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Mental Health



# Screen Time & Mental Health – Balancing the positive with the negative

With Professor Barry Carpenter & Dr Max Davie



# Today's learning objectives

- Evidence the positive & negative impacts screen time can have on mental health
- Identify what problematic screen use is
- Provide recommendations on the actions to take to assist young people



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# Which type of school are you representing this evening?



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# Screen time - how much is too much?

Dr Max Davie

Consultant Community Paediatrician  
Health Improvement Officer, RCPCH



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# Increased screen time has led to....



- 1) Has screen time increased?**
- 2) Has X increased/ worsened?**
- 3) Are the two linked?**

## Total media usage of US children



ATLAS | Data: Common Sense Media



**Between 2004 and 2017, the rates of mental health disorder in children aged 5-15 increased, in absolute terms by...**

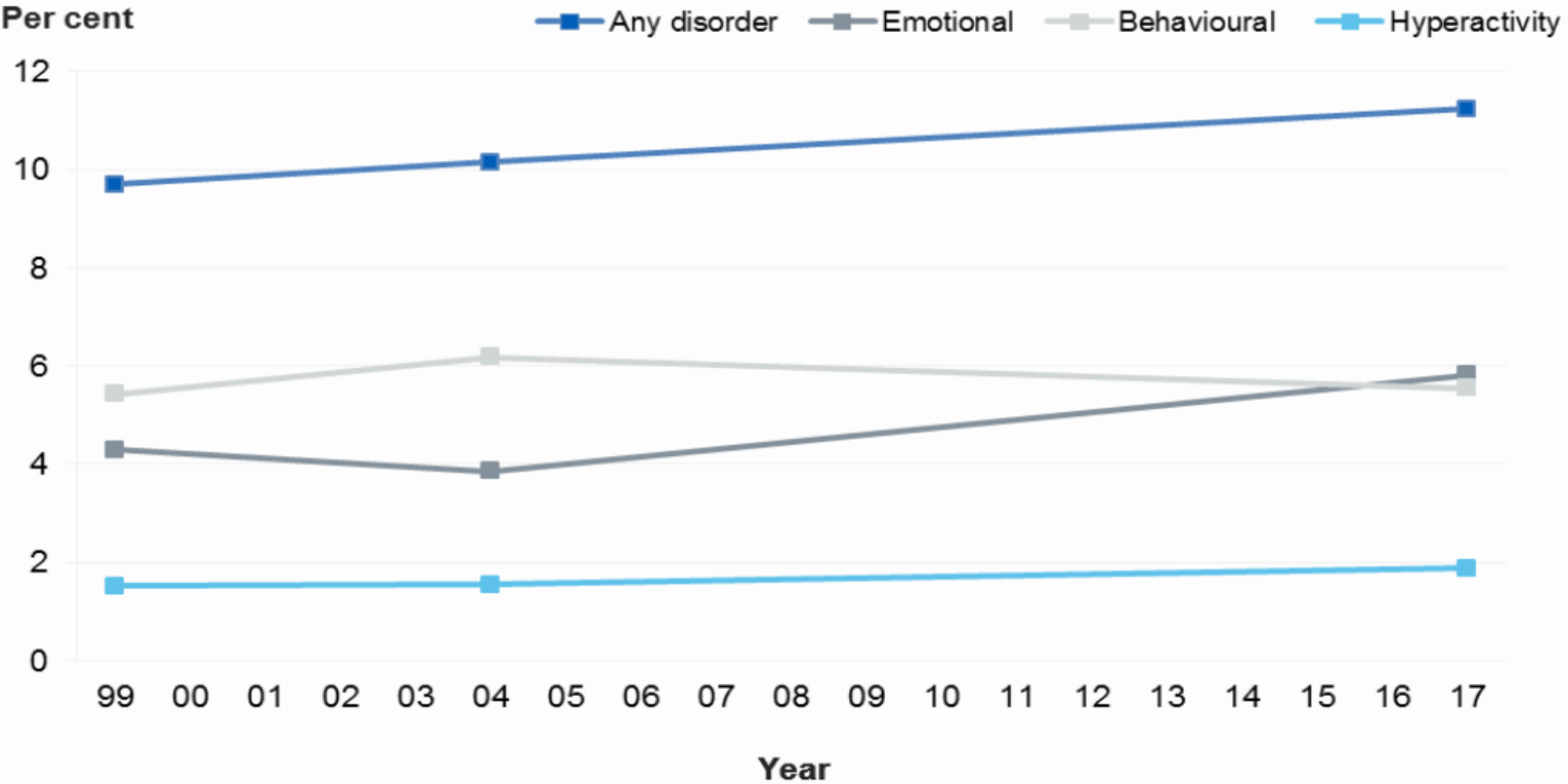


# Just over 1%

**Figure 1: Prevalence of any disorder, emotional disorder, behavioural disorder, and hyperactivity disorder, 1999, 2004, 2017**

Base: 5 to 15 year olds

Per cent

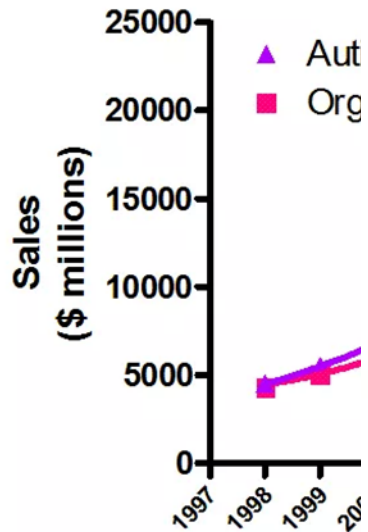


Source: NHS Digital



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# OK but there's a link, right?

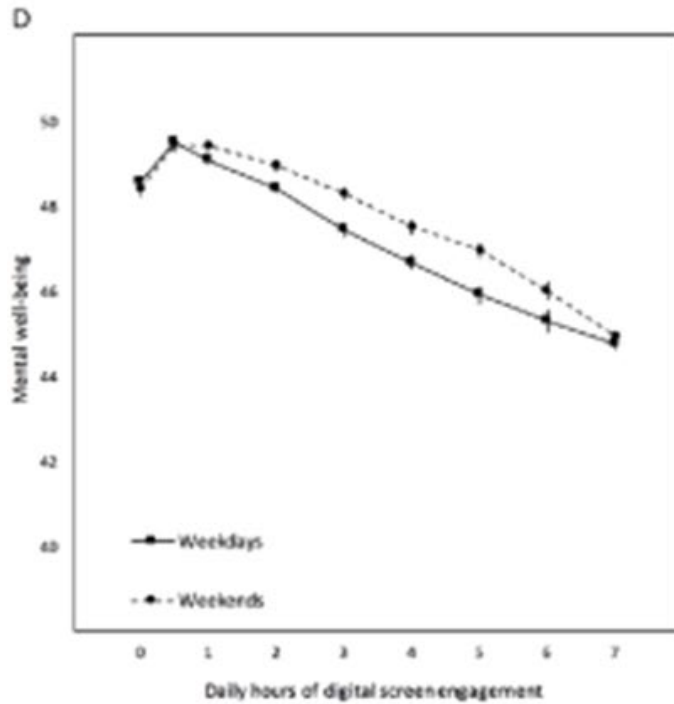


Sources: Organic Trade Association  
Education Programs, Data Analysis:  
Education Under Part B of the Indi  
with Disabilities Education Act

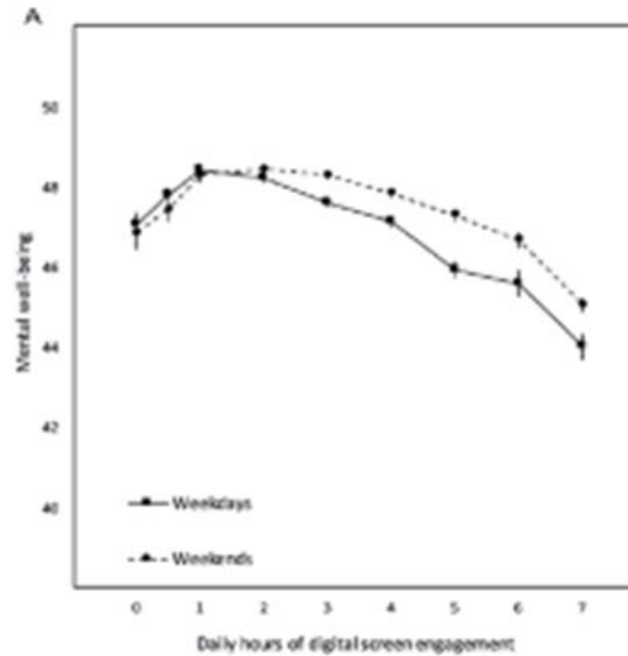


# Goldilocks?

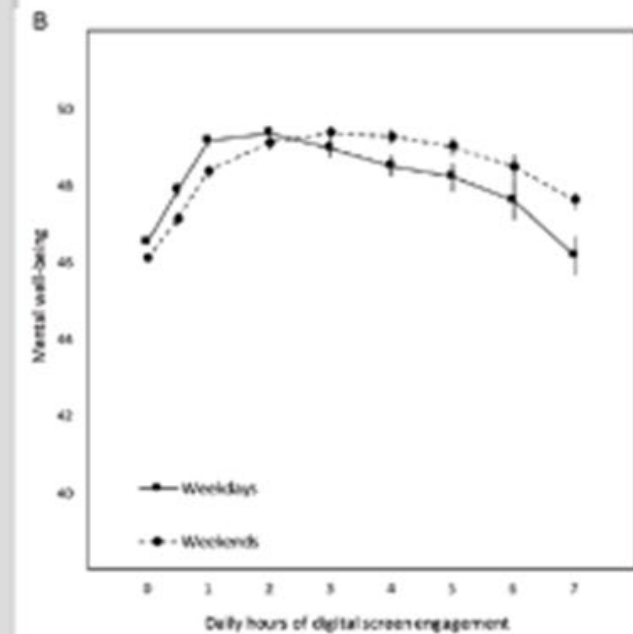
## TV



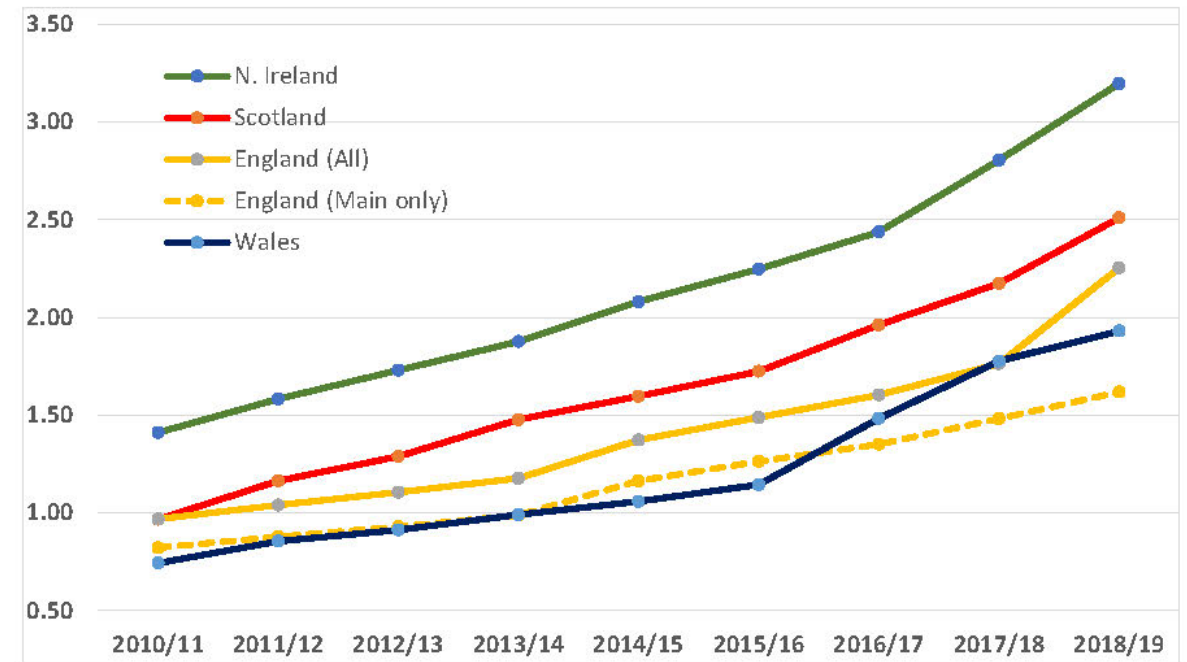
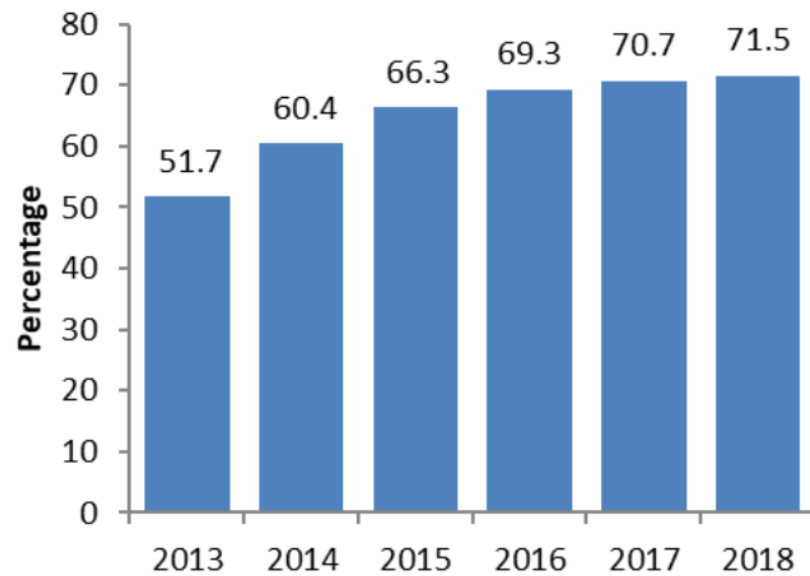
## Computers



## Video games



**Figure A: Percentage of children achieving a good level of development  
England, 2013 to 2018**



**Figure 1.** The prevalence rates of pupils with ASD in each country of the UK in the school years 2010/11 to 2018/2019 [Colour figure can be viewed at [wileyonlinelibrary.com](http://wileyonlinelibrary.com)]



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# But why do things feel harder?





**At a population level, the narrative of  
screen use leading to worse outcomes  
doesn't stack up**

# Problematic screen use at an individual level

- Duration based criteria
  - Varying definition of screen time
- Popular with health bodies
  - AAP
  - WHO
- Scientifically unsound





# Content criteria?

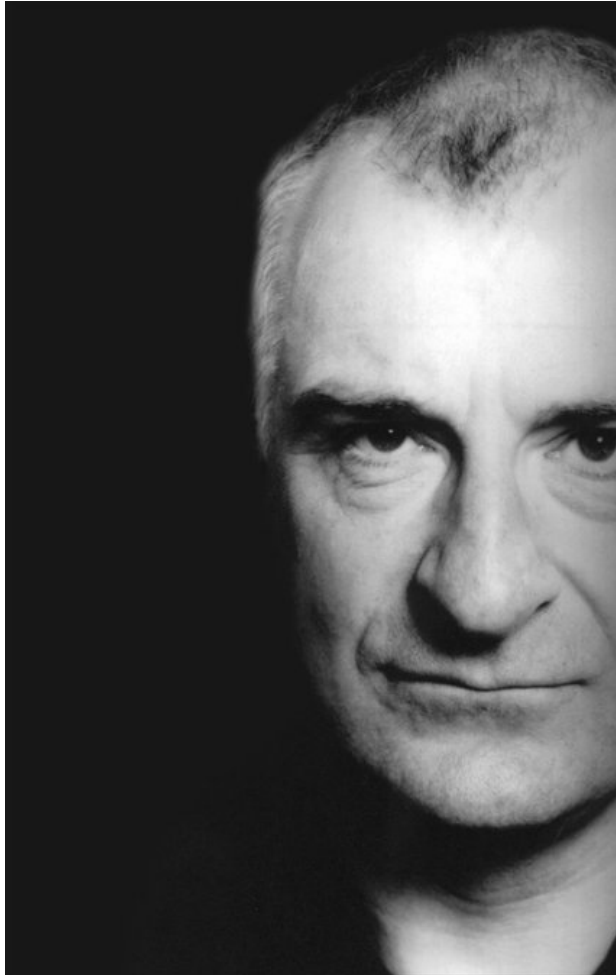






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# Social media?

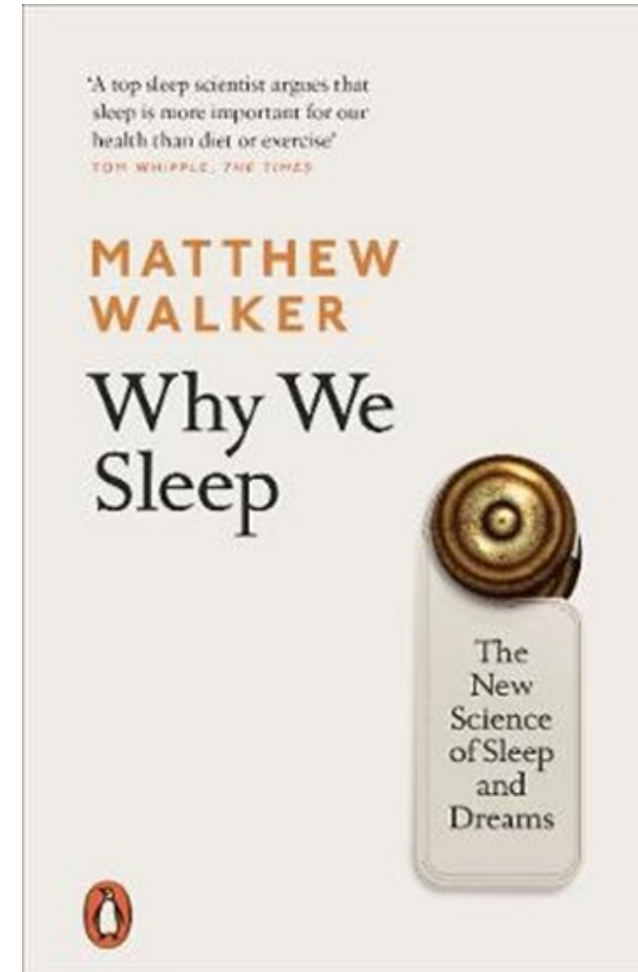


# Impact criteria

Sleep?

Academic work?

Family functioning?



# What to do: giving advice or presenting an ideal?





# The RCPCH approach: 4 questions

- Is *family* screen time under control?
- Does it interfere with family activities?
- Does it interfere with sleep?
- Are you in control of snacking during screen time?

# Top tips for controlling screens



HAVE A PLAN AND  
STICK TO IT



THINK ABOUT YOUR  
OWN MEDIA USE



PRIORITISE FACE-  
TO-FACE  
INTERACTION



BE SNACK AWARE



PROTECT SLEEP



# Is it a screen problem?

- Oppositional behaviour
- Family discord
- Anxiety and low mood
- School avoidance





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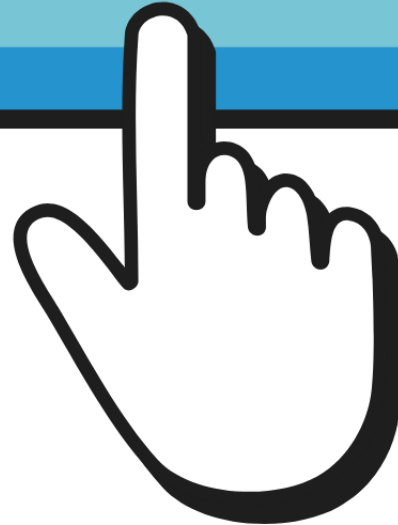




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**TAKE SURVEY**





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## ***Ask the Expert – Sleep***

With Dr Faith Orchard

3.45pm on 25<sup>th</sup> November