

Pediatricians: Turn off electronic devices

By Andrea Petersen, Wall Street Journal

Parents should ban electronic media during mealtimes and after bedtime as part of a comprehensive “family media use plan,” according to new recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics.

The influential new guidelines are being spurred by a growing recognition of kids’ nearly round-the-clock media consumption, which includes everything from television to texting and social media.

“Excessive media use is associated with obesity, poor school performance, aggression and lack of sleep,” said Marjorie Hogan, co-author of the new policy and a pediatrician.

Families should have a no-device rule during meals and after bedtime, the guidelines say. Parents should also set family rules covering the use of the Internet and social media and cellphones and texting, including, perhaps, which sites can be visited, who can be called and giving parental access to Facebook accounts. The policy also reiterated the AAP’s existing recommendations: Kids should limit the amount of screen time for entertainment to less than two hours per day; children younger than 2 shouldn’t have any TV or Internet exposure. Also, televisions and Internet-accessible devices should be kept out of kids’ bedrooms.

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