

ARE YOUR KIDS SPENDING TOO MUCH TIME WITH THE TUBE?

Screen or Scream

Recent studies have determined a positive correlation between increased sedentary time (not moving much) with increased obesity in all age groups, including children and youth.¹

There is an association between “screen time” (leisure time sitting in front of a TV, computer, or mobile device) and higher obesity rates. Interestingly enough, another sedentary activity, reading, was not associated with obesity for either gender.²

If you or your family members are in front of a screen during leisure times for more than 21 hours in a week, there is a definite increase in the chance of gaining weight and becoming obese.³

Test it! Just keep a one-week log of how much leisure (i.e. not school-related) time your kids spend with some kind of screen in front of them. Change nothing about what’s done in that week. You’ll be surprised (and so might they)!

¹ Canadian Consumer Health Survey 2006, Health Canada

² Statistics Canada – Sedentary Behavior and Obesity

³ Statistics Canada – Screen Time Among Canadian Adults



Did you know?

A 130-pound person will burn 89 calories in one hour of screen time versus 177 calories playing guitar and 472 playing hockey!⁴

⁴ NutriStrategy Chart, NutriStrategy.com



HEALTHY SNACKS FOR SEDENTARY ACTIVITY

- Try to have fewer high-calorie snacks when partaking in sedentary activity.
- The key is to have more nutrient-dense foods, chock-full of vitamins & minerals with less calories.
- Make sure that if the kids want a snack, they have to get up to enjoy it – get them moving more!
- Have a rule that eating is only done in the kitchen; food should stay in this area. That way, they have to move to get the grub.

SEDENTARY TIME SNACK IDEAS

- 1 sliced apple with a drizzle of caramel
- 1 cup veggie sticks with a few tablespoons of hummus or bean dip
- Skinless, non-breaded chicken strips with a few tablespoons of hummus
- 1 tablespoon peanut butter or light cream cheese on a few celery sticks
- Granola bar with nuts and seeds (watch the calories!)



CALORIES IN/CALORIES OUT – IT’S WAY MORE THAN YOU THINK⁵

To burn:

- 250 mL (1 cup) of vanilla ice cream with over 300 calories, it would take your child just under 1 hour of “full out” running to burn it off!
- 1 small bag of chips (43 g) with about 230 calories, it would take your child over 30 minutes of soccer practice to burn it off!
- 360 mL (12 oz) of a regular sports drink with 310 calories, it would take your child almost one hour of hockey (without breaks) to burn it off!

⁵ Health Canada - Nutrient Value of Some Common Foods

CANADIAN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY GUIDELINES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Guidelines – For health benefits, children and youth should accumulate at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous intensity physical activity on most days.

This should include:

- Vigorous-intensity activities at least 3 days per week
- Activities that strengthen muscle and bone at least 3 days per week

VIGOROUS ACTIVITY EXAMPLES

- Play tag
- Kick, toss, hit or throw a ball
- Martial arts

Combine screen time with family time. Play with the Nintendo Wii, or Microsoft’s Xbox Kinect and try games that get you moving, like fitness programs, sports, dance and more – just get active!

MUSCLE-BUILDING EXAMPLES

- Try yoga with your kids
- Play strength training games, like tug of war

Nintendo Wii, or Microsoft’s Xbox Kinect also offer some programs with strength training benefits. Try games that get you strong, like fitness programs, yoga programs, or even some of the other games.

Other helpful hints:

Balance sedentary time with some active time. Agree to a set time for sedentary activity with your kids and set an alarm on the device to indicate when it’s time to get more active.

- Active time can simply be helping with a few household chores