

# HEALTHY MEDIA HABITS SOMETHING WE CREATE TOGETHER

Good advice for parents  
of 0-18-year old children



**VIBORG**  
KOMMUNE

# “GOOD PARENTS SET BOUNDARIES SO WE KNOW HOW TO BEHAVE WHEN WE GROW UP”

PUPIL IN THE 5TH GRADE

Digital media, including iPads, mobile telephones, computers, game consoles and TV fill family life with good experiences, entertainment, learning, cosy time spent together and healthy communities across suburban roads and national borders.

In Viborg Municipality's School, Social Services and Police Cooperation (SSP Cooperation) we, unfortunately, also find that the digital media creates new challenges and expands existing challenges in a child's life in the digital arena. Many day-care centres, schools, youth education centres and, especially parents, have put children and media on the agenda in recent years and the overall goal is common:

**To ensure that children gain the digital skills society needs and, at the same time, achieve an up-to-date culture with a healthy balance between the physical presence and digital interests and communities.**

*With Healthy Media Habits – Something we create together*, the SSP Cooperation in Viborg Municipality wants to provide a number of good tips to parents who want to be active co-players in their children's digital development and well-being. The tips support parents who believe that the existing relationship between children and adults in the family and the other healthy communities is what, as a basis, creates children with high self-esteem and courage to meet the world – also online.

The good tips, which are supported by research in the field, build on experiences from the reality we meet in our daily work and is supportive of the demand we experience from children, parents and professionals in Viborg Municipality. On [viborg.dk/SSP](http://viborg.dk/SSP) you can find more detailed descriptions and references to other material about children, youngsters and media.

Enjoy!

# THE 0-3-YEAR OLDS



## TIME RECOMMENDATION

Max. 0-35 min. daily.

## SLEEP

No screen 30-60 min. before bedtime.

## ONLINE ZONES

Look together, help and comment when the child plays a game on the tablet or computer. Make the common rooms the centre of the child's online activity.

## PARENTS

Make an active decision on how you, as a family, want digital media to take up time in precisely

your home. Both for you as role models and for the children. Avoid digital media (including TV) during meals as it can weaken the body's signals on hunger and satiety and remove focus from the togetherness with the family.

## MEALS AND CHANGING-TIME

Avoid using media at meals and at the changing table. The child gains precious skills when it is the primary adult who helps the child out of frustrations about eating or changing situations, for example. It is mum and dad's voice, touch and eye contact that must comfort and help calm the child again – not a mobile phone or iPad.

# THE 4-7-YEAR OLDS

## TIME RECOMMENDATION

Max. 30-60 min. daily.

## SLEEP

No screen 30-60 min. before bedtime.

## ONLINE ZONES

Be together with your child about his or her media activities. The child must be close to you and all online activity should occur in the communal rooms. Avoid digital media (including TV) during meals as it can weaken the body's signals on hunger and satiety and remove focus from the togetherness with the family.

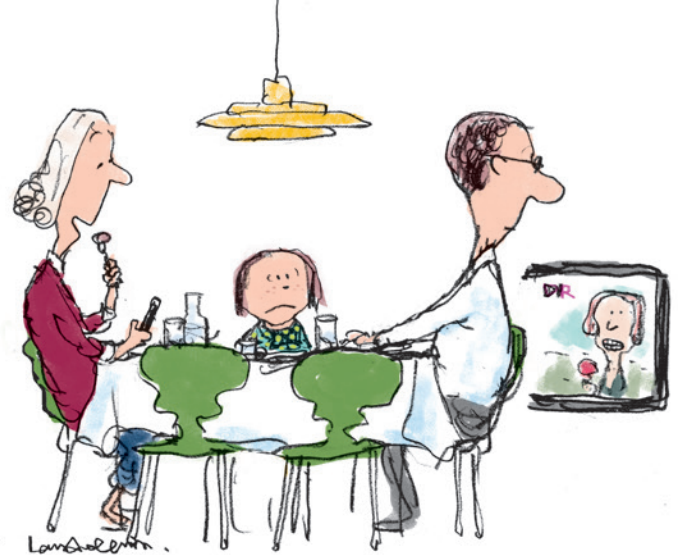
## PARENTS

Make an active decision on how you, as a family, want digital media to take up time in precisely your home.

Moreover, it is important to create dialogue about children's media use together with other parents – for example, in day-care centre communities and later in classroom communities. Be especially aware in connection with play dates, as children's limits for what they can cope with of games, films, etc. can be very different.

## CLEAR FRAMEWORKS

Many children are so attracted to iPads and game consoles that at this age, there is a particular need to have clear frameworks on what, where and when they may play with the media. The frameworks create calm in the child so he or she can also be occupied with other things. It is in this age group the seed for good media habits and media understanding is established.



“MOM, CAN WE MAKE THOSE RULES AGAIN? THEN YOU DO NOT HAVE TO GET ANGRY AND I DO NOT HAVE TO THINK ABOUT PLAYING”

**5-YEAR-OLD BOY ABOUT IPAD RULES**

# THE 8-12-YEAR OLDS

## TIME RECOMMENDATION

Max. 1-2 hours daily.

## SLEEP

No screen 30-60 min. before bedtime.

## ONLINE ZONES

The child must be close to an adult and the online activity should be limited to the communal rooms. Be honestly interested in what they do and participate as much as possible. Avoid digital media (including TV) during meals as it can weaken the body's signals on hunger and satiety and remove focus from the togetherness with the family.

## PARENTS

Make an active decision on how you as a family want digital media to take up time in precisely your home. The children love to talk about the subject, so involve them and listen to their suggestions. Chatting and cooperating with other children's parents is crucially important for this age group. Also put it on the agenda for parent meetings at the school.

## SOCIAL MEDIA / COMPUTER GAMES

The interest for social media and online computer games seriously comes to the fore in this age group. Look for information on what you can do as parents to support your child's media use and digital culture on Sikkerchat.dk and the Media Council's website.



# THE 13-18-YEAR OLDS



## TIME RECOMMENDATION

Max. 3 hours daily.

## SLEEP

No screen 30-60 min. before bedtime.

## ONLINE ZONES

When the child has access to the internet and digital media from his or her own bedroom, it is important that you continue to talk with your child about what interests the child online. You must still be available and inquisitive and check up on the child at regular intervals. Avoid digital media (including TV) during meals as it can weaken the body's signals on hunger and satiety and remove focus from the togetherness with the family.

## PARENTS

Make an active decision on how you as a family want digital media to take up time in precisely your home. The children love to talk about the subject, so involve them and listen to their opinions and suggestions. Chat and cooperate with other children's parents is crucially important for

this age group. Also put it on the agenda for parent meetings at the school.

## SOCIAL MEDIA / COMPUTER GAMES

Social media and online computer games are a very key part of children's lives and social communities in this age group. Unfortunately, the frequent use also increases the risk of being exposed to various online related unpleasantness so now they really need accessible and inquisitive adults. Look for information on what you can do as parents to support your child's media use and digital culture on Sikkerchat.dk and the Media Council's website.

## SEXUALITY

Children in this age group experiment with their sexuality to a great extent and flirt through digital media. Speak with your child about feeling their own limits and respecting others – for example, about the risk of sharing their own and other's private photos with their circle of friends or on social media. Sikkerchat.dk broaches the latter subject on their website.

# FIND MORE INFORMATION

## CONTACT

If, as a parent, you have questions or are concerned about your child's media use or worrying digital communities, you are welcome to contact the SSP consultants.

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## USEFUL WEBSITES

SSP Viborg's website

**viborg.dk/SSP**

The Media Council for Children and Young People in Denmark

**medierådet.dk**

Save the Children and The Danish Crime Prevention Council

**Sikkerchat.dk**

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SSP Viborg is participating in an EU project focusing on strengthening parents and healthy communities



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