Screen time and the development of emotion understanding from age 4 to age 8: A community study

# Details

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* Learning
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* Online safety and policy regulation

## Sample

This longitudinal community study of 960 Norwegian 4-year- olds, followed up at ages 6 and 8, examined bidirectional relations between screen use and emotion understanding.

## Implications For Parents About

## Implications For Educators About

Professional development

## Implications For Policy Makers About

## Implications For Stakeholders About

* Researchers
* Industry
* Healthcare

# Abstract

Recent increase in children’s screen activities has raised concerns that screen time may replace face-to-face interaction, and hence impair children’s development of emotion understanding. This longitudinal community study of 960 Norwegian 4-year- olds, followed up at ages 6 and 8, examined bidirectional relations between screen use and emotion understanding. Results revealed that more screen time at age 4 predicted lower levels of emotion understanding at age 6. In addition, television in children’s bedroom at age 6 forecasted lower levels of emotion understanding at age 8. The effect of TV watching on emotion understanding was gender moderated, with stronger effects of TV watching observed among girls, but no significant effects detected among boys. In contrast, gaming forecasted lower level of emotion understanding in boys, not girls. Results are discussed in the light of the importance of face-to-face interaction to preserve the development of social-emotional competence among young children.

# Outcome

Results revealed that more screen time at age 4 predicted lower levels of emotion understanding at age 6. In addition, television in children’s bedroom at age 6 forecasted lower levels of emotion understanding at age 8. The effect of TV watching on emotion understanding was gender moderated, with stronger effects of TV watching observed among girls, but no significant effects detected among boys. In contrast, gaming forecasted lower level of emotion understanding in boys, not girls.