

Stop Texting, Dad! I'm Talking to You!

Dr. Dana Suskind, a language researcher and surgeon at the University of Chicago, agreed to record language use in six Chicago-area households where the parents say they frequently check their smartphones. Dr. Suskind recorded each family at least two times — once with smartphones and computers on, and again with them off — in each case measuring the number of words spoken by adults to a child, a key indicator of the quality of a child's early language environment. Although Dr. Suskind cautions that this is not a scientific study, in most cases turning off smartphones and laptops had a strong effect on the verbal interactions between parents and children at home.

Average number of words per hour spoken by adults to a child

