Today’s piece was prepared by Corinne Shubin based on a NY Times article, “The Child, the Tablet and the Developing Mind”.

<http://bits.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/03/31/disruptions-what-does-a-tablet-do-to-the-childs-mind/?_r=0>

This New York Times technology article questions whether the increased use of tablets children has a negative effect on social development and coping skills. The journalist comments on providing children and teens with electronic tablets to watch shows or play games to occupy or distract them while at restaurants, rather than being given crayons and paper or enabling interaction with each other or with adults or simply using their imagination.

The journalist cites a study examining overall time spent passively watching TV and, in distinction, actively playing electronic games, rather than the use of these technologies as distraction in a social setting, reporting that time spent in passive TV-watching (>3 hours per day) was associated with a slight increase in conduct problems, but active participation in electronics games was not. The journalist cautions that the research findings don’t shed light on association between the use of tablets and self-soothing or coping mechanisms while bored, or in building social communication skills.

While impacts on children’s social and coping development stemming from using electronic media in social situations are not determined, reproduced findings reveal increased total screen time as associated with behavior and emotional problems in children. The AAP recommends that children and teens engage with select entertainment media for no more than two hours per day (including at least an hour of supervised/socially engaged media) and emphasizes outdoor play, reading, and imaginative creativity for optimal social, physical health and intellectual development.

**Resources on screen time and technology use by children:**

AAP on Media and Children

<http://www.aap.org/en-us/advocacy-and-policy/aap-health-initiatives/Pages/Media-and-Children.aspx?nfstatus=401&nftoken=00000000-0000-0000-0000-000000000000&nfstatusdescription=ERROR%3a+No+local+token>

Center on Media and Child Health

<http://www.cmch.tv/>

Healthy Children media

<http://www.healthychildren.org/english/family-life/media/Pages/default.aspx?nfstatus=401&nftoken=00000000-0000-0000-0000-000000000000&nfstatusdescription=ERROR%3a+No+local+token>

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