

Ages and Stages Tip Sheet

School Age Children Ages 6 to 10



Center on Media
and Child Health
ASK THE MEDIATRICIAN

How school age children are affected by media is important to their overall health and development. This tip sheet will help you understand how media can positively and negatively affect how they think, act, learn and grow. Use this information as a guide to help you choose media that are best for your child.

Media and School Age Children

The American Academy of Pediatrics suggests that parents set media limits for their children based on their child's individual needs. Below are some suggestions for how to best use media with your school-aged child:

Video

- The more children watch TV, the more likely they are to gain weight, have sleep problems, and have poor attention. Encourage your child to participate in different activities, such as playing outside and with friends, in addition to watching TV and movies.
- Advertisements can influence children's food choices. Limit commercials by using ad-free streaming services, or by fast-forwarding through commercials.
- Videos that show violence, drinking, smoking, and drug use can lead to children copying those behaviors. Monitor the TV shows and movies your children watch, limiting their exposure to these unhealthy behaviors.

Reading Materials

- Reading can help children learn and develop their critical thinking skills. Help your child choose age-based reading materials that interest and challenge them, such as fantasy novels, gaming blogs, or comics.

Music

- Listening to music can help children's language skills, creative thinking, and promote their awareness of other cultures. Help your child choose music that they enjoy, and that contains healthy messages.

Apps

- There are many entertainment and learning-based apps aimed at school-aged children. Choose apps for your child based on their likes and learning needs, such as a drawing app, memory quiz, or nonviolent game.

Video Games

- The Entertainment Software Ratings Board (ESRB) rates video games based on content. Games that are rated for Everyone (E) are usually well suited for school-aged children, but some may still be too violent or scary for your child. Play through video games first, or read reviews before allowing your child to play.

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- Some video games can help children's social skills and physical development. Help your child choose games that require working with others to accomplish a goal, or that get them up and moving.

