

Television viewing is a major activity and influence on children and adolescents. Children in the United States watch an average of three to four hours of television a day. By the time of high school graduation, they will have spent more time watching television than they have in the classroom.

Television



Presidential commissions have confirmed the profound effects of television violence on children's aggressive behavior. These reports indicate that violent television programming is related to an increase in children's fighting. If you do not want to have a physically aggressive child, you may consider monitoring your child's television viewing habits. One way to do this is to count the number of aggressive acts in your child's Saturday morning cartoons. Then you can decide if you would like her to continue to watch them.

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Cartoon watching also seems to have a negative impact on children's activity levels. While they sit and stare at the television set, they appear zombie-like; afterward, these same children act overexcited, running helter-skelter with little direction or content in their play. In all likelihood, a steady diet of superheroes and monsters is harmful. Also, because two and three year olds are unable to distinguish between fantasy and reality, the evil warriors and monsters may seem real to them, and the characters in some of these daytime "entertainments" can come back to haunt toddlers at nighttime. To make matters worse, it is often difficult to tell where the cartoons end and the commercials begin.

However, television can be used for positive ends as well. Good educational programs, like Sesame Street

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American children watch an average of three to four hours of television daily. Television can be a powerful influence in developing value systems and shaping behavior. Unfortunately, much of today's television programming is violent.

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