

*Playing on screens for a long time harms the eyes of young children as it makes them short-sighted.*

Ophthalmologists warn: long and frequent close-up viewing of a phone or tablet leads to the eyeballs growing too much and children becoming short-sighted. Babies and young children also need to learn to see spatially (in three dimensions) first. Flat screens prevent this, because children are unable to pick items up in their hands.

Ophthalmologists therefore recommend no computer, phone, tablet or TV for children under the age of 3! Over the age of three the maximum should be half an hour a day, and the eyes should be at least 30 cm away from the screen. Spending at least 2 hours outdoors in the light is important for children's eyes to develop in a healthy way

(recommendation from the Conference of the German Ophthalmological Society in 2018).

Recommendations of the World Health organisation on daily exercise, duration of sleep and screen times from infancy to the age of five: <https://www.bvpraevention.de/cms/index.asp?inst=newbv&snr=12809>

Further reading on children and media: <https://www.kindergesundheit-info.de/themen/medien/>



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# Phone and tablet: not for young children!



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## Babies aged 0-12 months

Electronic media such as phones, tablets, televisions and games consoles are harmful for babies and young children.



Babies want to

- 😊 hear the voices of Mummy and Daddy and listen to them
- 😊 play with Mummy and Daddy
- 😊 be part of everyday life
- 😊 move around freely on the floor/a blanket (not in a car seat or rocker)
- 😊 discover the world with their own hands
- 😊 cuddle
- 😊 have songs sung to them and listen to music
- 😊 put everything in their mouths
- 😊 look at picture books from around 6 months

## Young children aged 1-3

Children aged 1-3 want to learn to speak, play, move and discover the world!

How do children learn to speak? By Mummy and Daddy

- 😊 talking to the children as much as possible
- 😊 looking at picture books together with the children and reading them aloud
- 😊 explaining everyday life and naming things

**Young children aged 1-3 should not play with phones or tablets.**

- 😊 no games on phones/tablets/consoles
- 😊 do not use children's apps either
- 😊 do not watch series (YouTube/TV) - not even children's programmes
- 😊 children under the age of 3 cannot learn anything from screen media

What can a young child do with a phone? Together with their parents:

- 😊 take photos
- 😊 look at photos
- 😊 make short telephone or Skype calls

**Do not give your child the phone to calm them down!**

## Parents are role models:

Babies and young children notice exactly whether Mummy or Daddy is "there" for them in their thoughts and feelings or whether they are distracted by their phones.

Phones/computers/tablets steal your attention from your children.

Intentionally put your phone away or switch the television off to play, speak, frolic or cuddle with your child.



Dear Mummy, dear Daddy,  
put your phone away and  
play with me!