

Screentime for Children

As a parent, seeing your child spending lots of time playing on tablets, phones and other devices can feel worrying. Many of us feel that being active, playing outside or reading a book is more beneficial for children's development. While physical activity, reading and other more 'traditional' activities continue to play a vital part in children's emotional and intellectual growth, most parents and carers occasionally do rely on touch screen devices to engage their child while they're busy doing something else. Not only is it a problem in itself, but it can also lead to addictions if children's time isn't made up of a balanced range of activities. Parents are sometimes concerned that time spent playing on screen devices may be affecting development in areas such as social and communication skills. However, as devices and technology have evolved to be more intuitive and creative, they have opened up endless possibilities for children who previously may have been frustrated by the confines of their abilities and their surroundings.

Many young children don't yet communicate by reading and writing but have plenty of ideas that they want to express. This can be quite a frustrating stage for them, but using technology properly can empower them to get their ideas across. This can be especially true for children with communication impairments. Technology like video-calling on a tablet or phone can support social interaction and communication skills as it makes it easy for children to show people the things they want to talk about or to describe facets of everyday life to family and friends. By doing this they're also learning to take turns, to take account of their conversation partner and to explain things in a way that's understandable for somebody who isn't in the same place. If others join in with apps and games or taking and viewing photos they become shared experiences and can provide stimuli for children's own questions, stories and imaginative responses.

Effective guided interaction is about finding ways of supporting your child's play and learning with technology. It's more than helping out when they get stuck, although sometimes that's all that's needed. Guided interaction often comes naturally: showing interest, asking questions, making suggestions, providing encouragement, praising accomplishments, just being nearby and helping children to deal with their frustrations. All of these can build confidence and support your child's play and learning.

Guided interaction also involves thinking about ways of extending children's learning beyond the screen. For example, if the virtual game involves categorizing objects, you could follow up with a real-world game in which your child helps to sort the washing. By doing this, you have helped them to relate what they have experienced on the screen to everyday life.

Allowing your child to get involved in everyday tasks such as online shopping, checking the weather or looking up directions can also be great for giving children a sense of purpose and developing their know-how about how to find out about things. These everyday tasks can also be great opportunities for talking with your child about the wider world and developing their general knowledge, for example, talking about what their favourite foods are and why, where the food in the shops comes from, or different kinds of weather.

Ex. 1 Find the words or expressions in the text which mean the following:

- 1) a piece of electronic equipment: _____
- 2) a person who looks after, e.g. a child or a senior: _____
- 3) from time to time, not regularly: _____
- 4) to be worried: _____
- 5) to develop continuously: _____
- 6) in the right way: _____
- 7) to give sb the strength to do sth: _____
- 8) to make sth longer or to spread sth: _____
- 9) to put sth into groups: _____
- 10) to continue with sth: _____
- 11) to check sth, e.g. in a dictionary: _____
- 12) an occasion to do sth: _____

Ex. 2 Match the expressions from the two columns into logical collocations:

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| 1) touch | interaction |
| 2) a balanced | sb's accomplishments |
| 3) to open up | sth to everyday life |
| 4) to take account | screen devices |
| 5) to take | stuck |
| 6) guided | confidence |
| 7) to get | endless possibilities |
| 8) to praise | opportunities |
| 9) to build | of sth |
| 10)to relate | range of activities |

Ex. 3 Provide English equivalents of these expressions:

1) korzystny	7) poratować kogoś
2) wpływać na coś	8) coś przychodzi naturalnie
3) intuicyjny	9) zachęcać
4) uprzednio	10)poradzić sobie z czymś
5) ograniczenia	11)ponad / poza
6) dużo czegoś	12)odnieść się do czegoś

Grammar corner...

Sometimes when you write a report, you may be asked to compare one or two things so that your superior can make an informed choice. Here are some ways in which to do it. In the text you've already seen, *while ... is more beneficial for children, ...* Other ways of comparing and contrasting are:

- A differs from B in terms of ...
- Compared to A, B is (more / less / completely ...)
- Whereas A is (quite) ..., B is (rather) ...
- Unlike A, B is ...
- A is ..., as opposed to B, which is ...
- There's a difference / discrepancy between A and B as regards ...
- A is much like B when talking about ...

Ex. 4 Complete the sentences with one suitable word.

- 1) _____ to Germany, the US is much more informal when it comes to corporate cultures.
- 2) Children nowadays, as _____ to those raised 10 years ago, are much more technology savvy.
- 3) _____ touch screen devices seem more attractive to children, they may limit their creativity.
- 4) There's a _____ between books and tablets as regards stimulating imagination.
- 5) Modern children are much _____ their parents when talking about technological awareness.
- 6) Some children are artistic, _____ others display more social skills.

GLOSSARY	
a device	urządzenie
a carer	opiekun
occasionally	od czasu do czasu
to be concerned about sth	martwić się czymś
to evolve	ewoluować
properly	należycie
to empower sb to do sth	dać komuś siłę do zrobienia czegoś
to extend sth	poszerzyć coś / rozwinąć coś
to categorize	kategoryzować
to follow up with sth	zrobić coś w następstwie czegoś
to look sth up	sprawdzić coś
an opportunity	okazja
beneficial	korzystny
to affect sth	wpływać na coś
previously	uprzednio
confines	ograniczenia
plenty of sth	dużo czegoś
sth comes naturally	coś przychodzi naturalnie
to help out	poratować
to provide encouragement	zachęcić
to deal with sth	poradzić sobie z czymś
beyond	ponad / poza
to relate sth to sth else	odnieść coś do czegoś
a balanced range of sth	zrównoważony zakres czegoś
to open up endless possibilities	dawać nieskończone możliwości
to take account of sth	przytoczyć coś
stimuli	bodźce
guided	pod czyimś kierunkiem

to get stuck	utkwić
to build confidence	budować pewność siebie
informed choice	świadomy wybór
savvy	znający się na czymś / będący znawcą

ANSWER KEY:

Ex. 1

- 1) a device
- 2) a carer
- 3) occasionally
- 4) to be concerned
- 5) to evolve
- 6) properly
- 7) to empower sb to do sth
- 8) to extend sth
- 9) to categorize sth
- 10) to follow up with sth
- 11) to look sth up
- 12) an opportunity

Ex. 2

- 1) touch screen devices
- 2) a balanced range of activities
- 3) to open up endless possibilities
- 4) to take account of sth
- 5) to provide stimuli
- 6) guided interaction
- 7) to get stuck
- 8) to praise sb's accomplishments
- 9) to build confidence
- 10) to relate sth to everyday life

Ex. 3

- 1) beneficial
- 2) to affect sth
- 3) intuitive
- 4) previously
- 5) confines
- 6) plenty of sth
- 7) to help out
- 8) sth comes naturally
- 9) to provide encouragement
- 10) to deal with sth
- 11) beyond
- 12) to relate sth to sth else

Ex. 4

- 1) Compared
- 2) opposed
- 3) while / whereas
- 4) difference / discrepancy
- 5) like
- 6) while / whereas