

Media Use and the Family

Through digital media we communicate with each other freely, entertain ourselves endlessly and find any type of information at the click of our fingers. Computers, tablets, cell phones, play stations and television are in the home and the community. The influence of media is everywhere.

Raising children in this digital age is filled with opportunity and also with challenges. The early years are a critical time in making healthy media choices and developing good habits that nurture positive growth. How can families successfully structure and navigate the virtual world on behalf of their young children?



This Welcome to Kindergarten document provides key messages for families of pre-schoolers regarding media and technology use.

WTK “Healthy Media” Key Messages:

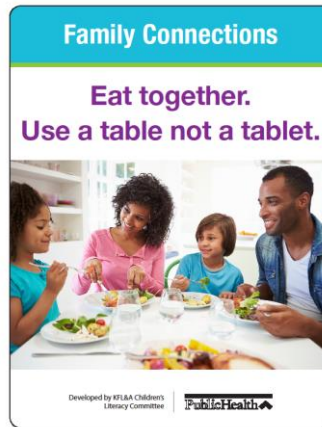
1. **Family Guidance:** Engage with your child in their media experience to help your child develop socially, promote language development and enrich learning.



2. **Media Content and Features:** Be selective about your child’s media experiences and look for open-ended, creative opportunities that generate conversation.



3. **Media Time and Family Life:** Balance media time with playtime. Make unplugged playtime a daily priority. Keep family mealtimes and other social gatherings tech-free.



Kingston, Frontenac and Lennox & Addington (KFL&A) Public Health

4. **Safety.** Use parental control settings that keep your child safe from inappropriate internet content. Check out the excellent parent resources at:

www.common sense media.org



Unhealthy Media Activities

1. Passive viewing, content with adult or violent themes, fast paced frenetic imagery and repetitive click and swipe game experiences.

“Video gaming before bed creates stress that leads to poor sleep; reading a book before bed creates relaxation that leads to restorative sleep”. Stuart Shanker

2. Using technology to manage behaviour. Media can be very effective in keeping kids calm and quiet, but it should not be the only way they learn to calm down. Children need to be taught how to identify and handle strong emotions, come up with activities to manage boredom, or calm down through breathing, talking about ways to solve the problem, and finding other strategies for channeling emotions.



3. Allowing children to access media whenever and wherever they please. Tech use is often sedentary. Kids need to be active to be healthy.



“Talk, Read, Sing, Play every day!” Welcome to Kindergarten