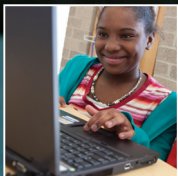


young *and* healthy

SPRING 2012



Screen time

How much is too much?

Story on Page 2



Unplug the kids

Your doctor says so

Story on Page 4



Have a heart

Treating the whole family

Story on Page 6



Cincinnati
Children's

change the outcome®

6

ways your pediatrician wants you to unplug

Actions speak louder than words, and children's behavior will model yours.

So if we want children to unplug, we need to unplug, says Ann Saluke, MD, a pediatrician affiliated with Cincinnati Children's who practices at Anderson Hills Pediatrics. This is her advice for parents.

1. Unplug at mealtime.

Set the rule that no technology is allowed at the dinner table. No TV, no cell phones, no texting.



2. Unplug when in the car.

Cell phone use and texting increase the risk of accidents. Respect yourself and your passengers enough to turn it off.



3. Unplug and discover the world with your kids.

Use all of your senses.
Use your imagination.



4. Unplug and take time to talk to your kids.

Talk to them about their day. Teach them to communicate with real people.



5. Unplug TV and internet access in kids' bedrooms.

Their bedrooms are for sleeping.



6. Unplug, but know what your kids are plugged into.

When they are plugged in, know the apps and websites your kids use.



MORE INSIDE: Can too much "screen time" really be harmful for kids? Pediatricians say yes. Read the "Ask the Pediatrician" column on Page 2. And a pediatrician who owns a children's bookstore weighs in on Page 4.

Ask the Pediatrician

Q. I’ve heard people talk about ‘screen time.’ What is it?

A. “Screen time” is the amount of time spent with television, video games, computers and cell phones. Studies show that many children spend more time in front of a screen each day than they do in school, being with family and friends and doing healthy things. It is important for parents to recognize that children are particularly vulnerable to the negative effects of this exposure.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends limiting TV exposure to no more than two hours of screen time each day, and discourages media use for children younger than 2.

Before the age of 2, children learn about the world and develop skills by exploring their environment and interacting with their caregivers. Despite claims that television and websites can be educational for little ones, media use at this age is more likely to do more harm than good. The best way to help babies and toddlers develop language is by talking to them. Play in its most basic forms helps develop creativity and problem-solving skills.

 If you have a question for the pediatrician, email youngandhealthy@cchmc.org

For older children, viewing is more than a passive process: Excessive media use is clearly associated with risky behaviors. As screen time increases, kids are more likely to be exposed to age-inappropriate themes involving violence, sexuality, drugs and alcohol. Seeing ads for junk food and being sedentary can contribute to obesity. Being in front of a TV or computer robs children of time that they could use socializing, being active and even sleeping.

Here are simple things we can do to protect children:

- Maintain age-appropriate limits on screen time.
- Keep TVs and computers out of bedrooms. Monitor and discuss what’s being watched.
- Be a good role model when it comes to using media.
- Talk to and read with your children.
- Go outside and play.



Sarah Selickman, MD, a community pediatrician affiliated with Cincinnati Children’s, practices at Pediatric Associates of Mt. Carmel. She is president of the Cincinnati Pediatric Society.

Tell Me a Story

 **GO ONLINE** to www.cincinnatichildrens.org/story to watch our series of patient stories.

If you have a story to share, email us at tellmeastory@cchmc.org



Meet a future ‘cowboy hematologist’

Cameron Noe says he’s a country boy with a dream anyone would want to come true. He wants someday for every disease to have a cure. And he wants a part in it. He hopes to cure blood diseases someday, when he’s a “cowboy hematologist.”



Patients become fast friends at camp

Summer camp is one of Zion Coleman’s favorite times of the year. It’s when he gets to reconnect with friends who have sickle cell disease.

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ScienceSnapshots

Sports concussions linger

For 36 percent, effects last a month or more

Concussion symptoms, such as slowed reaction time and reduced blood flow in the brain, can last longer than many people think, a new study reveals.

The study, led by Todd Maugans, MD, was published online Nov. 30 in the journal *Pediatrics*.

Testing revealed concussion symptoms lasting up to 14 days for 73 percent of the children studied and longer than a month for 36 percent of injured athletes.

“During recovery, rest and avoidance of a second head injury are imperative,” Maugans says. “In some children, two seemingly minor concussions within a few weeks can lead to serious brain damage or death.”

Battling childhood obesity

Home visits will reach more than 150 families

A lifetime of obesity-related health problems can start as soon as preschool for some children – but initial research indicates that intense, early intervention can make a difference.

After reporting encouraging results from a small pilot project, Lori Stark, PhD, is leading an expanded study of a six-month intervention program aimed at 2- to 5-year-olds that includes a mix of office-based parent counseling and home visits for more than 150 families.

The goal: to teach families healthier living methods, from how to introduce healthy foods to fussy eaters to encouraging physical activity even when kids are stuck inside.

Day care kids need time outside

Many centers lack enough outdoor activity

Chalk it up to fear of injury, concerns about school readiness, or boring playground equipment – but whatever the cause, many children in day care settings are not getting enough outdoor activity, researchers say.

A team led by Kristen Copeland, MD, examined 34 child care centers in Cincinnati to better understand the barriers to outdoor physical activity. Their findings were published online Jan. 4 in *Pediatrics*.

“We were surprised to find such a strong focus on academics for children as young as 3,” Copeland says. “In ensuring that young children are smart and safe, we may also be keeping them sedentary.”

NewsBriefs

Text to find out Urgent Care wait times

Want to find out the wait time at our Urgent Care centers? Urgent Care wait times for Cincinnati Children's neighborhood locations in Anderson, Fairfield and Mason are now available through a text messaging feature. Parents can find out estimated Urgent Care wait times by texting **ccurgent** to 437411 from their mobile phone. Text messaging rates may apply.

Expert discusses ADHD

Russell Barkley, PhD, an internationally recognized authority on attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), will speak April 16 and 17 at the Springer School in O'Bryonville about “Executive Function, ADHD and the Struggling Child.”

Families of ADHD patients at Cincinnati Children's are welcome to attend. To guarantee your place, register at www.springer-ld.org or call 513-871-6080. The first night will be an overview of what ADHD is all about. The second night will focus on strategies for managing at home and school.

Special Needs Directory

If you have a child with special needs, find resources at www.cincinnatichildrens.org/special-needs

ResearchStudies

Research studies help us learn more about medical conditions, come up with better treatments and ultimately find cures for diseases. Learn how you and your child can help our scientists by joining a research study at Cincinnati Children's.

Heart screening for teen athletes

What: This study will help determine the best way to screen teen athletes for potentially dangerous heart conditions.

Who: Healthy 14- to 18-year-olds who participate in organized sports and have no known heart problems or risk factors for having or developing heart disease.

When: Saturday, April 14, and Saturday, July 21.

Details: Families will get results of the screening. For more information, call 513-803-0366.

Researching mood and appetite

What: This is a research study to learn more about hormones, thoughts and behaviors related to eating and weight among teen girls.

Who: Girls ages 13 to 17 who are depressed but not currently taking antidepressant medication may be eligible to participate.

Pay: Families will receive \$35 for the screening visit and up to \$210 for study participation.

Details: Contact Emily Verkamp at igame@cchmc.org or 513-636-1169.



A heart study is recruiting teen athletes to determine the best way to screen for potentially dangerous heart conditions.

Learning more about language

What: This study is to evaluate children's language and functional skills.

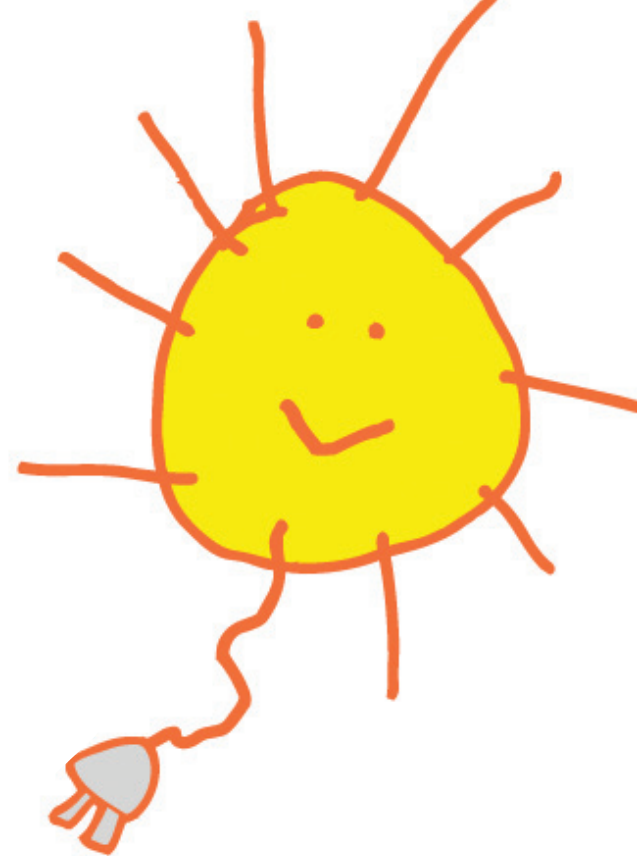
Who: Children ages 3 to 6 with normal hearing who have been diagnosed with a cognitive disability may be eligible to participate.

Pay: Families will be compensated \$50 and a meal ticket for the time and expenses related to participation.

Details: Contact Sandra Bechtol at Sandra.bechtol@cchmc.org or 513-803-0073.

TECHNOLOGY CAN WAIT

In a plugged-in society, children need parents to set limits



John Hutton, MD, a pediatrician at Cincinnati Children's and owner of blue manatee children's bookstore and decafé, has written a series of "Baby Unplugged" books, celebrating "old-school" experiences and icons of childhood.

Many parents feel that their children are constantly plugged in to video games, computers or cell phones that seem to be permanently affixed to their palms.

If you're wondering if all that techno time is unhealthy, you have reason to be concerned.

"Electronic media are not only an inferior means for children to experience and learn about their world, they can be toxic," says John Hutton, MD, a part-time pediatrician at

Cincinnati Children's and owner of blue manatee children's bookstore and decafé, in Oakley.

The average child, 8 through 18, now engages in screen-based media more than seven hours a day. Factor in the time spent texting, using a personal computer or camping out in front of a flat-screen TV, and your child may be racking up a whopping 11 hours of screen time daily.

The use of electronic media now starts, on average, at just

9 months of age. Most children under the age of 2 watch more than three hours of television daily, despite guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics that discourage it.

As a result, childhood is being vastly transformed from the days of running around outside with imagination taking the lead, to an experience largely dictated by media companies and software developers.

Despite claims that many products will give your children a competitive edge, Hutton says there is no scientific evidence to support the idea. He has launched a blog at www.BabyUnplugged.com promoting healthy alternatives, with a mission to "keep kids screen-free until 3."

"We need to really reinforce how important it is that parents and kids spend time together, reading together, playing together," Hutton says, "and how that interaction can never be outsourced to any device."

The ill effects of too much screen time include:

- Increased likelihood of childhood obesity and aggression
- Development of a habit difficult to break, especially as children get older
- Interference with sleep
- Development of behavioral problems
- Impaired academic performance
- Fragmentation of the family
- Decreased socialization skills



WATCH ONLINE to hear pediatrician and children's bookstore owner John Hutton, MD, discuss getting back to what's really important, at www.cincinnatichildrens.org/story



The physician-owned blue manatee children's bookstore and decafé offers story times and activities for kids.

DECLARE A TECHNO TIMEOUT

- Limit screen time: The American Academy of Pediatrics discourages screen time for kids younger than 2 and calls for limiting older kids to one to two hours of quality programming a day.
- Don't permit children to have a TV in their room or to watch it in the car.
- Keep the TV off during meals.
- Have a techno turn-in time at night, where kids hand over their laptops and cell phones to ensure homework gets finished and they get enough sleep.
- Have at least one technology-free day a week or limit it to weekends.
- Take frequent trips to bookstores and libraries and read regularly to your child.
- Make techno time something children need to earn rather than a given.
- Block channels you don't want your children to watch (see your cable provider's website for instructions).
- Rediscover nature and quality family time by spending time hiking and cycling at local forest preserves.



WATCH ONLINE to hear the story of three generations of Cincinnati Children's heart patients: Sarah Anderson, her son, Noah, and her dad, Jeff Steel, at www.cincinnatichildrens.org/story

A Family with Heart

Researchers gain valuable insights from family with four generations of hypertrophic cardiomyopathy

Sarah (Steel) Anderson is one of the few people in the world who can say she's nearly "died" three times and lived to tell the tale.

In August 1994, Sarah was an active 12-year-old who had enjoyed a childhood filled with softball, basketball, swimming and dancing. A few days after returning from a cheerleading camp, Sarah went outside to exercise in her front yard. Her mother, Diana, was ironing. Her father, Jeff, was napping after a round of golf.

Minutes later, Sarah staggered inside and collapsed at her mother's feet. Without exhibiting any previous signs of heart trouble, Sarah had gone into cardiac arrest.

"At first, I thought she was just being dramatic about how hot it was outside. But then she didn't respond and I screamed for my husband," Diana says.

Jeff fell back upon 18 years of experience as a paramedic to perform CPR for Sarah, not once, but twice. A life squad later used a defibrillator to shock Sarah's heart back into rhythm. Once Sarah arrived at Cincinnati Children's, she became the first child in Cincinnati to receive an implanted defibrillator.

Now 29, Sarah teaches dance classes. She and her husband, Grant, have two sons.

"I truly believe God had a hand in this," Sarah says. "The series of circumstances that allowed me to be here today is amazing."

Inherited condition detected

Doctors initially diagnosed Sarah with an arrhythmia (irregular heartbeat) with an unknown cause. Years later, doctors discovered more was going on when Sarah's second son, Noah, was born with heart trouble.

An echocardiogram revealed that Noah, now nearly 2 years old, was born with hypertrophic cardiomyopathy, a thickening of the heart muscle that can lead to heart-stopping electrical malfunctions. Athletes who suddenly collapse and die often have this condition.

A genetic test confirmed that Sarah and Noah share a gene mutation known to be linked to hypertrophic cardiomyopathy. However, Sarah's oldest son, Alex, age 3, does not.

Further testing traced the gene back to Sarah's father, Jeff. Doctors believe that Jeff inherited the gene from his mother, who died 17 years ago after years of heart problems.



Diana and Jeff Steel (at left) worried their daughter, Sarah (Steel) Anderson, might not survive a teenage cardiac arrest. Now 29, Sarah is married to Grant Anderson and is the mother of two boys, Noah and Alex. Jeff, Sarah and Noah are three generations of heart patients at Cincinnati Children's.

Contributing to understanding

While the test results were disturbing, they also offered peace of mind. Thanks to a new program that expands certain cardiac services to adults, all three family members now receive care through the Heart Institute at Cincinnati Children's.

Over the years, many doctors have closely followed Sarah's unusual case. Her experience with broken wires helped change how surgeons implant defibrillators in children. Family concerns about whether the implanted defibrillator was working helped inspire the device maker, Medtronic, Inc., to add alarm features to new defibrillators.

For Noah, doctors have prescribed beta blockers to help prevent him from following his mother's path. The family expects to be monitored for years to come.

"We don't want anyone to have to experience the sudden death of their child," Diana says. "We're just hoping people will learn from our family that there are genetic tests you can take to know who is safe and who is at risk."



Have a great health tip?

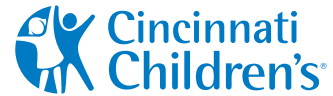
Share it on our Facebook page

Ever wonder if you remembered to give your child her medicine?

Here's a tip: Write it down where you can't miss it. Pick up a Sharpie and mark it right on the bottle.

In this case, the doctor prescribed medicine twice a day for 10 days. Marking the checklist on the bottle helps you make sure you follow through on the instructions.

Do you have health tips that make life a little easier? Join the conversation on our Cincinnati Children's Facebook page at **www.facebook.com/cincinnatichildrensfans**



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