

SCREEN TIME AT 5 YEARS

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A long time ago I wrote [this post](#) on this topic. It was a time when I was way less experienced as to what toddlers, preschoolers and older children's free will could be like. I wrote this when N (my now 5 year old) was 1. I am sure parents with older kids out there may have rolled their eyes and said 'hmmm let this new mother talk, she will know when she has a full blown thinking human being on her hands'.

Well it's true, many lessons have been learnt and I have also reached a place where I roll my eyes when newer parents say – my child will never do that.

But more on those 100+ instances for other posts (possibly maybe possiblymaybe). Right now I want to talk about where we are with screen time currently.

The boys are now 5 years 3 months and 2 years 9 months. There was a time when N was very demanding when it came to the ipad or tv. We didn't have clear-cut rules and I would give him the ipad to watch songs on YouTube as soon as the whining would escalate. I thought I was restricting it but clearly not enough. I also thought some of the content was educational so I let it go at times. I felt that educational content on screen was worth showing kids as that's what a lot of parents were doing. There were also times when he was quiet and out of the way so I'd let the watching go on for more than the allowed half an hour. I started to notice that whenever I'd turn off the screen it invited a huge huge meltdown along with kicking and hitting.

The break through came when N once in a fit of rage because I'd turned off the screen flung my ipad and smashed the screen. That was the end of all screen time and TV time for a long long time. This was around time he was 3.5 years.

After that when I reintroduced TV time it was strictly on Fridays and weekends. Because the rules were so clear N never ever asked for TV time during the week. No whining, begging, pleading nothing, although Friday after school was a screen time binge. A great plus is during the week besides school he has to be innovative and creative to occupy himself as he cannot fall back on a screen everytime he feels bored. This also helps children move their bodies more and then the weekend does come and it's ok to be hooked sometimes (aren't we all?)

In November the wonderful folks at [Netflix](#) sent me an iPad as I got to be on their exclusive

#streamteam of influencers who help sift through relevant content and share with readers. Since being on [Netflix](#) N discovered a show to really capture his interests - Wild Kratts - which is about two brothers who are almost like wildlife super heroes helping animals and studying their habits and their habitats. He was already a walking talking encyclopedia on his one and only love – animals, but this show has taken it onto another level altogether.



His little brother and him have made plans of being the Kratt brothers and disappearing into a forest in the future to shoot (as in film thank goodness) and study animals. Honestly as parents, you can't go wrong when kids watch responsible shows such as these, even if they binge watch on weekends. Here he is studying his animal encyclopedia to find the place where clouded leopards live.



I give him the ipad now though I prefer him watching Netflix on our smart tv. It's safer for him to browse the Netflix app over Youtube so I don't mind not monitoring what he is watching too much and I can always see what he has watched later. As parents as kids get older that's one thing we want to do is to ensure online safety and that's one of reasons I am ok with him exploring his own profile on Netflix which is set to kids content, as much as he pleases.



My younger son – A – aged 2.9 has no inclination to watch any screen at all. I guess that's because he has never been exposed even in small amounts from a young age and also because of his social nature he is more interested in the comings and goings of actual human beings over stories and fantasy. Different strokes I say.

So what's your take on screen time? Do the work with rules in place or is it more of a liberal approach? What are your kids watching on Netflix currently?

Thanks for reading.

