Presenter Notes for the *Munch & Move* Staff Development Kit – Key Message: Turn off the screen and get active

What to bring to the session:

- A printed copy of the *Munch & Move* Record of Completion
- A printed copy of the reflective practice document
- A copy of the *Munch & Move Resource Manual: Birth to 5 years*

Note: If you are undertaking this module – please ensure your service has already completed 'Module 1 – Program Overview of the Staff Development Kit'.

Slide 1:
Welcome to the *Munch & Move Staff Development Kit **Monitor** 'key message' module *Turn off the screen and get active*.

Let's start by sharing the recommendations related to this key message.

Slide 2:
The *Get Up & Grow* 'Physical activity recommendations for children birth to 5 years' and the *Australian 24-hour Movement Guidelines* that we referred to during *Module 1 Program Overview* include recommendations for 'screen time' and 'sedentary behaviour'. These recommendations focus on both 'screen time' and 'sedentary behaviour' as a lot of sedentary behaviour occurs during 'screen time'. Limiting 'screen time' will limit 'sedentary behaviour'.

The 'Sedentary Behaviour' recommendations tell us that infants, toddlers and preschoolers should not be sedentary or restrained (for example, in a car seat, stroller or highchair) for more than 1 hour at a time or sit for extended periods. While sedentary, engaging in pursuits such as reading, singing, puzzles and storytelling with a caregiver is encouraged.

For screen time, the recommendations also tell us that children younger than two years of age should not spend any time watching television or using other electronic media (DVD's computer and other electronic games) as sedentary screen time is not recommended. For those aged 2 to 5 years, sedentary screen time should be no more than 1 hour per day and less is better.

Now let's look at a statistic related to this key message.

Slide 3:
Interestingly, the statistic at the bottom of the slide tells us that 'only 26% of Australian children aged 2-4 years meet the Australian sedentary behaviour recommendation of accumulating no more than 1 hour per day.' That means 74% of these children are engaged in more than 1 hour of screen time each day.

Remember – it's all about forming positive 'screen time' and 'sedentary behaviour' habits for now and for the future.

Slide 4:
So why limit 'screen time' and what are the facts?

As the recommendation states, screen-based activities are not recommended for babies and toddlers less than 2 years of age because:

- It reduces the time for the child to be engaged in active play.

- It reduces the time for social interaction with others and consequently opportunities for language development – you do not learn the art of conversation in front of a screen.

- It reduces the length of time children can stay focussed.

- Also, screen time can impact on the development of the full range of eye movements – as you know, when using screens your eyes are focussed on the one framed space.

Did you know that *Get Up & Grow* states that 'screen-based activities for children less than two years of age have not shown to lead to any health, intellectual or language improvements'.

Also, as stated in the green box on the slide - 'there is little research to suggest that infants and toddlers learn from watching videos. If infants are distressed, they need the comfort of a caring adult, not an electronic toy'.

Both of these quotes provide further support for 'no screen time' for children less than 2 years of age.

Slide 5:
Let's now look at some facts about why the recommendation states 'screen time' should be limited to less than one hour per day for children 2 to 5 years of age.

Research tells us that toddlers and preschoolers who engage in long periods of 'screen time' each day are more likely to:

- Have unhealthy eating habits - snacking on 'sometimes' food.

- Be less physically active and spend less time outdoors - reducing the time for physical activity and reducing the many benefits received from being physically active.

- Have sub-optimal muscle and bone growth.

- Have poorer social skills – lack of social interaction with others.

- Have slower development of language skills and short-term memory.

Also, even though some screen-based activities now include 'movement', this movement is restrictive and usually done indoors and shouldn't replace more traditional forms of outdoor physical activity. We don't want children to get into the habit of turning on the 'screen' to get active.

Slide 6:
We now know what the 'Sedentary behaviour recommendations' are and why they exist, and we know that screen-based activities can play a role in children's development, however they involve time spent sitting still and can displace time available for children to be physically active.

So what is the learning potential for screen-based activities for children over 2 years of age? In relation to 'educational program and practice', what is the purpose or the intention of undertaking a

learning experience on a screen-based device as opposed to undertaking a learning experience using traditional resources?

Let's do a comparison:

Firstly, consider a 'drawing App' and the learning potential for children of using this 'drawing App' – now consider the learning potential for children using 'traditional' drawing/painting resources.

The learning potential for children using the 'traditional' drawing/painting resources far outweighs the learning potential of the 'drawing App'. The 'traditional' resources provide children with the opportunity for creativity, exploration, social interaction, turn taking, cooperation, to be messy and to move around, as well as the development of language, fine motor skills and concepts.

We need to remember - just because we can use an 'App' with the children, doesn't mean we do. We need to consider, is the 'App' providing an opportunity to do something you can't normally do using 'traditional' resources?

Slide 7:
This quote by the *Fred Rogers Center* sums it up:
'Ultimately, the key decision regarding the use of technology and interactive media is whether specific goals - both for individual children and the program as a whole - can be more effectively achieved using traditional classroom materials, or whether the use of particular technology and interactive media tools actually extends the opportunities for learning and development.'

Slide 8:
As mentioned earlier, 'screen time' and 'sedentary behaviour' are linked. However, let's just focus on 'sedentary behaviour' for a moment and the related recommendation – 'Infants, toddlers and preschoolers should not be sedentary, restrained, or kept inactive for more than one hour at a time - with the exception of sleeping'.

Children need quiet 'down time' to balance out the times of physical activity. However, educators need to be aware of how long children may be engaged in 'down time' - no more than 1 hour at a time. The *Australian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines* also tell us that while sedentary, children aged birth to five years should be encouraged to engage in 'productive' sedentary experiences as per the green outlined box on the slide, rather than 'non-productive' sedentary behaviour experiences for 'down time' as per the blue outlined box on the slide. For example, would you engage children with a 'screen-based' 'blocks' game for 'down time' or play with the 'traditional' blocks set for 'down time'? Again, what is the intent, the purpose, the learning potential? Both can be played quietly for 'down time', but the learning potential from one activity, the 'traditional' blocks set, far outweighs the other.

Children need to learn how to have 'down time' without using a 'screen'. We want children to get into the habit of 'productive' down time and into the habit of 'moving' after being sedentary.

Does the service's sleep and rest policy reflect this information? We can consider making time to read over and review the service's sleep and rest policy together.

Slide 9:
Technology is all around us, it's a reality in children's lives so we can't be like ostriches and bury our heads in the sand. We need to embrace technology, but do this in line with the 'Sedentary behaviour recommendations' and the *National Quality Framework*.

Educators have a responsibility to support children's technological knowledge. Young children may be technology savvy, but they are not technology mature. Educators need to help children develop positive screen time habits including developing the skills to choose appropriate technology to consume, good posture and how to use technology responsibly. For example asking permission to take photos of people and how to self regulate screen time use – which is what this key message is all about – how to *Turn off the screen and get active*; and, as we just shared, educators need to promote 'productive' down time.

To best do this, educators need to engage with technology to develop the skills, knowledge and confidence to make informed technology choices for children. Educators need to positively role model appropriate screen time and sedentary behaviours.

On the slide is a great quote by the *Fred Rogers Center* to finish off with:

'When used appropriately, and keeping screen time recommendations in mind, technology and interactive media have the potential to enhance, without replacing, creative play, exploration, physical activity, outdoor experiences, conversation and social interactions.'

Slide 10:
ACTIVITY:
Please follow the directions in the 'Green Activity Box' and reflecting on the information we just shared, take 2 minutes to brainstorm how your service can promote '*Turn off the screen and get active*'.

(Take 2 minutes to complete the activity with your colleagues.)

Slide 11:
In our brainstorm we may have considered some of the points listed on the slide. There are so many ways we can promote and embed this key message – *Turn off the screen and get active* - in our service.

Slide 12:
ACTIVITY:
Now that we have shared the *Turn off the screen and get active* 'key message' module, let's take 5 minutes to begin the 'Reflective Practice' task on the slide using the hardcopy version of this document.

Once we have completed our 'Reflective Practice' task for this 'key message', we can transfer any identified 'areas for improvement' onto our service's *Quality Improvement Plan* – especially for *National Quality Standard,* Standard 2.1 – Health and it's related Element 2.1.3 – Healthy lifestyle. Remember the action plan template can assist with this planning.

 (Take 5 minutes to complete the activity with your colleagues.)

Slide 13:
Resources available to promote *Turn off the screen and get active* include the:
- *Munch & Move Resource Manual: Birth to 5 years*
- *Munch & Move* CD
- *Munch & Move* Fact Sheet

These resources and more are available on the *NSW Healthy Kids* website.

Slide 14:

Congratulations – we have now completed the 'key message' module *Turn off the screen and get active.*

Please ensure the 'Record of Completion' is finalised for this module and remember to link the 'Reflective Practice' task to the service's *Quality Improvement Plan*.

Let's select the next 'key message' module and schedule a date and time to share it.