



Screen Free Week is a community event in Bozeman, this year it falls during the week of April 20-26. Kids and families are challenged to go for a week without using a screen of any kind (except for work or school). Look for the special insert in The Bozeman Daily Chronicle, available at various locations and at the Parent Place.

Below is a national report breaking down the amount of time that children use media. As reported by the Kaiser Family Foundation [Generation M<sup>2</sup>: Media in the Lives of 8- to 18-Year-Olds](#)

Today, 8-18 year-olds devote an average of 7 hours and 38 minutes (7:38) to using entertainment media across a typical day (more than 53 hours week). And because they spend so much of that time 'media multitasking' (using more than one medium at a time), they actually manage to pack a total of 10 hours and 45 minutes (10:45) worth of media content into those 7½ hours.

When parents set limits, children spend less time with media: those with any media rules consume nearly 3 hours less media per day (2:52) than those with no rules.

Girls spend more time than boys using social networking sites (:25 vs. :19), listening to music (2:33 vs. 2:06), and reading (:43 vs. :33). Boys spend more time than girls playing console video games (:56 vs.: 14), computer games (:25 vs. :08), and going to video websites like YouTube (:17 vs. :12).

Media use increases substantially when children hit the 11-14 year-old age group, an increase of 1:22 with TV content, 1:14 with music, 1:00 using the computer, and :24 playing video games, for total media exposure of 11:53 per day (vs. 7:51 for 8-10 year-olds).

7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders report spending an average of 1:35 a day sending or receiving texts. (Time spent texting is *not* counted as media use in this study.)

Ask the Parent Place.

**I'm getting tired of playing the same things, What other ideas might you have?**

~**Dramatic play.** Helps children work out their own ideas about their experiences. Provides a powerful way of learning new skills and a sense of mastery. Examples: blocks, dress-up clothes, fabric pieces, dolls, puppets, props to recreate real life (post office, restaurant, store), plastic and stuffed animals.



~ **Manipulative play with small play objects.** Develops small muscle control, eye-hand coordination, and visual discrimination – skills needed to read and write. Teaches about relationships between objects, essential for understanding math and science. Examples: construction sets and toys with interlocking pieces; Legos, Lincoln Logs, K'nex, puzzles, pegboards, pattern blocks.

~ **Game playing.** Teaches about taking turns, planning strategy, sequencing, rules, and cooperation. Examples: board games like checkers, chess, cranium, card games, etc.



~ **Creative arts.** Encourages self-expression and the use of symbols, a skill for problem solving and literacy. Develops fine motor skills. Examples: any paints, assortment of blank paper of all sizes and colors, crayons and markers, scissors, glue, recycled materials, stamps, clay, weaving kits. Collaborative art experiences are easy and simple. The process of creating together doesn't always require a lasting product.

~**Physical play.** Promotes healthy body awareness and coordination. Provides opportunities for social interaction. Using bikes, scooters and other wheeled toys, climbing structures, walking or running.



**The Parent Place - Family Resource Centers**

Bozeman-400 E. Babcock @ 587-4734

Belgrade-92 N. Broadway @ 388-1300

parentplace@allthrive.org

Also at [www.allthrive.org](http://www.allthrive.org)



# Ages and Stages

## Be Screen Smart



### Infants and Toddlers

Infants and Toddlers are not developmentally ready to benefit from even the best of television and video programming, despite the advertising claims made on some products. Children at this stage of development learn much better from live three dimensional experiences, which is why the Academy of Pediatrics recommends no screen time for children under 2 yrs.

Research on early brain development shows that babies and toddlers have a critical need for direct interactions with parents and other significant caregivers for healthy brain growth and the development of appropriate physical, social, emotional, and cognitive skills.

Young children's vocabularies and language skills develop from hearing words spoken and read directly to them daily.

Background TV (TV on with no one watching) can interfere with free play-time, quality time with family, strong language development and sleep quality— all of which predict success with learning.

### School Age and Teens

**Do not permit TV watching during meals.** If the TV set is on at the same time, it will get in the way of talking to each other.

**Middle school students who watch more TV,** play more video games, and have more cable channel availability during the week are more likely to do worse in school than students with less screen time exposure and cable availability.

**Talk to your child about Internet safety.** Parents should take the time to share important internet safety with their children. Some tips for social networking: Begin an open conversation to establish a context of discussion about social networking. Open your own account to get familiar with the site. Monitor your child's site on occasion. Set the expectation that they only "friend" real people that they know.

**Restrict the times your tween or teen** can watch TV, text or play on the internet. Set a time to have the cell phone on the kitchen table to limit the temptation.

### Ways to Be Screen Smart!

- Talk together about the days events, what's happening in your family, along with your thoughts, feelings, hopes and dreams.
- Have no TV or computer in a child's bedroom.
- If TV causes arguments or fights, simply unplug it for a while.
- Be a good role model. Limit your own screen use. Your children pick up both good and bad habits from you.
- Set limits on the amount of screen time your family has.
- Watch TV with your kids, so you know what they are watching. Talk about the commercials and what they are selling.
- Talk about the internet and how information flows to intended and unintended people.
- Plan alternative activities with your family, at home and in our community. Ideas may include swimming, hiking, sledding, skiing, camping, star gazing and so on!



*“Scientists have so far come up with nothing to suggest that babies are better off watching a baby video than, say, watching you fold laundry.”*

Into the Minds of Babes: How Screen Time Affects Children From Birth to Age Five by Lisa Guernsey



Lending Library Spotlight– In each newsletter we will feature resources that can be checked out from the Parent Place.

- The Elephant in the Living room– make television work for your kids by Dimitri Christakis, MD, MPH and Frederick Zimmerman, PhD
- The Siblings Busy Book By Hanson and Kempksie
- The Wiggle and Giggle Busy Book by Kuffner

*This information was taken from a flyer developed by the Montana Nutrition and Physical Activity Program with the help of many sources which can be found on their website at [www.montanana.org](http://www.montanana.org). All illustrations are the original creations of Sharon Glick.*

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## The Bozeman Parent Place

400 East Babcock  
M-Th from 8-5, Fri. from 8-4.  
587-3840

## The Belgrade Parent Place

92 N. Broadway  
T 9-12, W 1-5, F 9-12  
388-1300

Also at  
[www.allthrive.org](http://www.allthrive.org)

Join us at playgroups and gym day!  
Both are Free and NO registration  
required.

### Playgroups



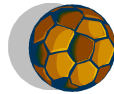
Bozeman Parent Place  
Mondays 10-11

Belgrade Parent Place  
Tuesdays 10-11

### Gym Days

Bozeman: Willson School  
Thursdays 9:15-10:15

Belgrade: Quaw School  
Wednesdays 11:15-12:15



Please note the following exceptions:  
**NO GYM DAYS: March 17th in Belgrade  
or March 18th in Bozeman**

## "Becoming a Love and Logic Parent, Early childhood"

Presented by Kristina Allison, LCSW

Love and Logic was designed to help you find specific answers and actions for some of those difficult moments in child rearing. These simple techniques are effective with all children. This is a special class for parents of children ages 0-6 years of age.

The six week class will be at the Belgrade Parent Place on Thursdays from 6-8pm beginning April 15th - May 20th. The cost is \$100 per person and \$175 per couple.

Call the Parent Place to sign up for the 6 week series at 587-4734 or visit our website [www.allthrive.org](http://www.allthrive.org)

## Pint-Sized Play.

Pint sized play is a parent-child group, available for parents and their children 0-3 years of age, in the attendance areas of Hyalite and Whittier schools. This is a free event. Please call 922-4240 for more information. *Sponsored by Thrive and The Bozeman School District*

Parenting: The Real Untold Story

**Hyalite School- Tuesdays, April 6-27, from 10-11am**  
**Whittier School- Fridays, April 9-30, from 10-11am**

## Parent Forum.

The forum is designed to allow parents time to discuss a topic with each other, while kids are supervised in another room. Hope you can join our discussion group! Please call 587-3840 to register so we can be sure to have enough childcare providers.

Bozeman is the 2nd Monday:

March 9th, April 12th from 11:15-12:15

Belgrade is the 4th Tuesday:

March 23, April 27th from 11:15-12:15

**Dynamite Dads** is designed for male role models to spend time with the child they adore!  
**March 24th 6-7:30:** Cooking with Prefix Dinner Studio, 1001 W. Oak. Please call 587-3840 to register. OR visit us on-line at [www.allthrive.org](http://www.allthrive.org) in the events section. This activity is free and we will cook our dinner!

**April 21st, 6-7:30:** Spring planting with Cashman's Nursery. Please Call 587-3840 to register OR visit us on-line at [www.Allthrive.org](http://www.Allthrive.org) under the events section. This activity is free and dinner will be served.



### Parent Place Sponsors



The Parent Place newsletter  
is proudly sponsored by  
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Broadway Flying J Travel Plaza, Ronald McDonald Charities of Montana

## Dad's Corner

Sacrifices come in all shapes and sizes; taking out the trash when it's 50 below outside, watching football on a non HDTV. Yet being a dad is the biggest and yet most rewarding one of them all. I have to keep reminding myself this, throughout the day. Each day I somehow find myself in situations, that require the utmost patience, restraint and guidance, due to an extremely outgoing, gregarious, and intelligent (almost too smart) four year old little girl.

You might say she's a handful. For example: I ask, "Would you like tights and a skirt or tights and a dress?" To which I get a cute smile and a reply of, "How about a dress, with a shirt over it? That would look pretty, right? And maybe some pants." While I'm thinking; those were not the options.

Every time I think I have the whole 'being dad' thing straightened out and feeling pretty good about it--like I am on top of the world--she flips it on my head and says in her cuteness, "NOPE!!! New direction!" I find myself forced to exercise extreme patience. My own father told me once; "being patient is a learned trait, and it takes a lot of practice." I have to say, over the last 4 yrs of my life, I have been introduced to patience, by my 4 yr old daughter.

It seems that every day my little one pushes me to the edge, which I fight back with kindness and restraint. It isn't easy, in fact it's the hardest thing I do all day. But at night, when we are rocking back and forth, and back and forth, in the dark of her bedroom, I smile and hold her tight. *It's right then, in that moment the world makes sense.* I was put here to be a dad, to be among the greats. It's definitely the most enjoyable and most trying thing I do, with a smile.

—Jeff Olech; 31 going on 15 ...father of a 4 yr old going on 24

