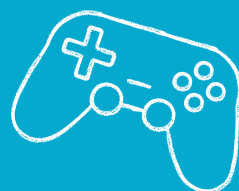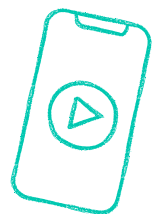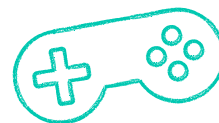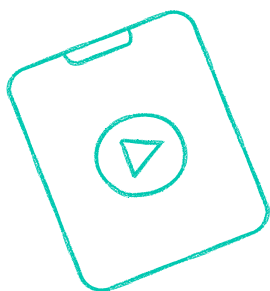# moshi

Healthy Entertainment for Kids

A practical guide to the digital world.

What is Healthy Entertainment?

Healthy entertainment, whether on a TV, tablet, or phone, occurs when your child is having a cognitively and socially engaging experience. Healthy entertainment uses the fundamentals of **play and storytelling** to guide kids through learning that has a positive impact on their well-being.

Children have become **"digital natives,"** meaning they have adopted technology into their everyday life as a part of our ever-evolving world. Technology—including tablets, phones, TV, and computers—will continue to evolve, and it is important that we encourage children to use technology in a healthy way.

Moshi Kids is Healthy Entertainment!

Moshi is a safe and trusted environment

- Embeds social, emotional, and cognitive learning into its content
- Content is designed for children to immerse themselves in an imaginary and creative world that a parent can trust
- Helps children develop their sense of empathy, identity, and creativity
- Features over 85 hours of content, created by a BAFTA-award-winning creative team and recommended by childcare and sleep experts
- 100% ad free
- App includes daily content recommendations tailored to your child's age and interests
- Characters and stories provide positive reinforcement that helps kids stay engaged with learning
- Interactive games are made up of puzzles, coloring, matching, and memory activities

With Moshi, you can expect:

- Fun and engaging stories and interactive play—Moshi provides a safe space and is a friend for your child throughout the day, with multiple formats to choose from including audio-only stories, music, and interactive games.
- Better bedtimes—In a poll administered by Moshi via Instagram, 97% of respondents agreed that Moshi helps their kids fall asleep faster than usual, and 95% said using the app makes bedtime less stressful.
- Calmer days—Moshi mindfulness exercises and stories help children relax, gain confidence, and manage their emotions while improving their focus and concentration.

Moshi Play

"**Moshi Play** is built on our commitment to established child development research and feedback collected from play studies with real Moshi families. We are excited to engage children during the day, allowing them to play independently, build concentration, practice problem-solving and deepen their relationship with our characters. Where most digital content promotes inattentive or mentally remote behavior, Moshi Play is a positive digital solution that will immerse your child in a dynamic play environment that supports cognitive development." - Christianne Amodio, Moshi CEO and mom of two

Benefits of Moshi Play

◇ Encourages imaginative and creative play

◇ Allows kids to practice cognitive skills through play, such as logical reasoning, spatial awareness, focus, and memory

◇ Respects the needs of children of different ages by providing developmentally appropriate opportunities for play

◇ Provides a safe place for kids to play

"**Young children have a natural curiosity about the world around them.** By using their senses, they take in new information, catalog it with previous experiences, and come out with new meanings. When introducing something brand new to children, the best way we can support their learning is to allow them the time and guidance to actively explore. Our new Moshi Play feature does exactly this. Moshlings are the stars of the Moshi world and children's imaginations. The images of the Moshlings in the app are adorable and relatable, and the colors are appealing to young eyes."

- Allison Henry, Head of Research and Efficacy at Moshi and mom of three

What parents say about Moshi Play

◇ "I love that my kid is learning tools like how to regulate their breathing—such a cool skill."

◇ "[We liked] the bright playful colors and adorable little characters."

◇ "[My daughter] said she liked the Moshi games the best because of the 'magical sounds.'"

◇ "[My son] especially liked the memory games. He liked that you could see a bear ear popping out and that if he left it the Moshlings popped out."

Welcome to the Digital World

Offline and online are fusing, as children's lives are becoming systematically reliant on the digital environment. The "plugged in" life is here to stay and will only grow and develop, so it is crucial to find a healthy balance of the virtual with other daily essentials of a healthy lifestyle, such as sleep, nutrition, exercise, creativity and exploration, and physical social interaction. It's about creating a "healthy media diet" and teaching our children healthy habits around being online.

When it comes to screen time, the pendulum swings toward the importance of social and emotional learning. The digital experience will be less solitary and passive if parents and caregivers are able to make it more interactive and relational. This might look like sitting together with your child and asking questions or encouraging discussion about a game they are playing. Another idea is to expand the digital experience by playing a similar real-world game together and then drawing comparisons between the two experiences.

Current research around technology use from a developmental perspective

The study of technology use by kids is recent and has evolved quickly. There is now more awareness of social and emotional learning, child development, and education in the study of digital programs and games for kids. The following are highlights of some of the research around screen time for kids.

"More than one-third of parents with a child under 12 say their child began interacting with a smartphone before the age of 5" (Pew Research Center, 2020).

"What's important is that parents be their child's 'media mentor.' That means teaching them how to use it as a tool to create, connect and learn" (Radesky, 2016).

"Children's play is vital for their development, learning, self-expression and sense of belonging. Children have the right to free play. Children want and need to be active participants in the digital world. The digital world can and should be designed to support children's agency and free play" (Livingstone & Pothong, 2021). According to these authors, there are 12 qualities of free play that give us language for what is appealing to children in a digital world: intrinsically motivated, voluntary, open-ended, with friends, imaginative and stimulating, emotionally resonant, social, diverse, risk-taking, safe, sense of achievement, immersive.

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How SEL and play moved into the digital space

- Throughout the past two decades, social and emotional learning has evolved into one of the most frequently talked about and researched topics within the field of education.

- This dates back to the 1920s and 1930s, to Leo Vygotsky and sociocultural theory.

- Sociocultural theory suggests that how people interact with others and the culture they live in shapes their mental abilities.

- Vygotsky strongly believed that community plays a central role in the process of "making meaning." He was the first modern psychologist to suggest that the culture one grows in plays a key role in their nature.

- "Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level" (Vygotsky, 1978).

- *Zone of proximal development:* Vygotsky believed that learning should be related to a child's developmental level. With ZPD, a child's actual learning ability (what they can do without help) and their potential learning ability (what they can do with help) are recognized.

  - *Private speech:* This is when children talk to themselves, which Vygotsky saw as the starting point for all mental development. He argued that children talk to themselves to guide themselves through action.

  - *Make-believe play:* Vygotsky believed that children use make-believe play to test multiple skills and achieve important cultural abilities.

- Alongside developments in social and emotional learning, there has been an increase in the presence of digital media and technology in children's lives, including a rise in virtual learning and educational technologies during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is now safe to say that students in today's world are more connected than any previous generation.

- Educational and wellness technologies have opened up an entirely new world of learning possibilities for children.

- The digital environment in which children and teens interact is a central part of their life experiences, positive relationships, and identity development.

Digital Wellness

Digital wellness is an intentional state of physical, mental, and social health that occurs with mindful engagement in the digital and natural environment. Defined by the Digital Wellness Lab in 2021, the term refers to the capacity of media and technology to build digital environments that can help advance the overall well-being of children, their families, society, and humanity at large.

Types of technology and screen time

- According to the Pew Research Center, children engage with various types of digital devices and this varies widely by age.
- From the Pew study, the most common device is the television, and the tablet falls right after this.
- Most parents feel that they want to be able to get in touch with their child, hence the need for smartphone devices.
- Not all screen time is the same and there are various types of screen time, including active and passive.
  - Active screen time involves engagement in the process of using a device. This could be cognitive or physical engagement, including YouTube videos, playing educational games, or coding a website. During active time children are engaged with the activity, further developing language, social, and physical skills.
  - Passive screen time occurs when a child absorbs information from the screen or consumes an app or a game passively, without the need for thought, creativity, or interaction. This could include watching videos on YouTube (especially autoplay), browsing social media (Facebook, Instagram, or TikTok), playing repetitive games, and binge-watching shows.
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Is it inherently unsafe? What do people fear most about technology and where it is going?

◇ According to the December 2022 poll referred to above completed by followers on Moshi Kids' Instagram, in answer to the question "What worries you about screentime impact?" 36% of respondents felt mental health was the biggest worry, 32% said behavior, 27% said sleep, and 5% said their child's physical health being impacted.

◇ The use of technology can have positive impacts on a developing brain and can help support children in learning a variety of skills. The use of technology for work and play are here to stay, so we can do our best to support children in understanding how to use technology safely and effectively.

Healthy balance is the key

◇ The important factor when considering screen time is understanding the concept of a healthy balance and healthy boundaries.

◇ Most families have clear expectations about when media consumption is acceptable and when it should be set aside.

◇ Strict zero-tolerance rules are not always best, and setting high limits on screen time can encourage children to want it more. Consistency, balance, and structure are most important.

◇ In response to the question "How many hours does your child spend on the screen?" 40% of followers on Moshi Kids' Instagram said their child spends 0–30 minutes on the screen a day, 40% said 30 minutes to an hour a day, and 20% said 3+ hours a day.

Questions to help set you up for success

As parents, our role is to create positive screen time for our kids. The following questions will help you take an active part in managing device usage and promoting healthy habits:

- How many hours per day do my kids watch TV?
- Where are they allowed to use their devices?
- Who decides when, what, where, and how long screen time is allowed?
- What types of media do my kids consume?
- What is the schedule for balancing healthy screen time with other types of play and activities

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Tips for setting healthy technology boundaries

◇ Help your child find apps that are fun and encourage playful and imaginative exploration, like Moshi Play.

◇ Build in breaks from screen time at regular intervals for other activities. Set a timer with your child.

◇ Sociocultural theory suggests that how people interact with others and the culture they live in shapes their mental abilities.

◇ Have tech-free zones in your home. Keep bedrooms, mealtimes, and parent–child playtimes screen free for both children and parents. Parents can set a "do not disturb" option on their phones during these times.

◇ End screen time an hour before bedtime. Moshi Stories for bedtime routines and sleeping are all audio only.

◇ Engage with your child about the skills they are practicing in Moshi. For example, if they are using a new breathing technique, ask them to tell you about it and practice it with them. Or if they are playing a Moshi memory game, ask them what was most fun and most challenging about their play.

◇ Be mindful of parental media use. Heavy parent use is associated with fewer verbal and nonverbal interactions between parents and children.

◇ Consult children about decisions that directly impact them. Work with your child to come up with a schedule for when they can have access to the screen and when they cannot. (For example: Once you have finished your homework, you can have 30 minutes on the iPad.)

◇ Remember that for younger children, face-to-face social interaction is vital to their development of language and other skills and the screen should not be a substitute for this unless absolutely necessary.

◇ Think about your own screen usage and model how you want your child to engage with screen time. You are your child's best learning tool, as children often mimic what their parent does.

◇ Praise your child for respecting the boundaries and following the schedules set around screen time use.

◇ Do not feel pressured to introduce technology before the age of 2. Interfaces are so intuitive that children will figure them out quickly once they start using them at home or in school.

◇ For children 2 to 5 years of age, limit screen use to one hour a day of high-quality programming, watch together with your child, help them understand what they are seeing, and help them apply what they learn to the world around them.

◇ Utilize apps, like Moshi, as tools to help equip you and your child with calming and soothing strategies. But as with all digital media, this should never replace the parents' capacity to co-regulate and model regulation with their children.

◇ When introducing a new app, test the app before your child uses it, play together with your child if possible, and ask them what they think about the app.

Parenting in the Digital Generation

Importance of screen time with parent and child

It's Important to recognize the influence of media on children's health and development in the first five years of life, a time of critical brain development, building secure relationships, and establishing healthy behaviors.

Moshi's aim is not to teach or to educate, but simply to offer a safe and trusted environment for a child to be immersed in their imagination and creativity while developing cognitive and social and emotional skills alongside fun and relatable characters.

Most apps are not designed for a dual audience (that is, both parent and child). It is important to emphasize to parents that the higher-order thinking skills and executive functions essential for school success–such as task persistence, impulse control, emotion regulation, and creative, flexible thinking–are best taught through unstructured and social (not digital) play, as well as responsive parent–child interactions

Parents need tools for downtime, too

Consider these questions. How often have you:

- Cuddled up to a loved one while watching a movie?
- Gone to the cinema with friends to watch a film?
- Eaten your dinner while watching an episode of your favorite show?

How fulfilling are some of those activities? Entertainment on screen can be part of a healthy balance for you and your family, and it can be used as a tool. Work, errands, child care, driving from activity to activity, preparing meals, doing laundry, cleaning the house—the list goes on and on, and all these responsibilities can be tough to juggle. Parents and caregivers need some downtime to do what fills them up to be the best they can be for their children. It is important to:

◇ Recognize and tap into your own needs and hobbies

◇ Take a moment to breathe

◇ Allow your children time with Moshi Play as an avenue for your own calm and rest

◇ Remember all of the benefits of Moshi and do not feel guilty about offering healthy digital entertainment to your kids

Conclusion

◇ **Healthy entertainment is fun and engaging.**

◇ **Moshi can be used as a tool to support positive experiences with your child and provide a safe space for them to develop their emotional and cognitive skills.**

◇ **Moshi is a great way for your child to immerse themselves in games and listen to stories that can inspire, entertain, and support them. Moshi Play takes kids on extraordinary adventures in a beloved world where they can play, explore, or relax, day and night. Moshi's relatable characters are trusted by kids and grounded in emotional well-being and mindfulness.**

◇ **Living in a digital age presents challenges for all families and it is key to understand the ways we can utilize technology to provide learning opportunities.**

◇ **Keep in mind: What might the use of digital play be taking away from? Is your child still having a chance to enjoy other types of play, get fresh air, participate in unstructured activities, and spend quality time with you? Yes? Perfect!**

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