

Friday, Oct. 21, 2016

Statement from Erikson Institute on new recommendations for technology and young children issued by the American Academy of Pediatrics

As digital devices become commonplace in our homes, schools, and early childhood settings, positive and actionable guidelines for adults are necessary to address the use of technology by today's young children and families.

While we support many of the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), we caution parents and educators against the belief that time is the chief metric when engaging with technology. We urge adults to shift their focus from *how much* young children watch to the *quality* of the content, *the level of engagement* with young children as they use technology, and the *opportunity* for learning.

As we learned from our national [survey](#) of parents of children under age 6 that we released on Wednesday, an overwhelming 85 percent of parents allow their young children to use technology in the home every day. Also, nearly 84 percent of parents said their young children use technology with them or another parent in the home. Among those parents who said they personally engage in technology use with their young children, 35 percent spend from 30 minutes to one hour a day and 23 percent engage from one to two hours a day.

The recommendations from Erikson and our Technology in Early Childhood Center are consistent with the recommendations today from the AAP: Co-viewing and high quality content are always best, and adults should become "media mentors" who pay close attention to their own habits as they are the primary role models for young children learning how to use technology. However, it is important to also realize the benefits that come from technology use, regardless of age, and to support parents to ensure they are able to achieve these opportunities to promote positive child development.

At Erikson, one of our primary functions is to educate adults about developmentally appropriate ways of engaging with young children and technology. We have been serving young children and families since 1966, and our work begins with engaging and empowering the adults in young children's lives. By supporting adults with the knowledge and tools to make the best decisions and increase their understanding of how to create positive interactions with technology, young children and families can take full advantage of the benefits of the technology all around us.

About Erikson Institute

Erikson Institute is the nation's premier independent institution of higher education committed to ensuring that all children have equitable opportunities to realize their potential. We uniquely prepare leaders in child development, social work, and early childhood education to improve the lives of young children and their families. We educate, create new knowledge, provide direct services, and advocate—because nothing matters more than a child's early years.

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