

What Health Care Professionals Say About Kids, Devices

The ubiquity of devices in twenty-first century life is hard to miss. Whether it's smartphones, tablets or laptops, devices are seemingly everywhere in modern life. That's even true with young children, who have a tendency to bring tablets along during car trips or nights out at a restaurant.

Parents walk a tightrope regarding screen time and children. Though media use is often, and understandably, discussed in terms of its potentially harmful impact on young minds, the issue is not exactly as one-sided as it may seem. For example, kids are naturally curious, and parents may not always have the answers to youngsters' questions. In such instances, devices can fill the gaps by encouraging kids to explore topics that interest them and find answers. Device usage also can teach kids digital literacy, which can help to prepare them for life in an increasingly digital world and also provide a way for children to employ lessons about internet safety emphasized by parents and educators.

The danger of devices in regard to young minds largely concerns overuse. Parents uncertain about how to help kids reap the rewards of me-



While that's a testament to the educational utility of devices, it also can complicate parents' efforts to minimize screen time, particularly if kids take tablets or laptops home from school each day. The AAP urges parents to make sure children five and older are not missing out on sleep, family time and exercise due to their device usage. The AAP also recommends that parents monitor kids' media usage to ensure they're safe and watching appropriate content.

• Discuss media usage with teens and tweens. Teens and tweens typically consume media without oversight. But the AAP emphasizes the importance of engaging teens and tweens in a dialogue regarding media use, digital citizenship and online content, whether it's read or viewed. It's also important that parents keep track of who teens and tweens are communicating with while on their devices.

It's not easy for parents to navigate their children's device usage. But the right approach can ensure kids are safe and reaping the rewards of engaging with their world through their devices.

dia use without overdoing it can consider these recommendations courtesy of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

• Greatly limit device usage and access with children under age two. The AAP notes that children two and younger learn best when they interact with other people, including parents, siblings, caregivers, and others. The AAP also notes that children two and younger do not easily understand what they see on a screen and how it relates to their world, which makes

screens a less useful educational tool for such youngsters than parents may realize. If parents of children between the ages of 18 and 24 months want to introduce screens to their kids, the AAP advises watching only high-quality programming and watching along with them. Reteaching lessons when programs end also can help kids make the most of their limited screen time.

• Limit screen time to no more than one hour per day for kids between the ages of two and five. Children be-

tween ages two and five can utilize devices to build their vocabulary, and quality programming like "Sesame Street" can instill valuable social, language and reading skills. The AAP recommends co-viewing with youngsters in this age bracket as well, and be sure kids are watching interactive, nonviolent, educational, and pro-social media.

• Don't allow devices to become older children's go-to activity. Many schools now supply devices to children from kindergarten on.

Why Do People Believe They're Right When Experts Say Otherwise?

By Tommy Druen

My high school had just over 300 students. It was the only public school in the county. Needless to say, we weren't accustomed to success. Talent isn't only found in larger places, but our school simply had a smaller pool from which to draw.

Yet, our basketball team punched well above its weight. In my four years, we won the district tournament and the All "A" region tournament three times each. I'm proud to say I was a part of the team.

For the sake of full disclosure though, I wasn't the reason. I was the guy at the end of the bench. I didn't see the floor unless the outcome was already decided. Once, my coach asked me to keep stats during the game. That moment made my role crystal clear. Our odds of winning were better if I had a pencil in my hand, not the ball. Still, I never resented it. I knew our chances of winning were better with my friend J.P. Blevins on the court, averaging 30 points a game, than me, who likely averaged more

fouls than minutes played. I accepted my role. My desire to play was outweighed by my desire for the team to win.

I thought of that acceptance recently while watching a 2018 documentary called "Behind the Curve." It follows a group of people who genuinely believe the earth is flat. More troublingly than just that fact, they believe that governments, scientists and teachers (and the Freemasons, of course) continue to conspire to hide this "truth" from the public. I'll admit I dozed off halfway through, so I never quite grasped what the supposed endgame of this conspiracy might be.

What struck me though was not one of these flat earth believers was a scientist. None had relevant degrees or worked in any related field, although one had won a virtual pinball tournament. However, they were all certain they knew better than experts who had earned the advanced degrees and dedicated their lives and careers to astronomy.

It sparked a ques-

tion that I think of with increased frequency. Why do people believe they're right when experts say otherwise?

We see it everywhere. Social media has made armchair experts of us all. There are entire industries built upon this. Podcasts, YouTube channels, and blogs become the mediums where people confidently opine about topics they barely understand. And they're wildly popular. We've created celebrities, and fortunes, out of demonstrated ignorance.

Not long ago, a woman lectured me about how the Kentucky's General Assembly "really" works. I've spent 25 years working for the legislative branch while her job isn't even remotely related to government. She wasn't unintelligent, but she was unwilling to acknowledge her own ignorance. When I politely corrected her, she questioned my motives for "defending the system."

What's more troubling is intelligence has itself become suspicious. I know brilliant people who are graduates of Harvard

and Princeton. When they ran for public office, they deliberately hid those credentials. Why? They feared it would cost them votes. And I suspect they were right.

Isaac Asimov captured it perfectly. He said, "There is a cult of ignorance in the United States. The strain of anti-intellectualism has been a constant thread winding through our political and cultural life, nurtured by the false notion that democracy means my ignorance is just as good as your knowledge."

What troubles me even more than ignorance itself is that expertise is being treated as evidence of corruption. The more qualified someone is, the more time they've dedicated to something, the more suspicious they become. It's inverted the entire logic of knowledge.

My basketball team didn't succeed because of anything I did on the court. But I like to think I contributed in other ways. I made my teammates better in practice. I cheered them on during the games. I

didn't create discord or undermine team chemistry. I simply knew my role.

You don't have to be the leading scorer to be valuable. But good teams are made up of people who play certain roles. Currently, people are playing positions in society they're not

prepared for, ones that treat hunches as expertise and opinions as knowledge. We could be so much stronger if we simply found our own roles and played them well. That's not a weakness, that's wisdom. And that's how our society wins.

UNION COUNTY FAMILY FUN FEST

MAY 28, 2026
4 to 6 PM

233 N Townsend St
Morganfield, KY 42437

JOIN US FOR FAMILY-FRIENDLY ACTIVITIES TO KICK OFF THE SUMMER!

Pizza ■ Refreshments ■ Inflatables
Face painting ■ Giveaways ■ Family photos
Access to mental health resources

rvbh rivervalley behavioral health

TCW
TRI COUNTY WASTE

IMPORTANT UPDATE!

STURGIS RESIDENTIAL TRASH PICK UP STARTING JUNE 16TH

WILL BE ON TUESDAYS.

THERE WILL BE **NO THURSDAY PICKUPS ANYMORE.**

Please have your trash out by **6:00 AM** on Tuesdays.
Thank you for helping us keep our community clean!

THANK YOU!
We appreciate you!

-- PUBLIC NOTICE --

**BOILER REPLACEMENT
UNION COUNTY MIDDLE SCHOOL
UNION COUNTY SCHOOLS
MORGANFIELD, KENTUCKY**

INVITATION FOR BIDS

The Union County Board of Education will receive bids for the construction of the referenced project as described herein and per the Contract Documents.

Generally, the project consists of the replacement of the existing heating hot water boilers, heating hot water pumps and associated piping, controls, power.

Major divisions of work include but are not limited to: Demolition; HVAC; Temperature Controls; Electrical; and Fire Alarm.

Sealed bids will be received at 2:00 PM CST, Thursday, May 21, 2026, in the Board Room at the Union County Board of Education, 4500 US Highway 60 W, Morganfield, Kentucky, at which time and place bids will be publicly opened and read aloud.

Contract Documents are on file at the office of the Engineer, Marcum Engineering, LLC, 2301 McCracken Blvd, Paducah, Kentucky and the Union County Board of Education office. Copies of the documents will be available Friday, May 1, 2026, and may be obtained at Paducah Blueprint by depositing \$100.00 (per complete set) made payable to Paducah Blueprint. The deposit will be refunded for the return of complete sets (in usable condition) within fourteen (14) days after the bid opening. **NO REFUNDS WILL BE MADE AFTER THE FOURTEEN (14) DAY RETURN PERIOD.**

A Pre-Bid meeting will be held in the Board Room at the Union County Board of Education, 4500 US Highway 60 W, Morganfield, Kentucky with a site visit to the Union County Middle School, 4465 US Highway 60 W, Morganfield, Kentucky immediately following on Thursday May 7, 2026, at 10:00 AM CST.

Bids shall be submitted with a bid bond, payable to Union County Board of Education, in an amount equal to five percent (5%) of the total bid. A certified check or bank draft will be allowed in lieu of the Bid Bond.

The successful bidder will be required to furnish and pay all fees for satisfactory Performance and Payment Bonds per the Contract Documents.

No proposal shall be withdrawn for a period of thirty (30) days. The Union County Board of Education reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, and to waive any informalities. 5/13c