

# Violence in television creates aggression in children

[Sociology](#), [Violence](#)



We all love action packed, horrifying, fighting type of movies like Drive, The Dark Knight, Kindergarten Cop, Star Wars or Who Framed Roger Rabbit.

These movies don't seem very harmful to us and may seem more funny than violent, but how children perceive these films is very different from how an adult may perceive it. How do children view these movies? And how do they absorb the information in front of them?. Violence in the media creates aggression in everyone but it has a major impact on children. Parenting and environmental factors also have an effect.

Society and media has made us believe that violence is acceptable in films but when it happens in real life, many don't seem accepting. People don't seem to realize in order to suppress violence in life you have to begin with not displaying violence as if it was socially acceptable. Many factors play into childhood aggression; family, environment or mass media. Many parents sit their children in front of a television for hours just to keep them occupied, but they are not aware of the damage they are doing to their kids.

Movies like Who Framed Roger Rabbit may seem like a harmless movie to us but it portrays violence with guns, arguing and even distorted information of how to handle stressful situations. Movies or cartoons like this, show children you have to resort to violence to resolve certain situations. Other cartoons like Bugs Bunny, who cross dress and flirt to bring his hunter into a trap, are highly inappropriate. Young children are very manipulative and tend to reenact or repeat things they see or hear.

It may be adorable when your kid is kicking and fighting around like Batman but in their mind they see fighting and aggression as a resolution. As they

get older aggression and violence seems like a normal part of life and acceptable. They become desensitized with the more violence they are exposed to and usually want to watch something with more action and violence, hence become more and more absorbed in to aggression. (Huesmann & Miller, 1994;) This aggression seems to stand out more on which family class they stand in.

Children in lower class families tend to watch more TV, and have lower IQ's because they are not interacting with others, reading, or using any kind of thought process. Many factors play into why children of lower class families watch more television (Huesmann, 1998). In these days many families find themselves working and not spending as much time at home, leaving the child to watch a lot of television, and if they are not around, there's no assuring what the child is watching. Lower class families tend to be more stressed and that sometimes reflects on the children; creating anxiety and aggression (Tremblay, 2000).

Not having money to enjoy other activities, also causes more children to be inactive, and living in dangerous neighborhoods cause them to stay inside more. Television is America's favorite pass time and people believe watching television is a good way to pass time or bond with each other but it does the opposite. There is no interaction with family members or peers and most adults don't want to sit around watching kid shows, so children watch what their parents want to watch and usually it is inappropriate.

Telling your child to cover their eyes or ears during a scene really doesn't improve much. Some families neglect their children, give them harsh

punishments or sometimes don't discipline them at all and that also plays a role. Many studies have shown, the more a child is exposed to violence, the more often a child will respond with aggression or violence (Anderson, F. S. 1977). Anderson from the American Psychological Association, also discovered continue exposure to violence can lead to antisocialism, violence, drugs and criminality.

Aggressive children prefer violence on television, prefer violent character and see it as part of life more than less aggressive children. Some children won't show signs of aggression until they are older. Consistently watching violent or inappropriate programs can affect anybody at any age or gender. Extensive researched from the American Psychological Association, also revealed aggressive behavior is more in males who tend to watch more television ( Huesmann, L. R. , Eron, L. D. , Berkowitz, L. , & Chaffee, S. (1991). Males are also raised more aggressively.

Many parents believe they have to be hard on boys to make them tougher, but in actuality that can damage a child or create anger or hatred. Many children who grow up with constant aggression or violence usually don't turn out to be the American dream person. Creators seem to forget their audience is young children and they side track to create more ratings instead of keeping it appropriate for children of a certain age. Not every person would agree violent television or inappropriate programs are the causes of aggression in children.

Taking into consideration how the child was raised, and the environment they grow up in, can have a large effect on many children. Not all television

is bad, but the problem these days is that parents don't monitor what their children watch. There are many reasons television can be a good thing for a child. If parents gave healthy viewing habits, less viewing time and watched what was on the screen for their kids, television can be very educational. Learning shows like blues clues give children thinking practice by causing them to solve riddles and find clues.

Channels like the discovery channel can help children discover about the world around them and in turn learning and using thought. Television has been a revolutionary change for the last few generations. It has changed our way of life for the better and for the worse. I personally believe that before television families were closer, and violence wasn't as popular on shows, and people were healthier, because there were more activities to enjoy, then just sitting at home doing nothing. These days the violence and uneducated shows on television has sadly affected even our younger viewer.

Children don't need to know about depression, hell or anger like the cartoon, Billy and Mandy display. Cartoons like this show children, it's acceptable to be furious and angry and act aggressively to your siblings. If parents really began to care about their children, they would monitor and lower their television time. No child should have to sit 5 hours or longer in front of a television with no supervision, when they could be interacting and learning with family and peers. Violence in television also has to be decreased in adult watching as well. It has become such a large part in our society.

Children shouldn't have to grow up thinking fighting, cursing, and aggressive behavior towards others is acceptable, and it's up to the parents to make a

change. Sources \* Longitudinal Relations Between Children's Exposure to TV Violence and Their Aggressive and Violent Behavior in Young Adulthood: 1977-1992 Psychology Copyright 2003 by the American Psychological Association, Inc. 2003, Vol. 39, No. 2, 201-221 \* Kidshealth. rg; How TV effects your child by Steven Dowshen, MD [http://kidshealth.org/parent/positive/family/tv\\_affects\\_child.html](http://kidshealth.org/parent/positive/family/tv_affects_child.html) \* Is Television Advertising Good for Children? Areas of Concern and Policy Implications Vol 20 No 1 (2001) <http://www.sfu.ca/media-lab/archive/2007/426/Resources/Readings/readings%20kidcult/canadianadpolicy.pdf> \* Desensitization of children to television violence. Cline, Victor B. ; Croft, Roger G. ; Courier, Steven Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, Vol 27(3), Sep 1973, 360-365