Today’s piece was prepared by Benjamin Lang, MD, based on a FoxNews story [Technology in early child development: Good or bad?](http://www.foxnews.com/health/2017/05/17/technology-in-early-child-development-good-or-bad.html)

This health editorial by Dr. Manny Alvarez details several studies related to how technology is influencing early childhood development. The first showed correlation between increased screen time and speech delay. The second showed that parental screen use resulted in children playing on their own or acting out to try to get their parents’ attention, as well as increased harsh reactions from the parents for that behavior. The final study showed that kindergarteners can have improved literacy learning when using iPads over traditional methods. Dr. Alvarez uses these studies to argue that while school-aged children can benefit from directed learning on technology, overall children’s development and behavior can be hindered by technology and its use should be decreased.

This article does a nice job of summarizing several scientific articles into language for parents and caretakers of children. It editorializes the topic somewhat with the selection of papers and explanation of their meaning, but the knowledge is overall appropriately applied. The proposed thesis that we should encourage more interaction and active play over technology use is quite agreeable, but doesn’t have any specific guidance on how to accomplish this goal. It is also interesting to interact with the layout of the news story as several advertisements on the margins appear to be news stories but direct you to health websites trying to sell you products and several of the hyperlinks within the story lead you to less evidence-based articles in the same vein of health media. Overall this article helps parents to see some of the evidence behind pediatricians’ recommendations to limit screen time, but would benefit from more guidance for parents about how they could accomplish this.

**RESOURCES ON SCREEN TIME**

[AAP Media and Children Communication Tool Kit](https://www.aap.org/en-us/advocacy-and-policy/aap-health-initiatives/Pages/Media-and-Children.aspx) *An excellent guide outlining the current research and AAP policy statements. It also has a great guide in English and Spanish that helps families to calculate the amount of screen time they are getting as well as (my favorite) a contract for families to set out for technology use by both kids and parents alike. You can recommend this to your patients or use it for your own families!*

[Common Sense Media](https://www.commonsensemedia.org/screen-time) *A nonprofit organization whose goal is to help positive and healthy interaction of kids and media with a website written by experts for parents on a number of topics related to media and kids. Includes interactive Q&A, age specific guidance on choosing shows and apps for kids, and ways to talk to kids about media and have positive interactions about news and shows.*

And that’s today’s Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics: IN THE NEWS!