

Screen time before bed is bad for children

8th November, 2017



New research shows that it is bad for children to watch TV, tablet or mobile phone screens before bedtime. Researchers from the University of Colorado found that "screen time" before sleeping damages children's health. The researchers looked at

over 60 different studies on how screen time affects children. They said: "Of more than five dozen studies looking at children aged from 5 to 17 around the world, 90 per cent have found that more screen time is associated with delayed bedtime, fewer hours of sleep, and poorer sleep quality." Screens are becoming smaller and smaller, so children can look at them in bed. More than 75 per cent of children in the study had some kind of screen in their bedroom.

Children need a lot more sleep than adults. Pre-school children need 10 to 13 hours, pre-teens should get between nine and 12 hours, and teenagers should be getting between eight and 10 hours a night. The researchers highlighted three main reasons how screens affect children's sleep. First, the light from screens upsets a child's body clock. The light from screens getting into children's eyes before they sleep tricks their body into thinking it is still daytime. Second, children often watch videos of things that excite them or interest them. This keeps their brain active, so they take longer to sleep. Finally, when children are watching screens, they are not exercising. Children need physical activity to make them tired.

Sources: qz.com / romper.com / treehugger.com

Writing

Children should not be allowed to use mobile devices or watch TV after 7pm. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

research / mobile phone / sleeping / damages / dozen / delayed / smaller / bedroom / adults / pre-teens / teenagers / reasons / body clock / tricks / daytime / excite / tired

True / False

- a) A study says watching TV before bedtime is bad for children. T / F
- b) Researchers looked at more than 60 studies in their research. T / F
- c) Researchers said 90% of studies found screen time was bad for children. T / F
- d) Around 75% of children had no screen in their bedroom. T / F
- e) The article said pre-teens needed up to 12 hours sleep a night. T / F
- f) The researchers mentioned four reasons why screens are bad. T / F
- g) The researchers said screens trick children into thinking it's night time. T / F
- h) The researchers said screens encourage children to exercise. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------|
| 1. shows | a. youths |
| 2. damages | b. discovered |
| 3. found | c. lastly |
| 4. associated | d. harms |
| 5. kind | e. focused on |
| 6. teenagers | f. disrupts |
| 7. highlighted | g. reveals |
| 8. upsets | h. thrill |
| 9. excite | i. sort |
| 10. finally | j. connected |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) How much sleep do you need?
- c) What do you know about your body clock?
- d) Can you sleep after watching TV?
- e) Do you need your mobile phone next to your bed?
- f) Why do children love TV and digital devices?
- g) What would life be like with no TV or mobile devices?
- h) What questions would you like to ask the researchers?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| 1. New research shows that it | a. with delayed bedtime |
| 2. "screen time" before sleeping damages | b. over 60 different studies |
| 3. The researchers looked at | c. things that excite them |
| 4. more than five | d. more sleep than adults |
| 5. more screen time is associated | e. children's health |
| 6. Children need a lot | f. body clock |
| 7. teenagers should be getting between | g. dozen studies |
| 8. light from screens upsets a child's | h. to make them tired |
| 9. children often watch videos of | i. is bad for children |
| 10. Children need physical activity | j. eight and 10 hours |

Discussion – Student B

- How important are tablets and mobile phones?
- What's the best time for children to go to bed?
- What should children do before they sleep?
- What happens if children do not sleep enough?
- Should screens be banned from bedrooms?
- What are the dangers of screens for children?
- How important are bedtime stories for children?
- What advice do you have for parents?

Spelling

- bomiel phone
- deasgma children's health
- how screen time asftfec children
- five odnze studies
- iodastscae with delayed bedtime
- poorer sleep iualyt
- gnetears should be
- highlighted three main sanosre
- tuessp a child's body clock
- things that eicxet them
- This keeps their ibarn active
- Children need scyalhpi activity

Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. d	3. b	4. j	5. i
6. a	7. e	8. f	9. h	10. c

Role Play

Role A – Playing in the Park

You think playing in the park is the best activity for children. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their activities. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): watching TV, reading comics or watching YouTube videos.

Role B – Watching TV

You think watching TV is the best activity for children. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their activities. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): playing in the park, reading comics or watching YouTube videos.

Role C – Reading Comics

You think reading comics is the best activity for children. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their activities. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): watching TV, playing in the park or watching YouTube videos.

Role D – Watching YouTube Videos

You think watching YouTube videos is the best activity for children. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their activities. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): watching TV, reading comics or playing in the park.

Speaking – Activities

Rank these with your partner. Put the best activities for children at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| • watching documentaries | • playing in the park |
| • computer games | • playing board games |
| • YouTube videos | • watching TV |
| • Lego | • reading comics |

Answers – True False

a	T	b	T	c	T	d	F	e	T	f	F	g	F	h	F
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.