

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS:

Children, Adolescents, and Television

Committee on Public Education

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends the following guidelines for parents:

1. Limit children's total media time (with entertainment media) to no more than 1 to 2 hours of quality programming per day.
2. Remove television sets from children's bedrooms.
3. Discourage television viewing for children younger than 2 years, and encourage more interactive activities that will promote proper brain development, such as talking, playing, singing, and reading together.
4. Monitor the shows that children and adolescents are viewing. Most programs should be informational, educational, and nonviolent.
5. View television programs along with children, and discuss the content. Two recent surveys involving a total of nearly 1,500 parents found that less than half of parents reported always watching television with their children.^{1,2}
6. Use controversial programming as a stepping-off point to initiate discussions about family values, violence, sex and sexuality, and drugs.
7. Use the videocassette recorder wisely to show or record high-quality, educational programming for children.
8. Support efforts to establish comprehensive media-education programs in schools.
9. Encourage alternative entertainment for children, including reading, athletics, hobbies, and creative play.

¹ Strasburger VC. Children, adolescents, and the media: five crucial issues. *Adolescent Medicine* 1993, 4: 479-493.

² Valerio M, Amodio P, Dal Zio M, Vianello A, Zacchello GP. The use of television in 2- to 8-year-old children and the attitude of parents about such use. *Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine* 1997, 151: 22-26.