

## *Parent Influencers VS iPad Kids: Which Do More Harm?*

30 years ago parents didn't have to worry about screens impacting their children's health, but with the modern technology boom, many parents worry about how a screen can affect their children. Other parents have seen this as an opportunity to make themselves and their kids famous influencers or family vloggers. Both of these have tremendous impacts on a children's health but does one hurt a child more than the other? In this article I want to go over what Parent Influencers are as well as what iPad kids are. I also want to break down the positive and negative sides of both concepts and determine which one harms children more.



This picture shows a mom and child standing in front of a ring light most likely to make a TikTok or even doing a live stream on some social media site.



This picture shows a child about the age of 5 playing on an iPad well ignoring the books around him. This is an example of an iPad kid.



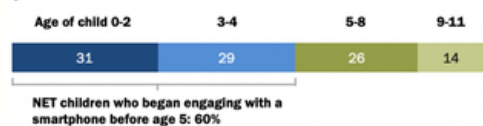
# Parent Influencers VS iPad Kids: Which do More Harm?

## iPad Kids



If you're not chronically online you might have heard the term iPad kid in passing. If you don't know what it means Charissa Cheong describes it as "Gen Alpha children have even been dubbed with the nickname "iPad Kids," due to the stereotype that they're constantly glued to technology" in her article "["Millennial parenting is facing a brutal reckoning as TikTok turns against it"](#)". In short iPad kids are the latter half of Gen Z and Gen Alpha who are glued to their iPads or some sort of technology but you mainly see them with an iPad.

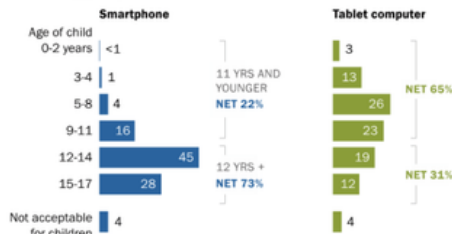
Among U.S. parents of a child age 11 or younger who uses a smartphone, % who say their child began engaging with a smartphone between the ages of ...



Note: If parent has multiple children, they were asked to focus on one child when answering this question. Those who did not give an answer are not shown.

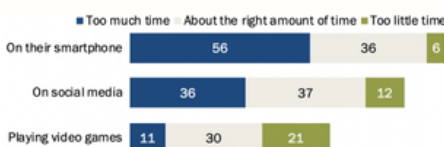
Figure 1

their own \_\_ at age ...



Note: Based on parents who have at least one child under the age of 18 but may also have an adult child or children. These items were only asked among those who use these digital technologies but are presented here among all parents. Those who did not give an answer

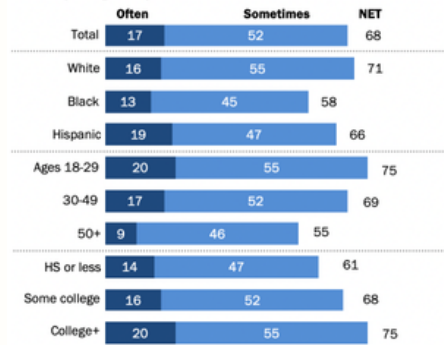
Figure 2



Note: Based on parents who have at least one child under the age of 18 but may also have an adult child or children. These items were only asked among those who use these digital technologies but are presented here among all parents. Those who did not give an answer

Figure 3

... how they are spending time with their children ...



Note: Based on parents who have at least one child under the age of 18 but may also have an adult child or children. This item was only asked among those who use a smartphone

Figure 4

PEW Research released a study called "[Parenting Kids in the Age of Screens](#)" which is a study done on parents before COVID-19 about their kids and screens/social media as well as parents' habits of using screens/social media. Figure 1 shows that most parents have let kids under the age of 5 interact with phone screens this includes kids barely even months old. However, in Figure 2 most parents say they don't want kids having a cellphone until the age of 12. Within Figure 2 most parents did agree that children under the age of 8 shouldn't have a cell phone meaning parents are giving children their phones under that age. As well in Figure 2 parents believe that a good age for a child to get an iPad at ages 5-8. Kids are not the only people who struggle with not being on their screens. 6 in 10 parents find that they spend too much time on their smartphones as demonstrated by Figure 3. Children imitate older people in their lives which may be why we see an influx of iPad kids out in the world. This is backed up in Figure 4 which says 68% of parents find it hard to not be distracted by their cellphone when spending time with their kids.

When parents put children in front of a screen they try to put on educational videos but research compiled by the [American Psychological Association \(APA\)](#) says that in 2005 researcher Daniel Anderson found that children at the age of 2 don't learn from videos they learn best from live interaction.

This is supported by a quote by researcher Troseth: "Until they're around age 3, kids seem to view video as irrelevant to real life." 3 to 5-year-olds present a different challenge because they can learn from shows like Sesame Street and Super Why. These shows are slow-paced and designed for kids. As children grow up so does their screen time and access to technology. However, with the increased screen time, tweens scored lower on cognitive assignments. As well tweens that get little sleep and have more screen time are highly impulsive. For teens, it has been found that there is a correlation between screen time and obesity and depressive symptoms.

## Are iPads good for kids?

The APA article didn't just give bad statistics they also put in good research on how screens can be beneficial to different age groups. A study done on preschoolers by researcher Deborah Nichols found "in tests of prereading skills such as alphabet recognition and letter sounds, kids who were randomly assigned to watch a 20-episode run of the literacy show "Super Why!" outperformed kids who were assigned to watch an educational science series,". Texas Tech also did a study on the same age group but with the TV show "Daniel Tigers Neighborhood" and found similar results. Texas Tech says "that kids who were randomly assigned to watch the program showed greater emotion recognition, empathy and self-efficacy". As well for preschoolers if a parent is there for a little to help them understand the shows they watch they are more likely to learn once a parent steps away. Parents are still worried about kids older than preschool age. For teens, researchers say "the best mental health and cognitive outcomes in teens who do one hour of physical activity each day, sleep eight to 10 hours a day and use screens recreationally less than two hours a day... such that moderate users were the best off". Overall as long as children have a balanced amount of screen time a day then there won't be any detrimental effects to kids of any age. As a parent, something you can do to promote a healthy interaction with screens is to have a screen time limit and they can earn more screen time by doing things like chores, exercising, and even reading a book.

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## *Conclusion* —————



We've now explored both parent influencers and iPad kids. To review a parent influencer can either be a parent monitoring a kid's account or a parent making content about their family. In many cases of children being involved men have come out to do more damage to both parents and kids. On the other side, there are people like Jacquelyn who is a parent running an influencer account that exploits her daughter, Wren's, innocence and naivety. Laws are starting to be put in place to get children money from their content but that law has only been used in one state.

iPad Kids is a term coined by TikTok users talking about kids who are always on their iPads. There has been research to show there can be bad effects for all ages with too much screen time. However, there are some good sides to technology like preschoolers can learn from educational videos. But there just needs to be a balanced amount of screen time, physical activity, and sleep to ward off many of these bad side effects.

Overall both parent influencers and iPad kids do have negatives to them but through my research parent influencers are worse for a child than an iPad can be. This is because the only thing that can help children who have parents trying to exploit or abuse them is the law. It is a parent's choice to become an influencer, not a 4 year olds and many parents take advantage of that. iPads also have features like screen time and there is more research backing up healthy screen time habits where as there is not much research done on parent influencers at the moment. As a society, we can help kids who are being taken advantage of by their parents. We can do this by talking to lawmakers about pushing a bill to protect children, as well as not giving in to the content these parents are pursuing unless it is to benefit the children. Hopefully, in the future, we find a way to protect children even if it's from their parents or an iPad.