



What is parental mediation?

A woman with long dark hair tied back is smiling and looking at a laptop screen. A young girl with dark hair, wearing large red headphones, is also looking at the screen. They are both focused on the content on the laptop. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be a home or office setting with some plants and furniture.

Parental mediation

refers to parental practices in managing and regulating children's media use (Clark, 2011). In essence, **parental mediation theory** suggests that parents employ different strategies to mediate and moderate the negative impact of media on their children.



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What are mediation strategies that parents can use?

There are **three known classic types** of parental mediation strategies:



active mediation

refers to parents' efforts to explain media content to their children.



restrictive mediation

refers to parents' efforts to limit their children's screen time and choose media content for them; these are enforced through rules and regulations regarding media use.



co-viewing or joint media engagement

refers to the practice of parents watching the television or other screen media with their children but not interacting or discussing anything about the program.



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Understanding active mediation strategies

Active mediation requires detailed discussion or explanation, making it unsuitable for infants who are not yet developmentally equipped with reasoning skills.

However, active mediation can be applied to toddlers around 2 to 3 years old because this is the stage when parents can communicate with their children using expressive language and simple explanations.

Active mediation is linked to **several positive outcomes** (Nikken, 2017):



better
learning
outcomes



enhanced
critical
thinking



higher media
literacy skills



better
appreciation
of literature,
arts and
culture



increased
pro-social
behaviors



decreased
aggression



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What are restrictive mediation strategies?

There are **three types** of restrictive mediation strategies:



time restrictions

pertain to limiting duration of media use



content restrictions

pertain to imposed restriction on media contents that are inappropriate



location restrictions

refer to specific areas (at home or in school) where using digital devices is not allowed



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What is the new coviewing or joint mediation engagement?

It has two types:

The concept of **joint media engagement (JME)** or new co-viewing, which means consuming media together (like watching TV or screen media) is recognized as an effective “strategy for parents to mitigate the negative media effects” or influence on children.



parent as a helper

(as someone who helps guide the child in digital media use)



parents as a buddy

(as a child's companion in using digital media for fun) for their children



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What other contemporary mediation strategies can parents use?



1

Diversionsary strategy

You can actively and intentionally divert your child's attention from media use by offering alternative, off-screen activities.



2

Technical safety guidance

You can also apply technology-supported safety measures (e.g., parental controls) designed to protect your child's online safety.



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Keep in Mind

Parents decide on what and how to mediate their children's media experience depending on their children's **age, needs, interests**, as well as their own **skills, values**, and **resources** (e.g., time, budget) that are available to them (*Blum-Ross & Livingstone, 2016*).



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