

Ankita Rout
takes nature
and people she
meets as her
inspiration
Page 2



Actor Taapsee
Pannu is one of
the most sought
after names for
brands
Page 4

Is screen time harming kids?

Docs recommend
a maximum of an
hour for two to
five-year-olds

Screen dependency, or addiction to TV and mobile gadgets, is affecting children in a big way. Handing a smartphone device to a child may keep it engaged and out of your hair, but it comes with serious problems.

According to the American Academy of Paediatrics, 60 minutes of screen time is the maximum you should allow two- to five-year-olds. Children younger than two should completely avoid using technology.

Rumela Dev, mother of two, restricts her children from technology.

“Samaksh, my five-year-old, watches television for a maximum of two hours in the afternoon, and he isn’t allowed to touch phones. He takes our permission before using the iPad,” she says.

Rumela encourages Samaksh to play games that don’t involve screen time. “He does get upset but we make him understand why it’s not a good habit,” she explains.

On the other hand, Janvi Prakash, mother of a three-year-old, gives her child a device to keep her busy.

“There are cartoons and rhymes that my daughter loves watching and I’m more than happy to entertain her with a device. She even knows how to find her favourite videos on YouTube now,” says Janvi.

She makes sure the child is not holding the device too close to her eyes, or listening to the audio too loud. “She also knows that she’s not allowed to watch videos when we are at a public place,” she says.

Dr Ruchi Gupta, consultant child psychiatrist, says young parents



Experts say that parents should keep a watch on their child’s digital usage.

Docs’ advice for nurseries

Children should be taught to interact with other people, play offline games and improve their skills rather than watch digital screens, doctors advise.

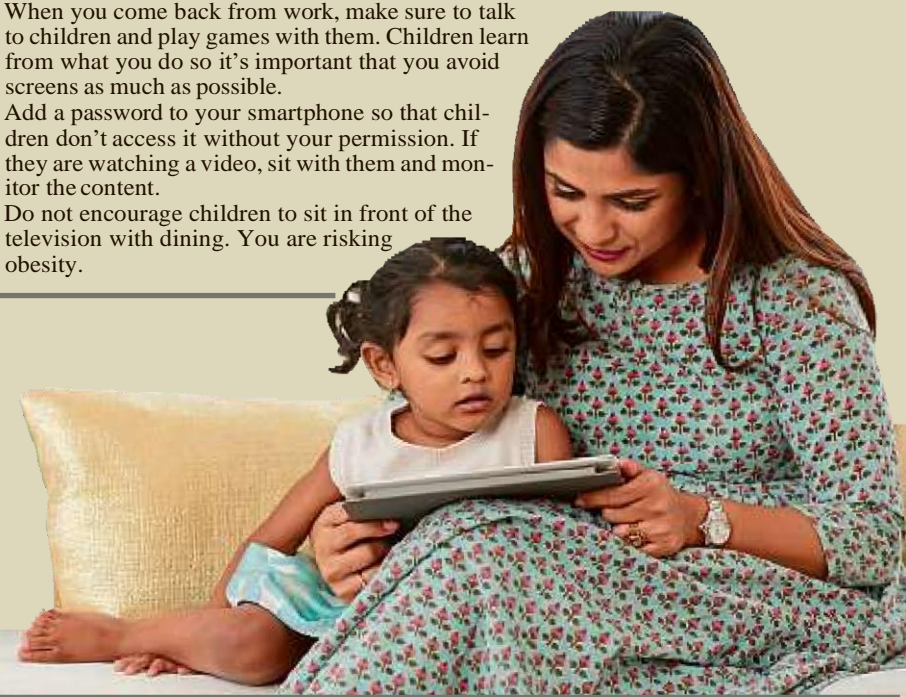
Parents, note

- When you come back from work, make sure to talk to children and play games with them. Children learn from what you do so it’s important that you avoid screens as much as possible.
- Add a password to your smartphone so that children don’t access it without your permission. If they are watching a video, sit with them and monitor the content.
- Do not encourage children to sit in front of the television with dining. You are risking obesity.

Big risks

With excess screen time

- Children can grow up to be aggressive.
- They can develop attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder and become restless.



What they say in USA

Here are some guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics on screen time

18 months

Children below 18 months should completely avoid screen media.

2 to 5 years

It’s important for children to limit screen time to one hour a day of high-quality programmes. Parents should co-view the media.

6 years and above

Limit the number of times the screen can be used. Make sure media does not hinder sleep time, physical activity and behaviour essential to health.

should spend more time with children.

“Children come with speech delays. That is because they spend most of their time looking at screens and not interacting with people,” she says.

The children are so used to the colours on screen that they don’t find real-life colours attractive, she notes.

She also blames free, unlimited mobile data for screen dependency. “Because parents are okay with

their children accessing YouTube whenever they want, children now know how to access it. And the data gets picked up by marketers, and they lead children to click on ‘suggested videos’ and watch all sorts of content,” she says.

Some of the suggested videos are violent and inappropriate for children, she observes. The more video a child watches, the more accent it picks up from video characters, Dr Ruchi says.

“There are children don’t know their mother tongue but know English or Spanish. They also pick up the accent and parents find it difficult to understand what they are saying,” she says.

A child’s brain develops in the first five years. If a child does not talk soon and is averse to socialising, take it seriously and seek professional help, she advises. Anila Kurian