

31 OCT 2014

Mr Bob McCoskrie  
Family First NZ  
bob@familyfirst.org.nz

No. 1 The Terrace  
PO Box 5013  
Wellington 6145  
New Zealand  
T +64 4 496 2000

Ref: H201403602

Dear Mr McCoskrie

### Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request of 3 October 2014, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) for "information on the Ministry's research and guidelines on screen time for children".

The response relating to this request is itemised below. Some of the information you request is already available on the Ministry of Health's (the Ministry's) website at [www.health.govt.nz](http://www.health.govt.nz) as indicated in the table below.

Request	Response
1. <i>What guidelines have been published by the Ministry relating to the amount of screen time on a daily basis for very young children [...] those aged 2-5 and those under 2?</i>	<i>The Ministry has not published any specific guidelines on screen time for children under 5 years old.</i>
2. <i>What guidelines has the Ministry provided to schools or the Ministry of Education regarding the amount of daily screen time 'during school time'?</i>	<i>The Ministry has not provided any guidelines regarding the amount of screen time during school hours to the Ministry of Education.</i>
3. <i>What guidelines has the Ministry provided to ECE (Early Childhood Education) regarding the amount of daily screen time 'during ECE time'?</i>	<i>The Ministry has not provided any guidelines regarding the amount of screen time during ECE time to ECEs.</i>
4. <i>What guidelines has the Ministry provided to parents/families regarding the amount of screen time for under 18 year olds?</i>	<p><i>New Zealand Physical Activity Guidelines for Children and Young People (5–18 years) were developed by Sport New Zealand and the Ministries of Health and Education in 2007.</i></p> <p><i>In summary, the guidelines recommend children and young people:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>limit screen time to less than two hours per day.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>Further recommendations and information about physical activity guidelines is available <a href="#">here</a><sup>1</sup>.</i></p>

	<p><i>In addition, the Ministry has also produced the following publications which reflect the recommendations in the Physical Activity Guidelines for Children and Young People (aged 5–18 years):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>• Food and Nutrition Guidelines for Children and Young People (2-18 years). Further information available <a href="#">here</a><sup>2</sup>.</i></li> <li><i>• Green Prescription (GRx) Active Families. Further information available <a href="#">here</a><sup>3</sup>.</i></li> </ul>
<p><i>5. The Ministry of Health recently reported that almost half of 2–4 year olds ‘watched two or more hours of television each day’ adding that this ‘does not include other screen time’. Please provide the research you have received related to ‘other screen time’.</i></p>	<p><i>The New Zealand Health Survey collects information on television viewing for 2–4 year olds, but has never collected information on ‘other screen time’ (e.g. in front of computers or using game consoles). The Ministry does not have and has not received any other research on ‘other screen time’.</i></p> <p><i>Further information on the New Zealand Health Survey can be found <a href="#">here</a><sup>4</sup>.</i></p>
<p><i>6. Has the Ministry of Health done or received any research which identifies the ‘estimated weekly hours of media consumption at home among users, by age’?</i></p>	<p><i>The Ministry of Health has not done or received any research which identifies the estimated weekly hours of media consumption at home among users by age.</i></p>
<p><i>7. What guidelines (if any) have been provided by the Ministry regarding amounts of screen time to those aged 18 and above?</i></p>	<p><i>The Ministry has not provided any guidelines regarding amounts of screen time recommended for those aged 18 and over.</i></p>

I trust this information fulfils your request.

Yours sincerely



**Dr Don Mackie**  
**Chief Medical Officer**  
**Clinical Leadership Protection and Regulation Business Unit**

<sup>1</sup> [www.health.govt.nz/our-work/preventative-health-wellness/physical-activity](http://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/preventative-health-wellness/physical-activity)

<sup>2</sup> [www.health.govt.nz/our-work/preventative-health-wellness/nutrition/food-and-nutrition-guidelines](http://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/preventative-health-wellness/nutrition/food-and-nutrition-guidelines)

<sup>3</sup> [www.health.govt.nz/your-health/healthy-living/food-and-physical-activity/green-prescriptions/active-families](http://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/healthy-living/food-and-physical-activity/green-prescriptions/active-families)

<sup>4</sup> [www.health.govt.nz/nz-health-statistics/national-collections-and-surveys/surveys/current-recent-surveys/new-zealand-health-survey](http://www.health.govt.nz/nz-health-statistics/national-collections-and-surveys/surveys/current-recent-surveys/new-zealand-health-survey)