Worrying about your child’s screen time during the COVID-19 changes?

Many families will find their use of technology has significantly increased as work, communication with family and friends, schooling and entertainment are now more reliant on what we can do in the virtual space.

It can be quite scary to add up time spent on mobile phones, tablets, televisions and computers.

Joanne Orlando, a Senior Lecturer, Educational Technology at the University of Western Sydney has written an article that may provide some reassurance.

She describes 3 features of healthy use;

* The time spent using a screen
* The quality of what is on the screen
* Who you use a screen with

While it is still important for children, and adults, to have a variety of different learning opportunities, time for physical activity and time away from screens, it is worth thinking about the quality and the relationship components of screen time.

Screen quality involves thinking about what your child is watching or using screen time for. Is it **relevant to their daily life**, is it **interactive**, is it **appropriate for their age and development** and is it **something you can have include in family conversations or activities**?

Our children still need us to be aware of who and what they are engaging with via technology so you may spend some time considering how much time your child spends; alone, on play dates, on school related activities and together with you or their siblings.

Orlando suggests, if you are concerned about how much screen time your child is having;

* Plan some interactive screen activities you can do together
* Check that the apps, games and content are quality and appropriate (see above)

For more information, the Australian Council on Children and the Media website has a Kidzone and app and movie reviews <https://childrenandmedia.org.au/>

If you would like to read Orlando’s article <https://theconversation.com/forget-old-screen-time-rules-during-coronavirus-heres-what-you-should-focus-on-instead-135053>

Other information

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/toddlers/play-learning/screen-time-media/screen-time>

<https://theconversation.com/stop-worrying-about-screen-time-its-your-childs-screen-experience-that-matters-118610>