

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

CHILDREN AND TELEVISION

How much is too much? This question is often asked concerning children and television viewing. Although there are no specific guidelines established, parents can consider several factors in determining how much TV is too much for children. Some considerations include:

- Is sufficient effort being given to school work?
- Does your child have time for reading?
- Does your child play with friends?
- Is your child involved in activities and/or hobbies?
- Does your child get enough physical exercise?
- Is your child able to concentrate on tasks for a long period of time.

If the answer to the majority of these questions is no, then perhaps your child is spending too much time in front of the television.

Television viewing habits can be altered to have a positive influence on children. Parents can alter viewing by following these tips.

1. Establish a weekly viewing limit. Encourage your child to select programs ahead of time rather than just flipping channels to see what is on.
2. Keep a time chart with TV viewing, homework, reading, and other activities. Make sure there is a healthy balance on the chart.
3. Designate "No TV" times in your house. These times might be in the morning, during dinner, at study time, or after a specific hour in the evening.
4. Set an example for your child. Limit your own viewing and choose to read a book or become involved in an activity instead.
5. Watch programs with your child. Choose programs your whole family will enjoy and watch and discuss them together.

SUMMER ACTIVITIES

Summer is the time for fun and relaxation for children. It is also a time to expand upon what has been learned in school by including educational activities which encourage children to think and make new discoveries. There are numerous activities which will keep active minds busy and help children be better prepared for the start of a new school year. Some of these activities include:

1. Read with your child. Set aside a time every day to read to your child or have a family reading time.
2. Visit the library. Take part in special summer reading programs and library activities.
3. Play word and reading games. Introduce new games suited to your child's educational level.
4. Encourage your child to write. Writing may include letters, stories, or a journal of summer activities.
5. Plan outings together as a family. Visit museums, the park, performances, and local events.
6. Help children plan shows or performances. These may include puppet shows, plays, or special dances planned for family and friends.
7. Begin a new hobby. Start a collection, work on puzzles, put together a model, or learn a craft.
8. Have children help plan family trips. Learn to read maps, keep mileage, plan places to visit, etc.
9. Learn to shop. Teach your child to plan menus, make the grocery list, compare prices, and handle money at the check out register.
10. Explore a new interest or subject with your child. Research historical events, find out how things work, or learn to play a musical instrument.

*"To accomplish great things, we must not only act but also dream,
not only plan but also believe."*

Anatole France