



## The Early Years

# SAFER SCREENS: AGES 0 TO 5 YEARS



Screen Time: Time spent watching any screen such as gaming devices, phones, tablets, television, laptops and computers

Time **OFF** screen is essential for:

- **Self-regulation:** the ability to manage emotions, attention and energy to promote positive well being.
- **Language development:** The development of language ranges from making noise when spoken to, to understanding complex questions, and engaging in conversation with others.
- **Social development:** the ability to foster and maintain meaningful relationships with others.
- **Creative thinking:** encourages children to problem solve, and explore unfamiliar areas and ideas.

Delaying the introduction to screen time has been associated with better language skills.



Screen time is **NOT** recommended for children who are **2 years and younger**.

Children **ages 2 to 5** should be limited to **1 hour or less** per day.



Research has shown increased screen time to children aged 2 to 5 years old to be associated with:

- Misbehaving
- **Hyperactivity:** being easily distracted, impulsive, having a difficult time concentrating, constantly moving or fidgeting, and aggressiveness
- **Inattention** (distraction) problems.

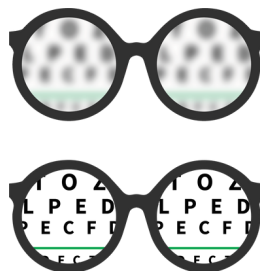


Turning off the 'Background TV' can **positively** affect:

- Attention
- **Language Development**
- Working memory
- **Impulse control:** the ability to choose a response by pausing and thinking, instead of reacting immediately
- Increase quality parent – child interactions
- Promote Imaginative play



Excessive screen time has been associated with **nearsightedness** (also known as Myopia) in children.



**Myopia:** Distant objects are blurry, but objects that are near may be seen clearly

## Challenging Behavior

Using screens as a soothing strategy or reward may increase outbursts of '**acting out**' if the screen is not allowed.

Children learn from example! When you use electronics in front of your child, it **increases** the chances of **children misbehaving to hold your attention**.

Your child may act out because they love you and want to connect.



Canadian Paediatric Society  
"Positive Discipline"



The **family media plan** allows families to establish screen time rules and expectations.



## Navigating Screen Usage at Home

Setting limits to screen time when children are young can help avoid resistance when children are older.



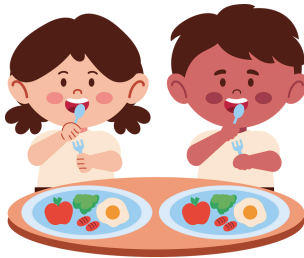
Familiarize yourself with the parental controls on the devices in your home such as:

- ✓ Time limit controls
- ✓ Site Blocking to protect from predators

### Parental controls



Avoid screentime that exposes young children to advertisements for unhealthy food, which is correlated with impacting eating behaviors.



Turning off screens **one hour before** bed can increase the likelihood of your child:

- Going to bed on time
- Staying asleep



Screen time has been shown to decrease the amount of Melatonin made by your body.

What is Melatonin?

Melatonin: A naturally producing hormone that regulates sleep/wake cycles.

Watch TV that is age appropriate to promote:

- Brain development
- Social Development



Keep in mind the messages about abilities, body image, violence, diversity, and social issues when choosing content for your child.



Watch screens with your child **[Co-view]** and **talk with your child about media content** to increase the educational value.



**Co-View:** Two or more people watching the same TV, movies, music, videos, apps, or games.



### Co-Viewing with your child



Turning off screens and interacting with family during mealtimes increases **social development**.



### Potential Benefits of Screen Time

When **co-viewed**, interactive educational content can potentially help children with:

- Early reading skills with letters
- Phonics
- Word recognition

Quality age appropriate content can promote imaginative play.

Screen time can be appropriately used to distract a child during a medical procedure or a long wait.



### CBC Kids



## Alternatives to Screen time

- Listening to an audiobook [Spotify has many audio stories for day time and bed time]

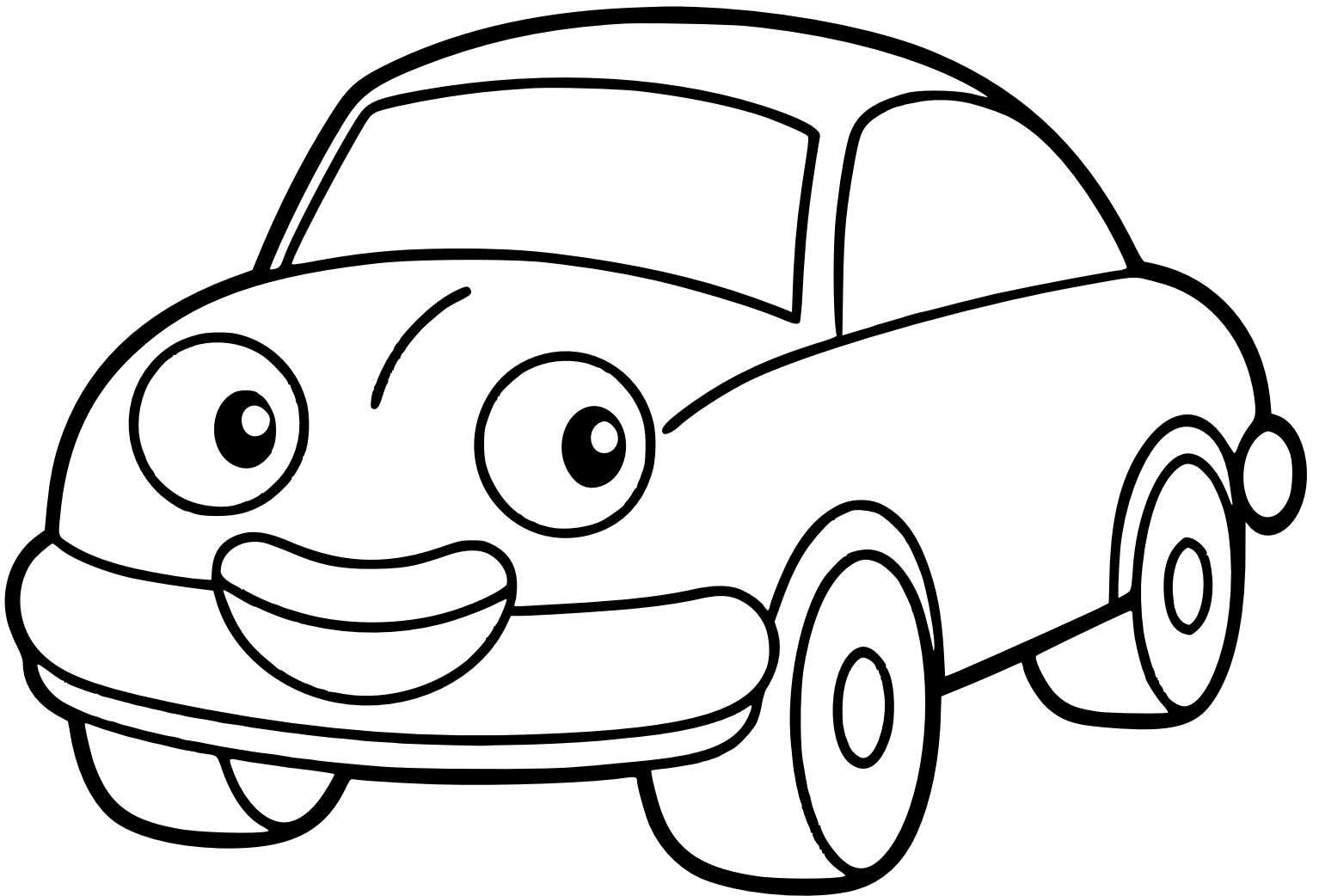
- Reading books together
- Going to the park
- Doing arts and crafts
- Play outside
- Go for a walk
- Imaginative play
- Baking cookies



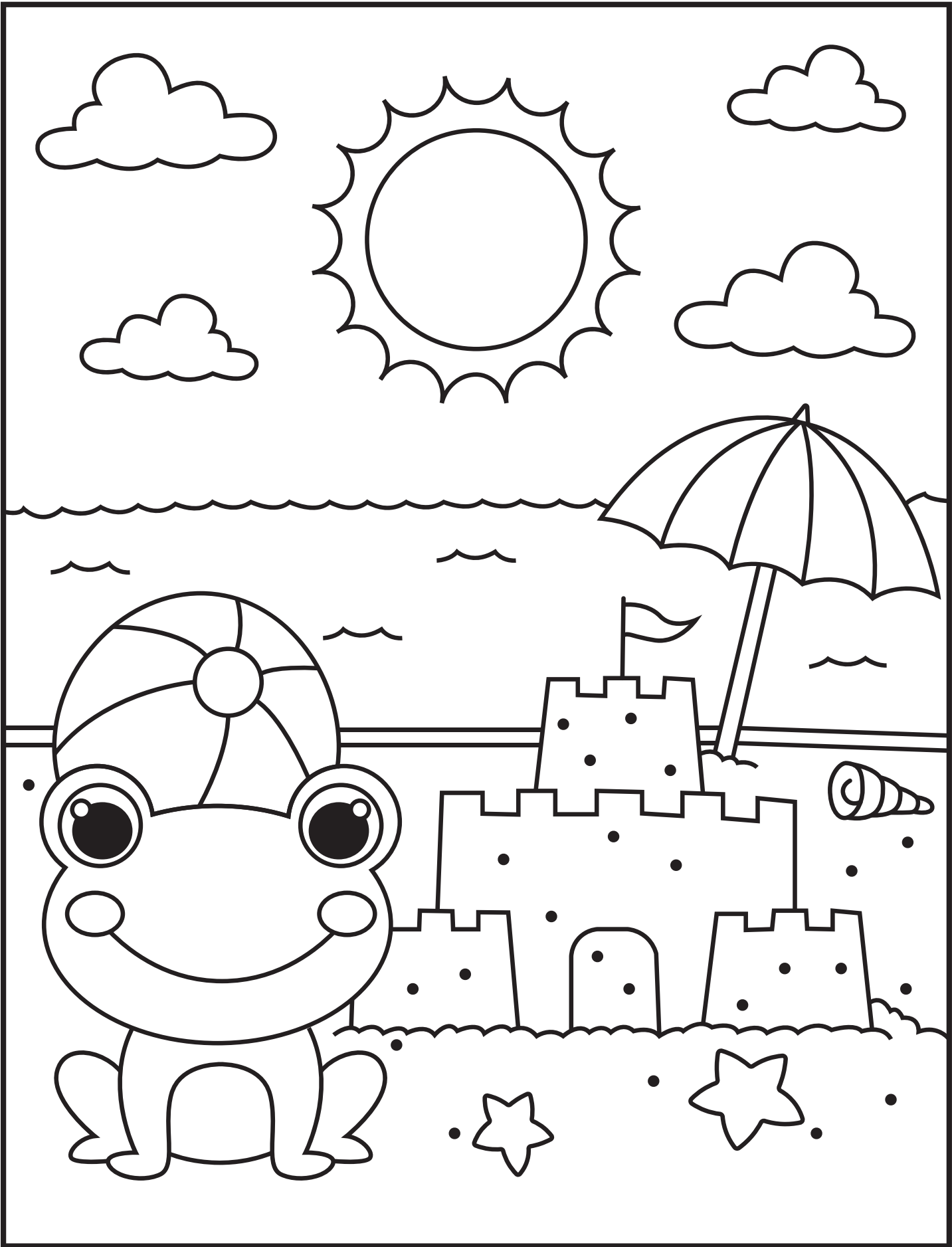
## References



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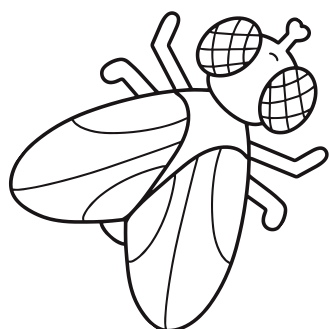
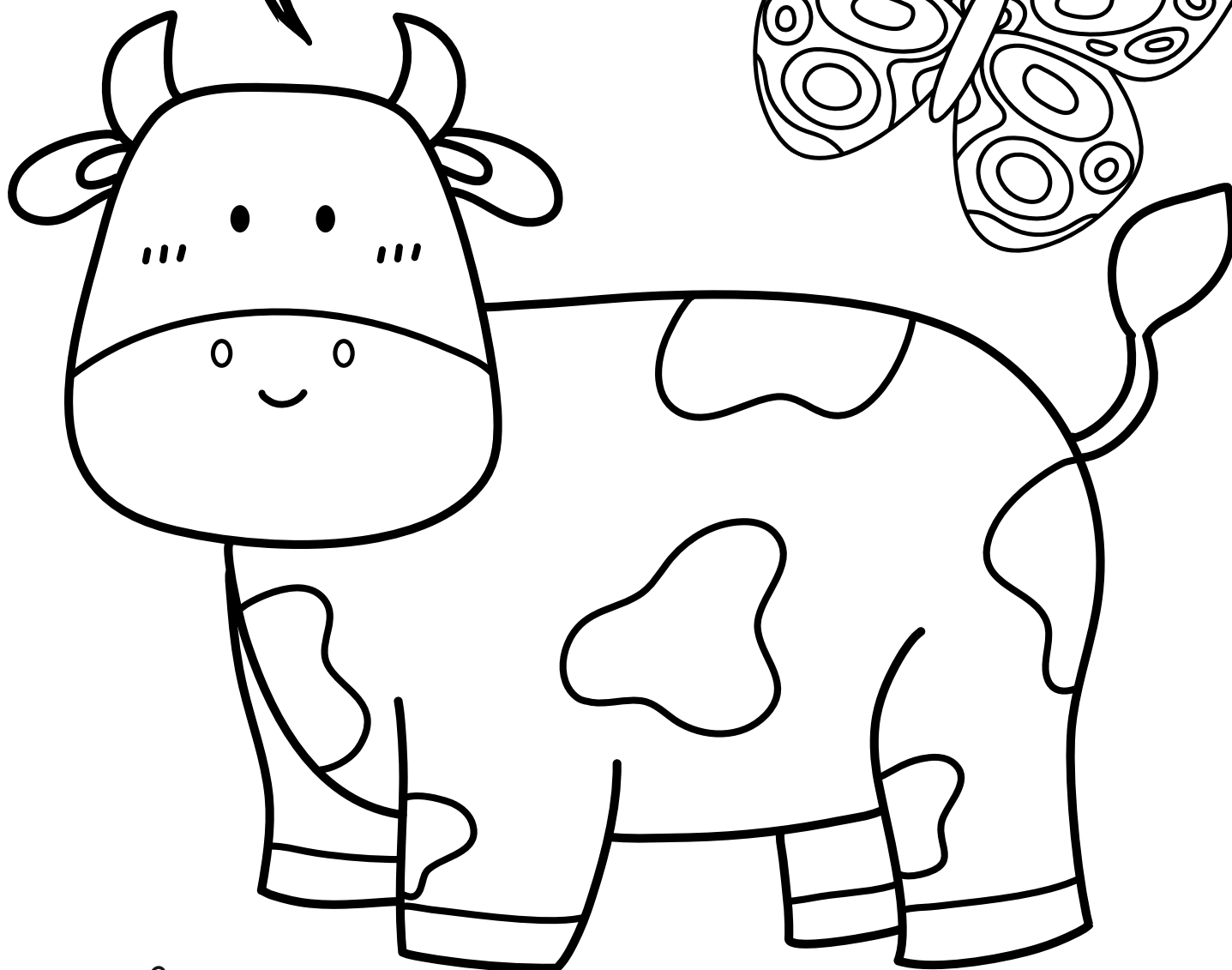
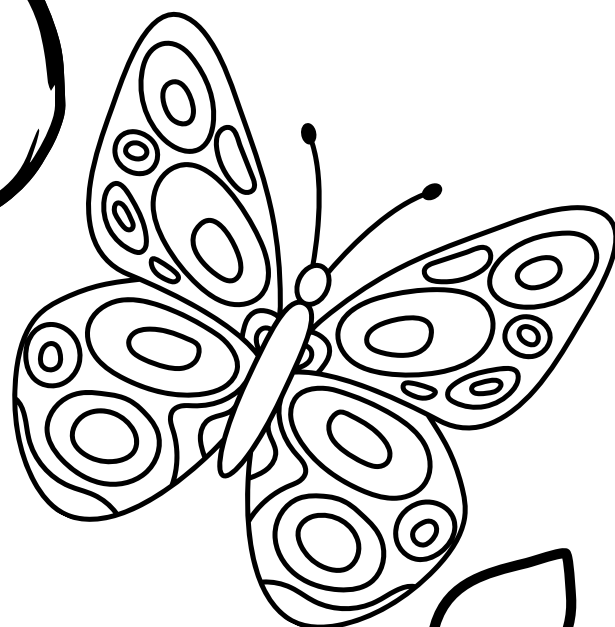
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