



Screen Time and Childhood Obesity Trends and Policies

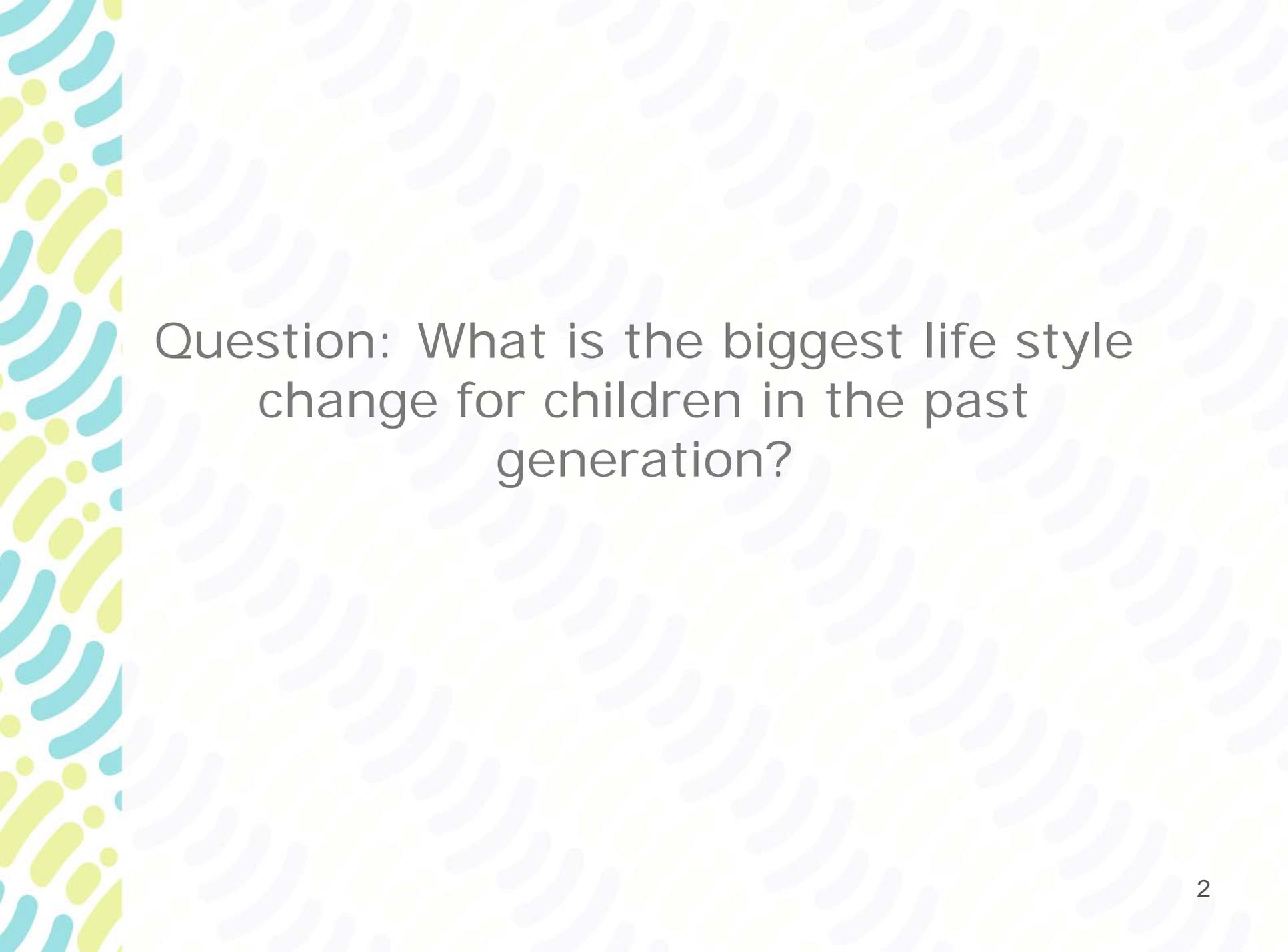
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President

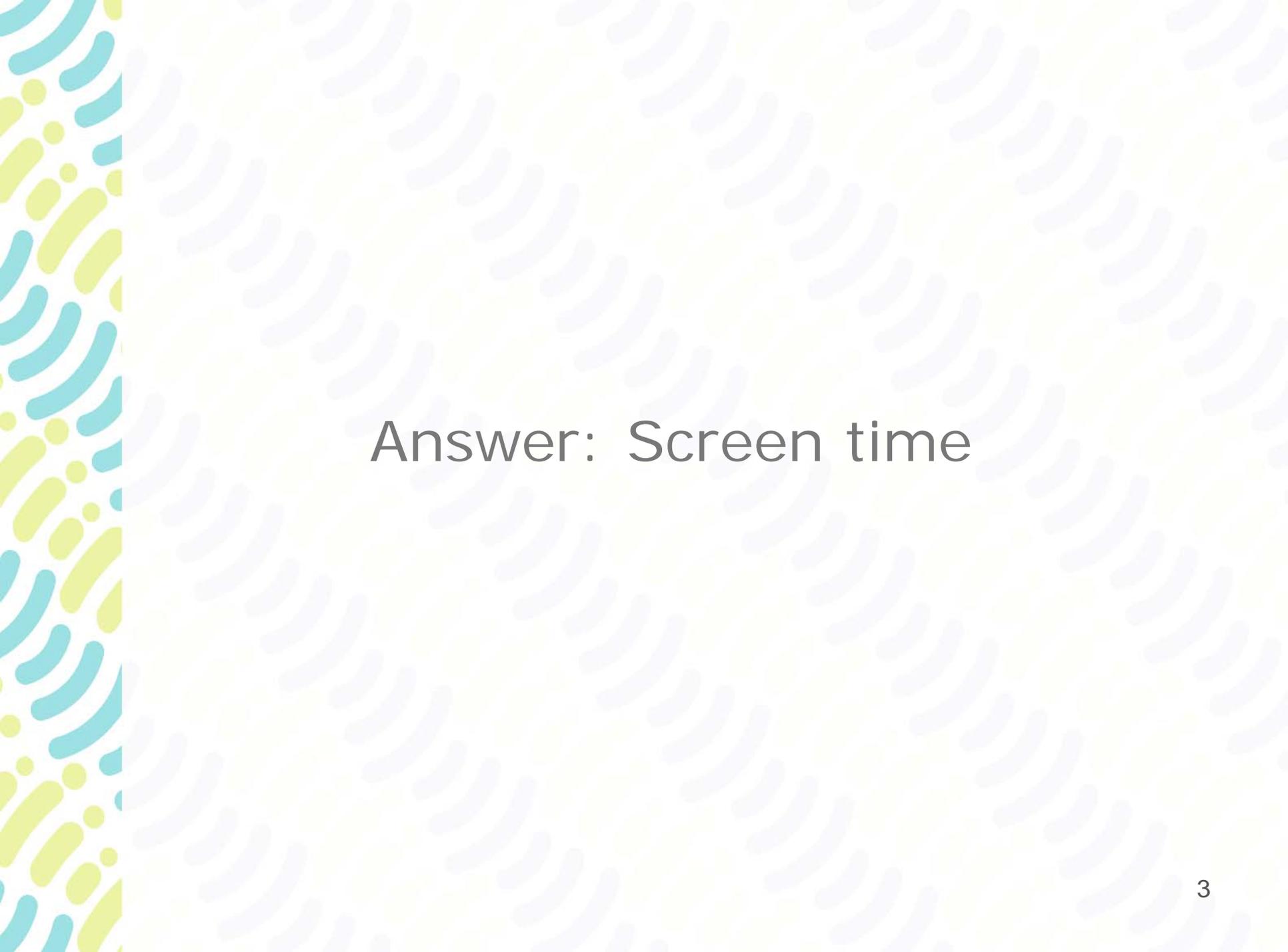
National Institute on Media and the Family

Minneapolis

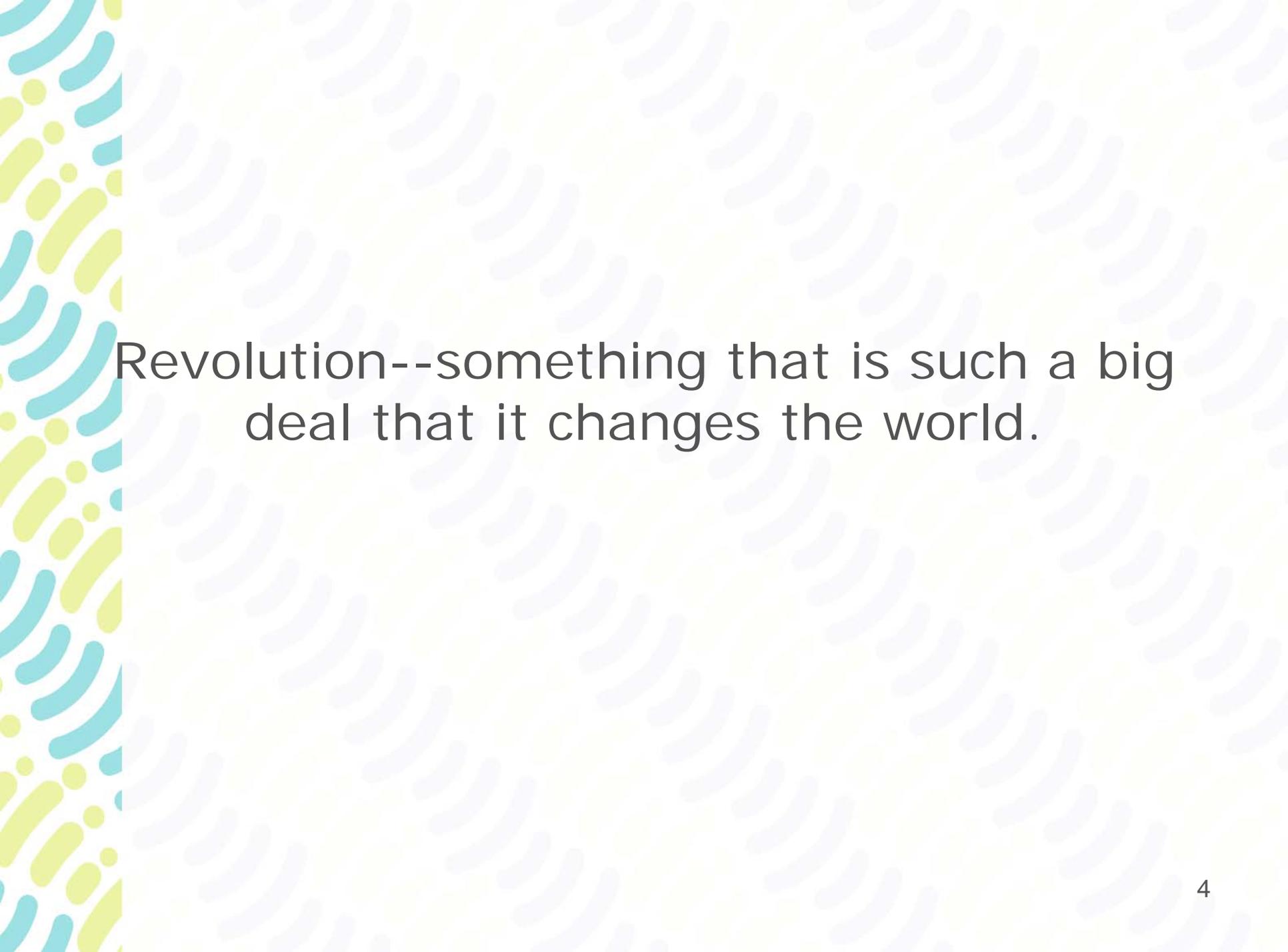
www.mediawise.org



Question: What is the biggest life style change for children in the past generation?



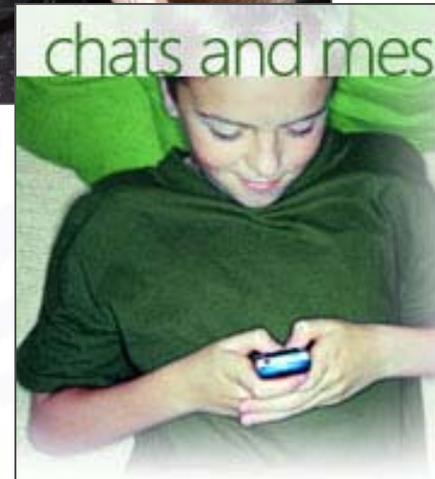
Answer: Screen time



Revolution--something that is such a big deal that it changes the world.

The New Media Age

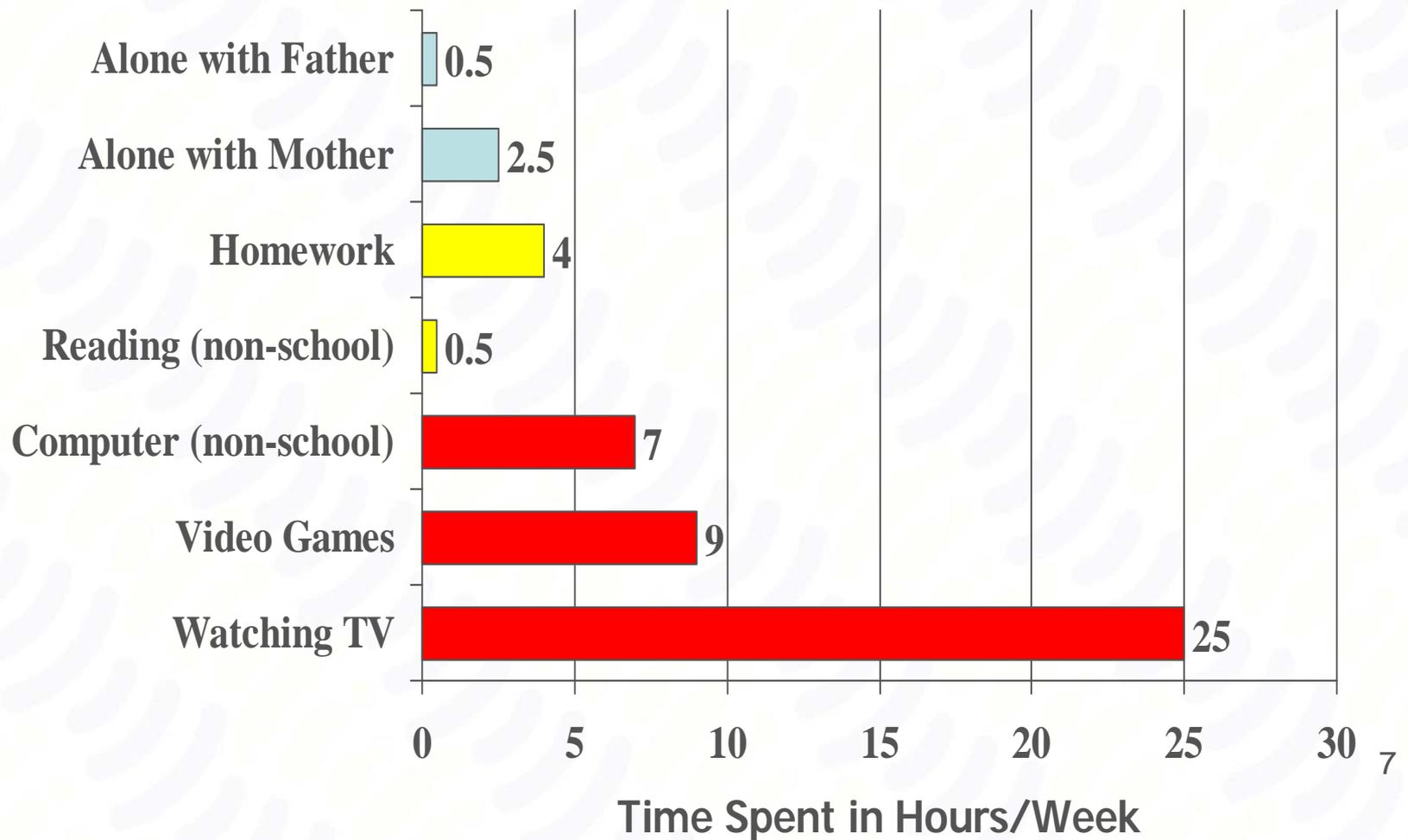
- Instant messaging
- Texting
- Chatrooms
- On-line games
- ipods
- Email
- Cell phone text messaging
- HDTV...
- My Space
- You Tube
- Twitter
- ??????????



Media Are Everywhere

- There are more televisions than people in American homes.
- Average family has 2.6 TVs
- 28% of children under two have a screen in their bedrooms
- 97% of American K-12 students play video games.

A Week in the Life of an American School-Age Child





Healthy media habits can help children:

- Develop cognitive skills
- Gain academic knowledge
- Learn positive behavior
- Understand nutrition and health
- Build awareness about current events



Unhealthy media habits have been linked to:

- Health issues
- Poor academic performance
- Tobacco use
- Underage drinking
- Aggressive and violent behavior.
- Risks are especially high with children from lower-income families because they watch the most media with the least supervision

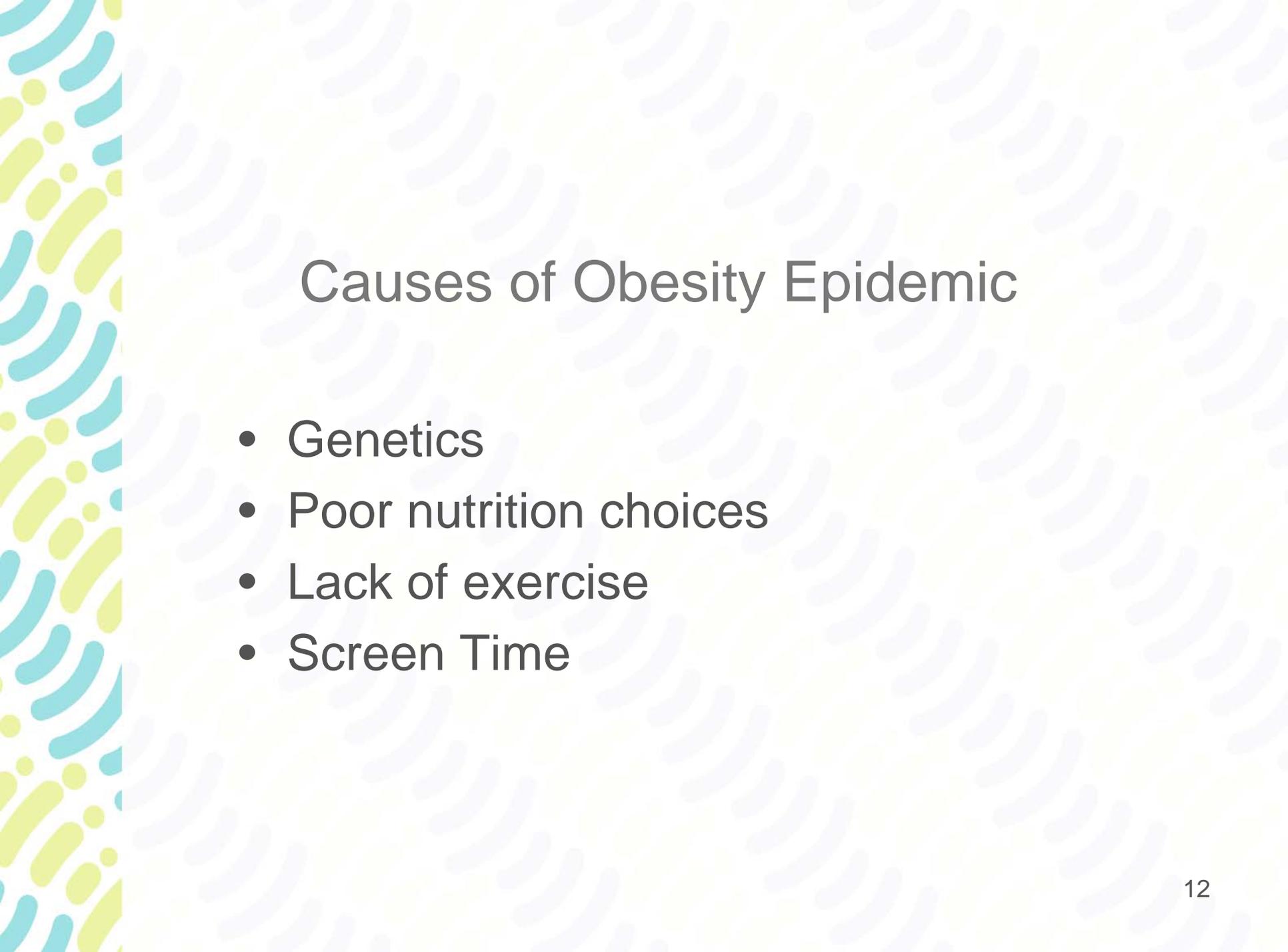
Rates of Obesity Among Children Have Tripled since 1970

- Overweight= BMI between 85-94% ile
- Obese=BMI at 95% ile and above.
- In 2003 15.3% of 6-11 year old qualify as obese using 1970 cutoff for 95% ile.
- In 2003 15.5% of 12-19 year olds qualify as obese using 1970 cutoff for 95% ile.

(Pediatrics, August 03)

Why Be Concerned?

- Diabetes
- Heart disease
- Stroke
- Psychological problems
- Life expectancy shorter
 - 3 years for overweight
 - 7 years for obese
- Cancer
- Musculoskeletal problems (eg. arthritis)
- Social problems
- Earns \$100,000 less over career
- Health Care Costs



Causes of Obesity Epidemic

- Genetics
- Poor nutrition choices
- Lack of exercise
- Screen Time

Lack of physical activity

- Physical activity has decreased 13% among children and youth since 1990.
- “Changes in dietary measures fail to predict weight change, but changes in various measures of physical activity are significant predictors...The evidence suggests that declines in physical activity are more likely than increases in energy intake as the explanation for the increase in obesity prevalence.” Mayo Clinic Proceedings, 2002.
- Dramatic increase in “Screen Time.”

Screen time has increased 59% since 1990.



Screen Time

1990 - 28 hours/week (all TV)

2006 - 44.5 hours/week

- TV
- Video games
- Computer and Internet

Screen Time and Obesity

- Incidence of obesity increased by 2% for every additional hour of television watched each week. (Dietz, 1985).
- Children with televisions in their bedrooms are at 31% greater risk for overweight or obesity. (Dennison, et al., 2002).
- A recent Canadian study reported that “more than 60% of overweight incidence can be linked to excess TV viewing time.” (Tremblay and Willms, 2003).

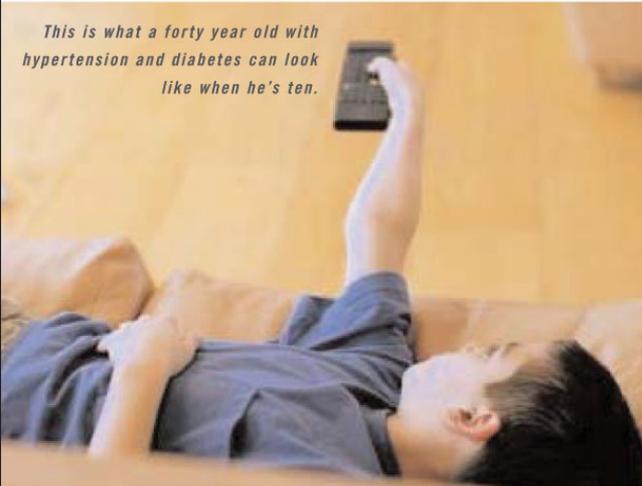
TVs in bedrooms contribute to increased screen time

Given the chance, some kids watch TV more than 4 hours a day. They're also more likely to be obese than those who watch less. Learn more, and ways you can set limits at www.mediafamily.org.

This public service message sponsored by CHAA.



This is what a forty year old with hypertension and diabetes can look like when he's ten.



- 68% of school age kids have TVs in their bedrooms.
- Children < 6 spend 2 hours/day in screen time
- 43% of children 4-6 have TV in bedroom.
- 43% of children < 2 watch TV every day.
- 26% of children < 2 have TV in bedroom.

Obesity and Screen Time—the Links

- Sedentary activity
- Snacking habits while watching
- Impact of advertising



The Importance of Intervening in the Preschool Years—Insights from Brain Science

- Neurons that fire together wire together.
- “Mental Operating System”
- Sets up patterns, habits and attitudes that persist throughout life.

Screen Time in Child Care Settings

- Nearly three quarters of American preschool-aged children spend time in child care settings.
 - Child care centers
 - Licensed child care homes
 - Informal care—Family, Friends and Neighbors (FFN)

Summary of Child Care Licensing Regulations

- Great deal of policy variation by state and by type of care provider.
- Most states had weak requirements regarding nutrition, physical activity and screen time.



Minnesota Nutrition Requirements

- Meals and snacks must follow federal Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) requirements.
- No policy on dietary guidelines
- No policy on “junk food.”

Minnesota Physical Activity Requirements

- All licensed programs must provide large muscle activity and/or equipment.
- Only centers must provide outdoor play.
- No requirements for time.

Minnesota Screen Time Requirements

- No licensing requirements.
- Some states are leading the way by setting standards for maximum number of hours of screen time per day and/or minimum age for screen time.

Implications

- Education about screen time.
- Licensing requirements for screen time.