Today’s piece was prepared by Carmen Carazo, MD, based on a Seattle Times story entitled“ [Worry over electronic tablets and kids](http://seattletimes.com/html/nationworld/2022524286_tabletskidsxml.html).

The author discusses the ubiquity of apps available for tablets and smart phones, often used by parents to pacify their children. The author adds that apps are easily accessible to even toddlers because they’re easier to use than computer activities requiring the use of a mouse. The author presents with seeming impartiality both sides of the debate about potential developmental effects of use of apps, including statements attributed the opinions of two different parents. One parent has limited his child’s screen time and favors reading to his child; the other parent has used tablets as a part of his child’s education since 18 months. Experts interviewed including a Seattle Children’s pediatrician and a NY psychologist point out that little research is available on this topic, but that purveyors of software geared to infants or toddlers may mislead consumers about potential learning benefits without mention of risk that excessive screen time, even if via engagement with app learning activities, may impede social and language development.

The author’s inclusion that research is limited regarding tablet use and its associations with child development is valid and helpful information. Pediatricians can discuss the AAP’s recommendation with families (no screen time prior to 2 years, and limited to 1 or 2 hours of select screen time for children 2 or older), and consider the following resources:

**RESOURCES ON MEDIA/SCREENTIME AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT:**

[Active Bodies, Active Minds](http://depts.washington.edu/tvhealth/) *UW Nutrition screen-time reduction site*

[PBS Children and Media](http://www.pbs.org/parents/childrenandmedia/) *Tips & strategies for raising children in the digital age*

[Healthy Children – Media](http://www.healthychildren.org/english/family-life/media/Pages/default.aspx) *American Academy of Pediatrics guidance*

And that’s today’s developmental and behavioral pediatrics: IN THE NEWS!