

Screens, Babies, and Growing Minds

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March 9, 2026



Introductions



Agenda

Screen time:
Why We Need to
Pay Attention

The Brain and
Overall
Development

Relationships

Screen time in
Infancy and
Early Childhood

Screen time
Guidelines

Breakout
Groups and
Discussion

Future
Thoughts

Paying Attention to Screen Time: Why It's Important



The Brain and Overall Development



- We are wired to have certain experiences (*'experience expectant'*) – essential to human development.
- Who we become depends on the nature our earliest experiences (*'experience dependent'*)



Brain Architecture

- We are born with a hundred billion neurons (brain cells) but not the connections
- Our earliest experiences in infancy and early childhood build the networks that make up our brain architecture
- Sets the *lifelong trajectory* of how we will function



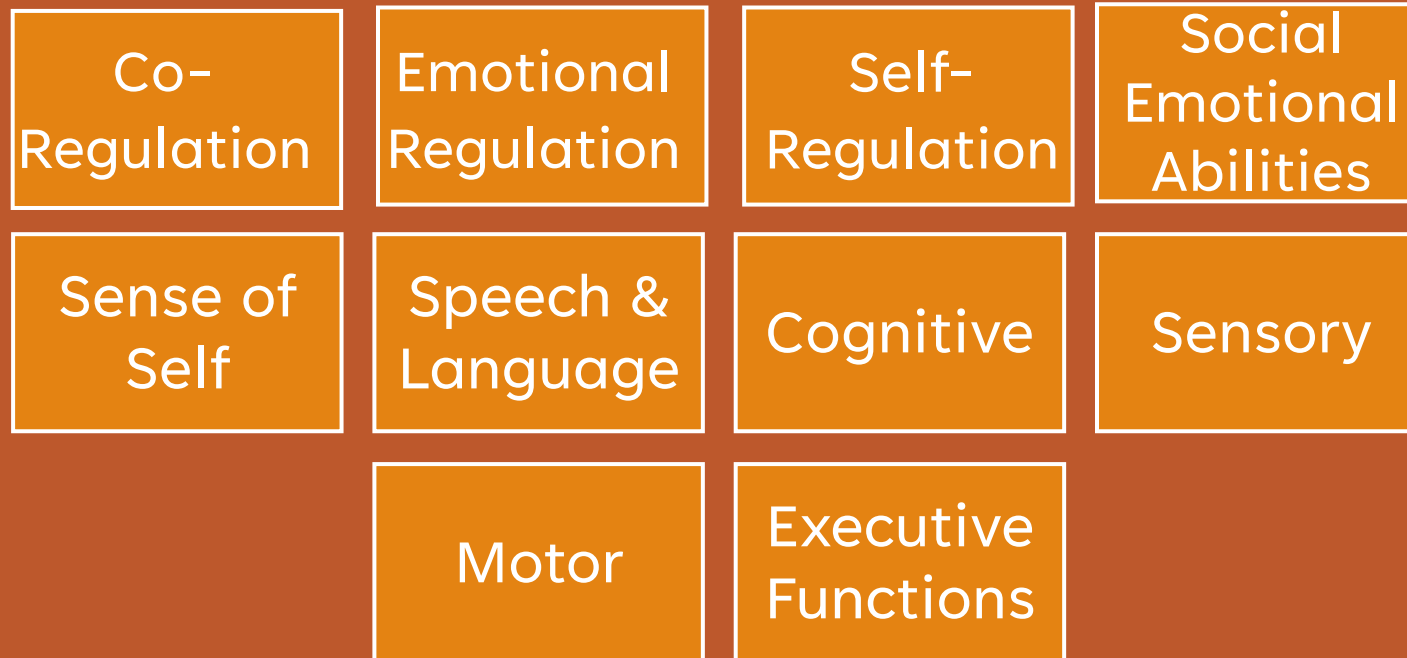
Relationships



- One-on-one relationships are primary to building this foundation
- Whether outcomes are positive or negative depends on the nature of the relationships in interaction with individual differences



Relationships: The Foundation for Overall Development





Screen time in Infancy and Early Childhood

Screen time is not 'expected' by the brain. It interferes with:

- Face-to-face interactions and relationships
- Reading faces, critical for social engagement and empathy
- With brain development and functioning



Screen time Affects:

Primary Relationships

Language Development

Sleep

Emotional Regulation

Attention systems

Social cognition

Empathy

Play

Learning

Weight

Caregivers and Screentime: Distracted, Disengaged, Dysregulated, Disconnected

Significantly Impacts:

- Attunement
- Parental Reflective Capacity
- Co-Regulation
- Hence, development



Screening Guidelines: American Academy of Pediatrics

- **0 – 18 months** - **No Screen time** – except co-viewing video chatting with family
- **18 - 24 months** – Very limited (no more than half an hour a day); high quality programming and co-viewing with a loving caregiver; adults should narrate and explain content
- **2 - 3 years** – up to 1 hour day – high quality and co-viewing with parent or loving caregiver; adults should narrate and explain content





What To Avoid

- Infants and children using screens alone
- Propping screens up in cribs or beds
- Fast-paced content
- Bright and/or flashing lights, especially blue light, which is part of all screens generally
- Television and screens on in the background
- Screentime during meals
- Screens before bedtime – stop at least 1 hour before bedtime



Important: Screens Should Not Be Used as Calming Tools



Create Media Plans and Alternatives Activities with Families

Screen-free bedrooms

Consistent daily limits

Prioritizing play, reading, and outdoor activities

Culture and context of each individual family

Listen, respect, and educate

Brainstorm alternatives



Breakout Rooms: How Can We Help Families Develop Better Screen Habits and Enhance Development?

- Consider the conversation
- Bring 1 – 2 questions or ideas to discuss with the group



Future Thoughts

- How do we make meaning of screentime as providers
- How to support parents and families to make good, consistent choices



Thank you!



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