Additional file 1: English translation of the semi-structured interview guide used in the study

Description

This supplementary file contains an English translation of the semi-structured interview guide used in the study. Interviews were conducted in Swedish, and the interview guide presented here is a translated version prepared for publication. The interview guide was developed by the research team and informed by expertise in early childhood health behaviours and digital intervention design.

Interviews explored three domains:

1. Parental and family screen use
2. Perceptions of young children's screen time and national screen time recommendations
3. Preferences for information and digital support to help manage screen time in early childhood

Note

Questions were asked flexibly in accordance with a semi-structured interview approach. Text provided in brackets represents examples, prompts, or follow-up probes used when further clarification or elaboration was needed and was not necessarily presented to all participants.

Semi-structured interview guide for parents participating in a study on toddler screen time

In this interview, I will ask questions about your views on screen time for your child, your family's screen use habits, and your thoughts on a digital tool designed to support parents in making decisions about screen time during the toddler years. Do you have any questions before we begin? Do you consent to participate in this interview and for it to be audio-recorded?

Your own screen use

1. Could you tell me what screen time means to you?
2. What was screen time like when you were a child?
3. When and why do you use screens today as an adult?
    a. What does your own screen use look like? (e.g., how much, when, for what purposes?)
4. What comes to mind when you think about screen time and toddlers?
5. Had you thought about screen time for your child before he/she was born?
    a. If yes, in what way?
6. Has your view of children's screen time changed as your child has grown older? If yes, how?

Screen time for your 1-3-year-old

7. What does screen time mean for your 1–3-year-old child?
8. What does your child's screen use look like?
    a. How often/how much?
    b. What does your child do during screen time? (e.g., watches children's programs on television, plays games on a tablet)
    c. In what situations is your child allowed to use screens? (e.g., while you are cooking, to unwind, in the car, to manage tantrums or make everyday situations easier)
    d. What might your child have done instead?
    e. When your child uses screens, are they usually alone or together with someone else (parent, sibling)? Why?
    f. When your child uses screens, what type of screen is usually involved (television, smartphone, tablet, etc.)? Why?
9. Has your child's screen use changed as they have gotten older?
10. Does your 1-3-year-old's screen use differ from that of younger or older children in your family?
11. Do you think your child's screen use differs from that of other children of the same age?
12. Do you think your child is affected by screen time?
    a. If yes, in what way? (e.g., mood, energy levels)
    b. Does it vary? If yes, what do you think explains these differences?

Screen time in your family

13. We are also interested in screen use within your family. Could you tell me a little about your family's screen use habits?
    a. When does it occur? (together or individually)
    b. How much screen use is there?
    c. What does it involve? (e.g., watching movies, playing games, video calls, together/alone, television/tablet/smartphone/game console)
    d. Does it differ between weekdays and weekends, holidays, or seasons?

14. How do you view screen use in your family? (e.g., easy to manage, problematic, a source of conflict)
    a. What advantages and disadvantages do you see with screen use for your family?
    b. Do conflicts arise in your family because of screen use? (e.g., do you and the child's other parent or grandparents share similar views?)
15. Would you like screen use in your family to be different? If yes, how?

Parenting and being a role model

16. Do you have rules or routines regarding screen use in your family?
    a. If yes, what do they look like?
    b. If no, why do you think that is?
17. Do you feel able to set limits around screen use?
    a. If yes, what kinds of limits?
    b. If no, why do you think that is?
18. How do you view yourself as a role model for your child when it comes to screen use?
19. Do you think your own screen use influences your child?
    a. If yes, in what way?

Screen time recommendations

20. What advantages and disadvantages do you think screen time has?
21. How much screen time do you think young children should have?
22. What are your views on different types of screen time?
    a. Do you think there is such a thing as "good" and "bad" screen time?
    b. Does the type of screen matter (e.g., tablet versus television)?
23. Sweden has national recommendations on screen time for young children, recommending no screen time for children under 2 years and a maximum of one hour of screen time per day for children aged 2-5 years.
    a. Had you heard about these recommendations before? If yes, where did you come across them?
    b. What are your views on these recommendations?

Information and support for balancing screen time

24. How do you think these recommendations should be communicated to parents? (e.g., brochure, verbal information from child healthcare services, preschool, or something else)
25. If you wanted more information about screen use in young children, where would you turn? (e.g., child healthcare services, preschool, friends, internet)
    a. What type of information would you like?
26. Would you like more information or support to help balance your child's screen use?
27. If you were designing a digital tool to help parents promote healthier screen use among young children, what would you want that support to look like?
    a. At what stage would you like access to such support? (child's age)
    b. How would you like the support to be delivered?
    c. What type of information and support would you find most useful? (e.g., alternative activities, setting limits, judging what is appropriate, managing everyday situations)

Thank you for participating in this interview!