

TELEVISION: EFFECTS OF TV ON CHILDREN

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I think we are just beginning to see the negative influence of uncensored media viewing by children. I was listening to a tape yesterday and heard that there are 148 acts of violence in a twenty minute tape of "The Power Rangers." It is increasingly difficult to screen what your children are exposed to, especially since most of their friends will have no restrictions.

Here are some thoughts for you:

- Never let him/her watch anything you haven't seen—at least in terms of general content.
- Have periods of time during the day when there is no TV or no movies allowed in your home. An important time when children learn social skills and feel connected to their parents is meal time, especially dinner.
- Only have so many hours of TV a day for a child. When the child is little, you will control that number. When the child gets to be five and older, you can cut pieces of "Pie" out of a circle and give them to the child. When the child wants to watch TV, he gives you a piece of pie for a half and hour of TV. When there are no more pieces of pie, there is no more TV that day. How many hours should a child watch TV in a day? As few as possible unless it is a learning or nurturing program. I'm a big Mr. Rogers fan as he knew that small children need to go slowly in their learning process. We rush today's child and wonder why we have so many wound up kids.
- A concern (beyond the fact that our youth are impervious to violence and are learning to be destructive in all sorts of ways,) is that the brain functions in a certain way. The TV is non-interactive, so the brain begins to skip two basic areas of function: creativity and intuition. If we continue to create a society hooked on TV, we will have a generation of non-creative, non-intuitive humans.
- A small child is asking two questions:
 1. What is the world, how does it work? How do I live here safely? How do I get and give love here? How do I function here?
 2. What is power and how do I use it? These absolutely vital lessons are best taught by interacting adults in a child's life. The TV cannot teach those lessons or answer children's questions about how to relate to other people. The more a child plays with other children, interacts with adults, participates in life, the more that child has a chance of becoming a functioning human being who is comfortable interacting with other human beings.

*** THESE THOUGHTS ALSO PERTAIN TO TOO MUCH COMPUTER OR VIDEO GAME TIME. THE REASONS ARE SIMILAR.**

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Television: Child Is Watching Too Much TV

Turn the darn thing off! Have regular periods of time when no television is allowed in your entire home. Children won't get distracted getting ready for school if no TV is running; don't have the TV on during dinner so your family talks to each other. Invite your children to play games, read or be creative—none of which they will learn if the TV is always running in your home.

PARENT: Why are you so against children watching a lot of TV? There are lots of good programs on the television.

SANDY: I'm concerned about excessive amounts of TV being watched. There is a statistic which states that by the time an average child is 18 years old, that child has spent more time watching TV than that child has spent in school and with the family, combined.

The television is non-responsive; you can just sit there and watch it without thinking or talking. If the brain isn't activated into thinking and imagining, it cuts off those resources. A child who watches enormous amounts of TV will not be able to use the part of their brain that inspires creativity and intuition. Do you want to raise a child who is not creative and one who cannot access his/her intuition (which is where I think access to your spirituality lies)? If not, you need to teach them to use free time in a better way.