

26th September 2015

TV Debate

Today's world is flooded with technological gadgets and there is no shortage of any area where it is being employed. Right from the common kitchen household work like cleaning, washing, grinding, cooking to official work and even entertainment have been replaced with such gadgets. What was once a luxury among the rich and royals has now become a common household name.



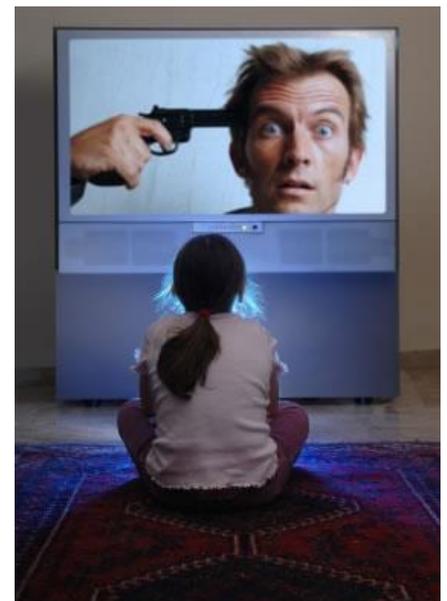
But before the advent of TV, people were occupied with many other activities during their pass time. Though TV has to some extent, been able to provide wholesome entertainment, the adverse effects are also worth mentioning. No doubt the scores of channels telecast are being intended for different kind of audience from different age groups and taste. Just like every coin has two sides, even watching TV is both good and bad.

Negative Effects

The negative effects of watching TV are described by different section of people in varying ways. Ask the doctors or medical practitioners, they will respond saying sitting in front of the TV for more than 2 hours in a day is harmful for children. The UV rays that are emitted from the screen cause different damage and health hazards. Kids tend to lose their vision capacity and are driven to go for spectacles at a very tender age.

Many researches have been carried out time and again to know the harmful effects of watching TV shows that display more violence. It has been medically proved that watching violent TV shows filled with anger, hatred and shootings leave a permanent scar in the brain. This eventually gets released at some point of time and the child becomes a victim of such actions in real life.

We can come across such instances when we see how small children of not beyond 16 years of age tend to kill their class mates, friends or others to either take petty revenge on them or to achieve what they want. Thereafter their life is tormented and the charm to live a happy and peaceful life is lost forever. This is so sad, as we get this life only



once and of what good it will be if we miss the chance to live it with love, peace and happiness?

Other Negative Effects

- **It stifles creativity.** Kids who watch too much TV are less able to use their own mind to create something out of nothing, says Jane Healy, PhD, author of *Endangered Minds: Why Children Don't Think -- and What We Can Do About It*. When they play make-believe, the play tends to be based on their favorite shows.
- **It inhibits language development.** Even the better shows rely on visuals at the expense of talk, says Healy. When kids start school, they're expected to pay attention and process information without the benefit of dancing Muppets. Kids who are used to TV may have a hard time making the transition.



- **TV is addictive.** Time spent watching TV is time robbed from other important activities like reading, make-believe play, and interacting with parents.
- **The things kids learn on TV do not translate into academic success.** Frank Vespe, executive director of the TV TurnOff Network, points out that according to a study conducted by the National Association of Educational Programs, kids who watched the least TV did the best on standardized tests in fourth grade
- **Learning bad habits.**
One problem caused by watching television is obesity. Television allows a child to be inactive for long periods of time. "Children in the United states watch an average of three hours of television a day."⁽¹⁾ Also the commercials on television encourage unhealthy eating habits. For example, Oreos are advertised in a very fun and creative way.

When children see that they begin to want them. How many times do you see dancing pieces of lettuce or carrots or something on television? Television makes unhealthy food look attractive. Obesity is just one of the physical issues caused by watching television, but there are others as well.



As mentioned earlier violence is an issue. They begin to think it is normal for that kind of behavior and start acting in that way as well. "The hero of TV shows never gets in trouble for his/her violent actions." (2) Many shows show the violent character as the "good guy". They also show the character not being harmed as they would in real life. Children need to know and understand that violence is bad and needs to be avoided. By watching television they are only encouraged to do violent acts. Another behavioral issue is a child being antisocial.

Children will begin to focus only on what is in front of them instead of the world around them. By this statement I mean they will block out whoever is talking to them in order to pay attention to the television show that is on at that time.

By keeping themselves glued to the TV, children these days are losing the opportunity to socialize with friends and neighbors. Playing in the open grounds, climbing trees, swinging in branches, enduring the sun and the chirping birds are all becoming things of past. Playing in the open prepares a child both mentally and physically to be strong and learn the life's lessons from nature directly.

At times, it becomes more of a necessity to reach out to TV in search of some information. Children start watching TV to learn science or sports and are gradually oriented to watch other programs that turn them more into addicts. This kind of getting addicted to watching TV reduces their IQ levels and memory retention.

All said, probably this is the reason why TV has been referred popularly as 'idiot box' just like how computer is termed as 'garbage in and garbage out'!!!!

Positive Effects

Chances are that when you were a kid, television was limited to a few hours a week of shows like Saturday morning cartoons. With the advent of channels like The Cartoon Network and Nickelodeon, kids can watch TV 24-7. With all of these options, today's parents have a much tougher job than ours did. The question for most parents isn't *Should we or shouldn't we?* but *How much is too much and how guilty should I feel?* Here are the pros and cons of television and how to make peace with it in your house.

- **TV can encourage reading.** On many shows, books are heavily promoted, notes Daniel Anderson, PhD, professor of psychology.
- **Kids who watch educational shows may do better in school.** One study found that kids who watched educational programs in the '80s did better academically in high school than kids who didn't. Anderson speculates that these kids entered first grade with some basic knowledge, which made them enthusiastic and confident about school. Getting off to a good start had a positive effect on their entire academic experience.
- **TV provides a window into world.** For example, if your child has never seen an elephant or a lion, watching a nature show about wild animals is a very effective way of learning about them, notes Anderson. If there's a subject your child enjoys, more likely than not, there is a TV show, movie, or educational DVD that explores the subject in detail. You might be even be surprised to find out how many kids watch and love educational shows aimed at adults. Rachael Ray, for example has a huge following among kids and tweens, and her primetime show often features kids in the kitchen.

- **Through media, kids can explore places, animals, or things that they couldn't see otherwise.**

Most kids are not able to visit the rain forest or see a giraffe in the wild, but many have seen these things on TV.



Thankfully, educationally minded producers have given us many shows and movies that allow viewers to see amazing footage of nature, animals, society, and other peoples. Kids and adults alike can learn from this type of media and gain a greater appreciation for our world and the animals and other people who inhabit it.

- **TV shows can inspire kids to try new activities and engage in "unplugged" learning.**

When kids see their favorite characters engaged in fun learning games, they want to play too. Kids also like learning activities more if they involve beloved characters. Preschoolers' shows are especially effective for generating ideas for learning activities and using characters to motivate kids.

If you have a child who loves Blue's Clues, for example, you can create clues and a riddle for them to solve at home, or challenge your child to create the riddle and clues. Or, turn a regular activity into a challenge and encourage your child to solve it like the Super Sleuths do.

- **TV and movies can motivate kids to read books.**

Of the new movies that are released each year, you can bet that several of them are based on books. Parents can challenge kids to read a book with the promise of going to the theater or renting the movie when they finish it. Or, kids may see a movie and like it so much that they decide to read the book. Discuss the differences between the book and the movie to help kids develop thinking skills.

- **Kids can build analytical skills by discussing media.**

What do you think will happen next? Who did it? What will the result be? What could that character have done instead? Asking these types of questions as you co-view with your children will help them learn to think, problem solve, and predict, making TV viewing a more active experience. More important than just memorizing facts, developing thinking skills will benefit them for the rest of their lives.

Also, remember those compare/contrast tests in school? You can help prepare kids for this type of literary thinking by discussing programs with them. Compare and contrast characters or shows. Who is the main character? Describe the plot. What was the setting and main idea? What was the conflict and how was it resolved? Use TV time to help kids practice for all those essay tests, and they might find that talking about this stuff can be interesting and fun!

- **Parents can use TV to help kids learn the truth about advertising.**

Advertising may be annoying, but it does present yet another opportunity to develop kids' thinking skills. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, young children may not even know the difference between programs and commercials. They are just soaking it all in and applying it to their reality. As a parent, you can explain the purpose of advertising to your kids and alert them to any deceptive tactics. Allow them to analyze the methods used by advertisers to sell a product.

- **Good role models and examples on TV can positively influence kids.**

Children are influenced by people they see on television, especially other kids. Obviously, this can have a negative result, but it can be positive too. Lately, kids' TV shows have begun promoting some positive agendas such as healthy living and environmental awareness. As kids see their favorite characters making

positive choices, they will be influenced in a good way. Parents can also point out positive traits that characters display and thereby spark valuable family discussions.



Whatever you decide - Present a united front

Once Mom and Dad have weighed all the facts and decided how much TV their child should be allowed to watch, it's important for them to be on the same pages. Stresses Kirkfield, "Parents need to present a united front when setting rules and limits for children and TV."

study

(verb)

The act of texting, eating
and watching TV with an
open textbook nearby.

This newsletter has been issued by:

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