



# Be Tech Wise With Baby!

## Create a Healthy Technology Environment for Your Baby to Thrive

Congratulations on your new addition! You are starting a wonderful journey. You have prepared for the basics: feeding, changing, and sleeping. Now is the time to consider how you can boost your baby's brain development and communication skills, right from birth. **This includes starting healthy screen-time habits for the whole family.**

### Did You Know?

**80%** of brain development occurs in the first three years of life. Talking, reading, singing, and playing with your baby sets them up for a lifetime of success.

### What does your baby need to grow their brain and develop spoken language?

- **Lots of talking.** The more words your baby hears, the better!
- **A tuned-in communication partner.** When your baby cries, coos, smiles, and laughs, they are trying to tell you something. Talk back!
- **Your full attention.** So much learning happens when you notice your baby's interests and respond (*"Oh, you see that ball? It's bouncing."*)

The use of screens—both by you and by your baby—can interrupt your baby's healthy development. But today's parents need devices for many purposes. **Here's why screen-free time is important:**

- Studies have shown that parents **speak fewer words** when they are using a smartphone. Find time to put screens away so you can talk about your activities. You will teach your baby so many words!
- Looking down at your device makes it harder to notice your baby's smiles and sounds, leading to **missed opportunities to bond and communicate.** Babies want to see your face!
- Use of screens by babies can **delay their speech and language development.** They may not be talking yet, but they are learning words by interacting with you.
- When babies use screens, it can be **harder for them to learn how to soothe themselves.** Giving your fussy baby your phone may help in the moment, but not in the long run.



### Build Baby's Brain:

Talk a lot!

Read to your baby every day.

Put your phone away, when you can.



## Your Healthy Technology Environment: Setting Baby Up for Growth

As you prepare your home, use these tips to create an environment that helps your baby thrive:

- Talk with your partner about how you can both be Tech Wise when spending time with baby.
- Create technology-free spaces.
- Commit to tech-free times each day—such as meal times, caregiving, and play times.
- Turn to your pediatrician, speech-language pathologist, and other trusted experts for guidance about screen-time use.

### How does creating a healthy tech environment help YOU?

By being Tech Wise, you can

- feel calmer and more tuned in to baby's needs;
- feel a closer connection to your baby;
- accomplish more throughout your day, giving you more focused time with baby; and
- feel more rested, even as your baby keeps you up often.

By being aware of your family's screen use, you can

- help your baby feel closer to you;
- engage your baby to delight in your attention;
- soothe your baby more easily; and
- help your baby feel safe as they learn about you and their world.

**Your baby is off to a healthy start!**



### Did You Know?

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends zero screen time for babies before 18 months. AAP says that it's okay to use devices just for video chatting with loved ones.

For more information about your baby's communication development, visit [www.identifythesigns.org](http://www.identifythesigns.org).  
For more information about children's screen time, visit [www.screentimenetwork.org](http://www.screentimenetwork.org).