Contact Information

