



As a result of the efforts of the Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood, the Walt Disney Company is offering a **full refund to anyone who purchased a Baby Einstein video in the past five years**. The refund offer is an important milestone in CCFC's ongoing campaign to stop the false and deceptive marketing of baby videos.

To learn more, please visit: [www.commercialfreechildhood.org/babyeinsteinrefund.html](http://www.commercialfreechildhood.org/babyeinsteinrefund.html).

## Baby Einstein DVDs and other screen media have not been shown to effectively educate babies and toddlers.

- There is no evidence of cognitive benefits from watching television during the first two years of life.<sup>1</sup>
- While television can be an effective teaching tool for older children, there is no credible evidence that babies and toddlers learn anything useful from screens.<sup>2</sup>
- Screen media is not an effective means of teaching babies and toddlers the meaning of new words or for promoting their phonetic learning.<sup>3</sup>
- Babies who watched Baby Einstein's *Baby Wordsworth* multiple times showed no increased communication skills when compared to a control group that did not watch.<sup>4</sup>

## Marketing Electronic Media as Educational for Babies is Effective.

- Baby media companies routinely make unfounded educational claims to sell parents on their products. Brand names such as *Brainy Baby*, *Baby Einstein*, and *Baby Genius* are powerful—and deceptive—marketing tools. Forty-eight percent of parents believe that baby videos are beneficial to child development.<sup>5</sup>
- The most common reason parents give for putting their babies and toddlers in front of screens is that they are beneficial to their child's brain development.<sup>6</sup>
- Only 6% of American parents know that the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends no screen time for children under two.<sup>7</sup>



THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS  
RECOMMENDS NO SCREEN TIME FOR  
CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF TWO

## Screen Media is Pervasive in the Lives of Babies and Toddlers.

- By the age of three months, 40% of infants are watching screen media regularly. By the time children are two, the number jumps to 90%. Children younger than 12 months watch, on average, one hour of television daily. Children between 12 and 24 months watch for more than 90 minutes per day.<sup>8</sup>
- 19% of babies one year and under have a TV in their bedroom.<sup>9</sup>



## There is Growing Concern about the Effects of Screen Media on Babies

- The more time babies spend viewing television the less time they spend interacting with parents or engaging in creative play—two activities known to promote learning.<sup>10</sup>
- Television viewing is negatively associated with regular sleep patterns for babies.<sup>11</sup>
- TV viewing can be habituating for babies.<sup>12</sup>
- For babies 8 to 16 months, every hour spent watching baby videos is associated with slower language development—they know six to eight words less on a standardized vocabulary test than babies who don't watch.<sup>13</sup>

*In 2006, CCFC filed a Federal Trade Commission complaint against Baby Einstein, Brainy Baby, and Baby FirstTV for false and deceptive marketing. As a result, the marketing for Baby Einstein and Brainy Baby was substantially altered—eliminating many of the educational claims cited in CCFC's complaint. However, the companies made no move to compensate parents who purchased them. Now parents who purchased Baby Einstein DVDs, mistakenly believing the videos would make their babies smarter, can recoup their money by visiting [www.commercialfreechildhood.org/babyeinsteinrefund.html](http://www.commercialfreechildhood.org/babyeinsteinrefund.html).*

*BabyFirstTV continues to market itself as an educational tool for infants and toddlers.*

<sup>1</sup> Schmidt, M.E., Rich, M., Rifas-Shiman, S.L., Oken, E., & Taveras, E. (2009). Television viewing in infancy and child cognition at 3 years of age in a US cohort. *Pediatrics* 123: 370-375.

<sup>2</sup> Anderson, D. & Pempek, T. (2005). Television and Very Young Children. *American Behavioral Scientist*. 48(5): 505-522.

<sup>3</sup> Zimmerman, F.J., Christakis, D.A., Meltzoff, A.N. (2007) Television and DVD/video viewing in children younger than 2 years. *Archives of Pediatric & Adolescent Medicine*. 161(5): 473-9.

<sup>4</sup> Robb, M.B., Richert, R.A., & Wartella, E.A. (2009). Just a talking book? Word learning from watching baby videos. *British Journal of Developmental Psychology*. 27: 27-45.

<sup>5</sup> Rideout, V. (2007). *Parents, Children and Media: A Report from the Kaiser Family Foundation*. Menlo Park, CA: Kaiser Family Foundation, p. 15.

<sup>6</sup> Zimmerman, Christakis, & Meltzoff, (2007).

<sup>7</sup> Rideout, V. (2004). *Parents, Media, and Public Policy*. Menlo Park: Kaiser Family Foundation, p. 10.

<sup>8</sup> Zimmerman, Christakis, & Meltzoff, (2007).

<sup>9</sup> Rideout, V. & Hamel, E. (2006). *The Media Family: Electronic media in the lives of infants, toddlers, preschoolers and their parents*. Menlo Park, CA: Kaiser Family Foundation.

<sup>10</sup> Vandewater, E.A., Bickham, D.S. & Lee, J.H. (2006, February). Time well spent? Relating television use to children's free-time activities. *Pediatrics*, 117(2): e181-191.

<sup>11</sup> Thompson, D.A. & Christakis, D. (2005). The association between television viewing and irregular sleep schedules among children less than 3 years of age. *Pediatrics*. 116 (4): 851-856.

<sup>12</sup> Christakis, D.A. & Zimmerman, F.J. (2006). Early television viewing is associated with protesting turning off the television at age 6. *Medscape General Medicine*, 8(2): 63.

<sup>13</sup> Zimmerman, F.J., Christakis, D.A., & Meltzoff, A.N. (2007, August). Associations between Media Viewing and Language Development in Children Under Age 2 years. *The Journal of Pediatrics*. 151(40): 364-368.