

Play Diet



The term “**play diet**,” refers to the types and amounts of play that are a regular part of a child’s daily activity. Observing a child’s play diet can help parents establish a healthy balance in their child’s play activities. Play diets are guides that are developmental in nature and must

take into account a child’s age and interests. Play diets help parents to understand the relative importance of various types of play, such as physical play, activity-based, social and creative play, solitary play, nature-based play, and digital play.

In today’s world, there is a great deal of controversy about the value of digital play. Digital play includes using computers, playing video games, and surfing the Internet, and many parents report a need for parenting guidance in this area. Developmental issues are of particular importance when it comes to digital play, such as the age children should be allowed to play violent video games, or how old a child should be before getting a cell phone.

While there are divergent opinions on these and other issues, there remain many obvious aspects of digital play that entail parental monitoring of children’s play diets. For example, we strongly believe that setting limits on digital play is imperative, particularly for younger children. In addition to monitoring the amount of video and computer time that young children are allowed, it is important to monitor the content of their play. Parental supervision and limit-setting is necessary for elementary-school children, along with parents’ simultaneous encouragement that children engage in other forms of play, such as physical activity, social play, musical and

creative play, and etc. There comes an increasing reliance on digital technologies for communicating and socializing with peers. However, the need for other healthy forms of play, including physical activity, face-to-face social opportunities, and creative and imaginative play persists.

For further information about developing a healthy play diet for your child, we encourage you to visit: [LearningWorks for Kids](#)