

The negative effects of media on our youth

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



XXXXX page 1 Ms. XXXX XXXXXXXXX Prep Writing 2 XX September 2011 The Negative Effects Of Media On Our Youth Of all the different types of media out there, television seems to have the biggest grip on our youth. Consider these startling statistics from studies by Dr. David Walsh. For example, the average house in America has 2.6 television sets and 56% of children have a TV in their room. Teenagers spend ½ hour a week with Dad alone, 2-1/2 hours a week with Mom alone, 5 hours a week doing home work, 2 hours a week reading, and 24 hours a week watching television. The Center for Media Education quotes from their website that watching TV is the #1 after-school activity for 6 to 17 year olds and each year most children spend about 1500 hours in front of the TV and 900 hours in the classroom. By age 70, most people will have spent about 10 years watching TV. Judging by those statistics, there is no doubt of the huge effect television has, but to what extent are the effects negative? The first negative effect is the subject of body image that is so prevalent on TV. Fashion models, pop stars and actresses are everywhere and by nature of their business they portray non-realistic body images. Too often they are seriously underweight. Most youths trying to be like them would have to make their selves undernourished. In movies, body doubles are often used to substitute for "imperfect" female movie stars. Eighty-five percent of those body doubles have breast implants. Recently the trend is for more and more teens looking for plastic surgery as a way of trying to be more like their idols. The second negative influence is the ad industry which is looking after their own profit interests XXXXX page 2 when it comes to commercials in television. The CME reports that 9 out of 10 food ads on Saturday morning TV are for sugary cereals, candy, salty snacks,

fatty fast foods and other junk foods. Teens see 100, 000 alcohol commercials before they reach drinking age. Most certainly these constant ads have a significant influence on young minds. Computers are now also competing for your youth's time. The popularity of You Tube videos makes television shows and movies even more accessible. Even our cell phones are doubling as portable devices for viewing anything on the Internet. The global social networking website Facebook has surpassed My Space with over 300 million daily viewers. Besides keeping in touch with their friends, youths are adding their media heroes to their Facebook accounts. Interactive advertisers in cyber space are targeting children and teens to develop "brand loyalty" as early as possible. In addition the amount of violence in media can be observed everywhere from WWF wrestling, "Jackass" style You Tube videos and the popularity of violent video games. As kids are growing up their minds are like sponges, soaking up images and ideas that are detrimental to a healthy mind. The Mediascope National Television Violence Study found that children are learning aggressive attitudes and behaviors and becoming desensitized to real world violence. Kids are also developing a fear of being victimized by violence. It's no wonder that violent crimes in schools are on the rise. The Commission for the Prevention of Youth Violence finds that one in every eight murder victims in the US is younger than 18 and almost 40 children and adolescents are killed by violence each week. In an average month, there are more than 525, 000 violent attacks in public schools. Nearly 8% of urban junior and senior high school students are too afraid to go to school at least once a month. So what can be the answer to the constant assault of negative influences by the media? Certainly we can't

keep our kids locked away from all media exposure. It is our duty as parents to limit its XXXXX page 3 negative effects. We can start by limiting the amount of television children watch to 1 to 2 hours a day. We can monitor the programs, websites and video games they view. Having conversations about what they do see in media will help them to think correctly about role models and media stars. We need to be the last word on what they are learning so they can grow up to be able to guide and shape their own kids in the future.