

Tips for Reading E-books with Young Children

- **Human interaction is a key factor in supporting young children's learning!** Parents, teachers, and caregivers should be cautious of the types of interactive features e-books contain. Interactive features that support learning should be in line with storybook content and not serve as a distraction from the story.
- **The quality of interaction during reading experiences matters!** Make reading interactive regardless of book format. Engage children in conversation about book content and make connections between book content and children's real life experiences. Try to avoid the use of directive talk that serves to tell the child what to do with the device rather than converse about what is happening in the story.
- **Engage in electronic media use with young children!** Talk with children about what is being viewed and refrain from using electronic media as a means of independent play for young children.
- **Set rules and limits on screen media use!**
Screen time is screen time! This includes devices used for reading books. Beware of books with enhanced features that reduce the need for adult assistance or can compete with the adult in the reading interaction. Voice-over narration and extra bells and whistles often distract the child from the story content and can impede story comprehension.
- **Make reading traditional print books a norm at bedtime!** Research is clear that screen use before bed is not only stimulating for young brains but also adult brains. Establishing this routine will help children develop healthy habits by promoting clear boundaries on screen use.
- **Continue to read traditional print books with young children!** Electronic book formats are readily accessible and available, but continuing to read print books along with electronic book formats will help parents and caregivers maintain a healthy media diet for young children.



Additional Resources:

ZERO TO THREE:

Lerner, C. (2014). Screen Sense: Setting the Record Straight. Research -Based Guidelines for Screen Use for Children Under 3 years Old. <http://www.zerotothree.org/parenting-resources/screen-sense/>