

Advantages and disadvantages of television for kids

[Media](#), [Television](#)



Television is an inescapable part of modern culture. We depend on TV for entertainment, news, education, culture, weather, sports—and even music, since the advent of music videos. TIP: Create your own family TV-viewing traditions, such as watching Olympic coverage, the NHL playoffs, classic movies or a weekly comedy show. With the recent explosion in satellite and digital speciality channels, we now have access to a plethora of both good quality and inappropriate TV content.

In this crowded television environment, the key for parents is to search out high quality TV programs for their kids, and whenever possible, enjoy them together as a family. Television offers lots of benefits to kids, including: *

- * Because of its ability to create powerful touchstones, TV enables young people to share cultural experiences with others.
- * Shared viewing gives family members of all ages an opportunity to spend time together.
- * Parents can use TV as a catalyst to get kids reading—following up on TV programs by getting books on the same subjects or reading authors whose work was adapted for the programs. Great television can teach kids important values and life lessons.
- * TV programs often explore controversial or sensitive issues, which can make it easier for parents and kids to discuss them.
- * Educational programming can develop young children's socialization and learning skills.
- * News, current events and historical programming can help make young people more aware of other cultures and people.
- * Documentaries can help develop critical thinking about society and the world.

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TIP: Whenever possible, choose Canadian programs for your family viewing time. TV can help introduce your family to classic Hollywood films and foreign movies that may not be available in your local video store. * Cultural programming can open up the world of music and art for young people. How to choose good TV How can you select viewing that is good for your children? David Kleeman, Director of the American Center for Children and Media, says ask yourself the following questions: * Does the program actively engage my child, physically or intellectually?

Television watching doesn't have to be passive. It can prompt questions, kindle curiosity, or teach activities to pursue when the set is off. * Do I respect this program? Parents don't have to like every show their children choose—in fact young people need their own district culture. But parents should trust that a program's creators understand and respect how children grow and learn. * Does my child see others like himself or herself on television? Young children believe that television reflects the real world.

To not see people like themselves—in race, ethnicity, or physical ability, for example—may diminish their self worth. A lack of role models should spark discussion about how TV portrays different types of people. * How do makers of this program regard my child? Some program creators see young people as consumers to be sold to. Others see them as students to be educated, as future citizens to be engaged in the community, or simply as children, whose work is play. Use the resources on the side bar to help you find good quality television for your kids.