

Excessive TV viewing causes other problems as well:

TV can . . .

- encourage passive, less interactive social patterns, fostering social isolation.
- decrease critical thinking skills.
- discourage physical activity and promote obesity.

What can we do?

- teach and encourage the **3 Cs**:

- 1** Critical viewing
 - 2** Conflict resolution
 - 3** Creativity in other areas
- set guidelines for media content.
 - set time limits 1-2 hours per day maximum.
 - create a “media-free environment” in your child’s bedroom.

Get informed:

Learn more about the impact of media on children and families. Check out:

Reading Rx
www.readingrx.org

National Institute on Media and the Family
www.mediafamily.org

**American Academy of Pediatrics
Media Matters**
www.aap.org



Reading Rx is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit corporation.

Our vision is to ensure that every child grows up literate.

Our mission is to:

- empower medical providers to
- partner with community organizations to
- prescribe family literacy and
- promote children as informed consumers of media.

To request more information about Reading Rx, purchase brochures or video tapes, obtain a speaker, or make a tax-deductible contribution, please contact:

Reading Rx
475 North Cleveland Avenue
Suite 100B
St. Paul, MN 55104

Phone: 651-490-7694
Fax: 651-766-6979
E-mail: readingrx@readingrx.org

www.readingrx.org

We emphasize TV viewing because of the enormous amount of time children spend watching. Our guidelines apply equally to computer games, movies, videos, and DVDs – **to all media.**

Media and Violence



Overwhelming evidence shows that media content can be harmful to children and families.

What you need to know.



We are a species of storytellers

Through stories we learn about life, about the world, about success and failure, about good and bad, about conflicts, and about how to treat each other.

Traditional storytellers – families, communities of faith and schools – are being replaced by television.

The lessons that children learn from television are often violent.

Overwhelming evidence shows that media content can be harmful to children and families!



Did You Know?

- More than 98% of American homes have a TV set; greater than 70% have 2 TVs.
- 11% of children have their own TV set in their bedrooms.
- 16% of American households never turn the TV off.
- 58% of homes leave the TV on during meals.
- On average, young children spend 20-27 hours per week watching TV, more than any other single activity except sleeping. Teens spend about 15-25 hours per week watching TV.
- It is estimated that by the time children reach age 18 they have viewed more than 350,000 ads.
- 37% of children age 5-11 years have sleep problems related to media viewing.
- 32% of children age 2-7 years and 65% of children age 8-18 have a TV set in their bedroom. Children with TVs in their bedroom **do less well** in school.
- All media has a message. Children as young as 3 years old can learn to be critical media viewers.



Television Affects Children's Behavior

TV can . . .

- teach children to behave violently and be more aggressive.
- encourage children to be insatiable consumers.
- discourage children from seeking nonviolent alternatives to solving problems.
- encourage earlier sexual activity: some research links media viewing with increases in teen pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases.

Televised Violence Affects Children's Attitudes

TV can . . .

- cause children to be more fearful of being attacked.
- desensitize children both emotionally and intellectually to the harmful consequences of violence.
- glamorize alcohol, smoking and drug use and portray these activities as risk free.
- portray "ideal" body images which are not healthy or realistic.
- promote gender, cultural and ethnic stereotyping.

Brain damage is caused by bad experiences. Children learn from the experience of TV by imitation, identification and incorporation.