SCREEn TIME AND ITS IMPACT ON EARLY CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Children spend an average of 7.5 hours per day using entertainment technology causing them to be sedentary and bombarded with overstimulation. Use of technology, can interfere with development, behaviour, and learning. The younger the children are, the bigger the impact. Twenty-five years ago child mental illness was rare. Today, one in three children entering school is developmentally delayed, one in four is obese, one in six has a diagnosed mental illness, and one in 11 is addicted to technology.

Outdoor, unstructured play optimizes child development and learning. As a licensee you can teach and encourage children the importance of active play.

The following table provides an interesting guide for use of technology that you can use in your facility and share with parents and older children in care:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Developmental Age</th>
<th>How Much?</th>
<th>Non-violent TV</th>
<th>Hand-held devices</th>
<th>Non-violent video games</th>
<th>Violent video games</th>
<th>Online violent video games and/or pornography</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-2 years</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5 years</td>
<td>1 hour/day</td>
<td>1 hour/day</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-12 years</td>
<td>2 hours/day</td>
<td>2 hours/day</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13-18 years</td>
<td>2 hours/day</td>
<td>2 hours/day</td>
<td>2 hours/day</td>
<td>Limit to 30 minutes/day</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Never</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reducing the Use of Technology:

- Disconnect to reconnect by creating time without technology:
  - Designate certain days of the week during program hours to go without any technology
  - Create a “technology” free policy for your program

If your program chooses to permit technology use, balance ‘energy in’ (technology) with ‘energy out’ (movement, touch, connection, nature). An hour ‘in’ = ‘out’.

Video Gaming Facts:

Violent video games involve fighting and killing and can make children aggressive and defiant.

Video games:
- can overstimulate children and may contribute to attention deficit
- keep kids from moving, which can cause obesity which can lead to diabetes
- isolate children, robbing them of much needed human connection and touch. This can result in anxiety, sadness, and tantrums
- keep children indoors and may contribute to problems paying attention and learning