

# Knowledge of Screen Time Recommendations among Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Clients and Caregivers

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## Problem Statement

Childhood obesity is a national epidemic. Screen time use exceeding professional recommendations increases a child's risk for obesity.

The purpose of this research:

- Decipher whether parents utilizing Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) services are aware of professional recommendations for daily screen time use
- Acquire data to guide future interventions and research for children and families at high risk for screen time overuse and obesity

## Theoretical Framework

### Prochaska's Transtheoretical Model of Change (TTM)

- Six stages
- Interventions must be based on current stage and knowledge of AAP (1999) recommendations for screen time use among children.
- Those in the first stage need education and information to progress to subsequent stages and adopt lasting behavior change.

## Research Questions

Among caregivers of children ages 0-5 utilizing WIC services, what is the awareness of American Academy of Pediatrics [AAP] (1999) recommendations for screen time?

## Methodology

**Design:** Exploratory, descriptive design analyzing qualitative data via a survey with a convenience sample

**Sample:** Parents and/or caregivers, age 18 years or older, that have a child or children 0-5 years and use WIC services

**Data Collection Measures:** Parent Media Opinion Survey- adapted from Funk et al. (2009) with permission. Upon completion of the survey, participants were provided with an informational brochure, "Screen Time Reduction: Family Fact Sheet," regarding AAP (1999) recommendations with permission from Michigan Department of Community Health.

## Review of Literature

- AAP (1999) recommendations are as follows: children ages 0-2 should have no media use; children at and above 2 years may use 1-2 hours of media daily.
- Obesity is associated with screen time use for the following reasons: decreased physical activity, increased sedentary activity, exposure to food advertising, and irregular patterns of eating (CDC, 2012a).
- Screen time greater than AAP (1999) recommendations is an independent risk factor for obesity. The American child spends more time in front of a screen than any other daytime activity.
- Screen time overuse in the young child (0-5 years) is related to a greater risk for future screen time overuse and obesity.
- Certain familial characteristics—parental education level and income—contribute to a child's risk for overuse of screen time.

## Findings

- 36 WIC caregivers participated
- A 5 question survey regarding knowledge of AAP (1999) recommendations for child screen time limits
- Most WIC clients are not aware of AAP recommendations.
- Only 22.2% of WIC clients responded correctly regarding recommendations for children under 2 years old.
- Fewer participants (11.1%, n=4) correctly identified professional recommendations for children two years and greater.
- No parents correctly identified recommendations for both age ranges.

## Recommendations

- Based on the TTM framework, the best intervention to address the WIC population's lack of knowledge of AAP (1999) recommendations is education.
- The health care provider can play a pivotal role in improving screen time behaviors among high-risk clients through educational techniques.
- Results can guide future research to determine the most effective educational interventions to address this lack of knowledge among WIC parents and caregivers.