

Preventing children from negative effects of modern television

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While parents are busy dealing with their own business, children are entertaining themselves with watching television. They are switching from one channel to another until they decide to watch an exciting horror film or an action movie where the main brave and fearless characters are chasing each other, killing their enemies and doing different dangerous things. Later, when playing with each other at home or with other children from neighborhood in a yard or at school, they may often use inappropriate lexicon and show cruelty towards other children or even adults and their parents. In such cases parents are wondering where it comes from and are usually blaming school or other children. But, in reality their children are just imitating the behavior of the movie characters they saw previously on the TV screen and which managed to become their role models. The thing is that such an unpleasant situation could be improved if parents paid more attention to their children.

Besides the influence of modern television on the children's conciseness and the process of establishing the social and cultural norms of the young generation, a number of other adverse effects may be observed. For example, excessive television watching is often connected with such serious conditions as Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD) and Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD). It is believed that the abundance of visual effects and background noises, and the rapid change of scenes may affect badly the nervous system of a child and contribute to the dispersion of attention and hyperactivity problems. Besides, it was found that children addicted to the television watching may suffer from obesity and diabetes as they are vigorously motivated by the TV advertisements to consume the food

containing high level of fat and sugar. On the other hand, television is believed to perform educative and informative functions as it broadcasts many programs that are targeted on the child audience and are aimed to further the development of the child's intellectual faculties and cognitive skills. As we can see, television may be beneficial, but only when it is reasonably used.

That is why a number of measures should be implemented in order to prevent any harmful effects that television may have on the children. To begin, it must be said that live communication between people is one of the issues that suffer the most because of the massive expansion of television. Nowadays people spend more time watching TV shows rather than communicating with their friends, neighbors or their children. Parents should speak more to their children about the everyday issues, share their feelings, emotions and thoughts. It will allow them to build harmonious and lasting relationship with their children and know more about their life. A popular tendency for families to spend time together while watching television should also be eliminated.

Spending quality time together and practicing different family activities like having barbecue together, playing Frisbee, baseball will make the links between parents and their children more close and strong. Furthermore, it is believed that children that have strong and friendly family relationships are more successful in life as the close family relationship gives them a feeling of self-confidence and a sense of psychological security. Secondly, parents are highly advised not to overuse television as a babysitter for their children.

Lots of parents firmly believe that there is a great number of various TV shows and programs, produced for children of different age groups ranging from the most little to the teenagers, which are informative and educational. Besides, they regard it as the best way to keep their children busy and entertained. However, replacing live communication with the surrounding world with the television programs disturbs child's ability of cognitive perception.

That is to say, children are supposed to learn using their hands and bodies by touching and smelling things that are surrounding them. What is more, using television as a supervisor for children reduces their adaptability skills and makes children less flexible and more sensitive to any changes in the surrounding environment. Obviously, parents should take into consideration that due to the young age children are vulnerable to any kind of information or messages they get from television. Therefore, parents should explain to their children what they see on the screen and make them analyze critically information they get. Otherwise, it may lead to the distortion of the information and the wrong interpretation of messages that a child receives from the television programs and advertisements.

As for advertisements, children should be taught to recognize the real intentions of advertising companies in order to minimize their influence on children's desires and wishes. The thing is that children may easily succumb to the temptation to buy something that is vigorously promoted by mass media. Thirdly, limiting time spent on the television watching will prevent children from many adverse effects that excessive television watching may

have on their physical and mental health. In spite of the fact that modern technologies are more reliable and safe to use in comparison to those that were used few decades ago, they still may affect badly the nervous system of a child and become a serious obstacle for a child's natural development. It was found that background noises and abundance of visual techniques produced by television contribute to the hyperactivity and attention problems. In addition, stringent restrictions help establish discipline and teach children to prioritize as they have to choose which programs they want to watch.

Moreover, limiting time of television watching will give a child more spare time to take up other activities or hobbies that would be more useful and fruitful. Otherwise, having a free access to the television at any time, a child may later appear to suffer from TV addiction. Furthermore, parents should control the TV shows and programs their children watch. It would be a good idea for them to watch at least few of the child's favorite television programs to make sure they do not contain inappropriate information. It is a common knowledge that the majority of TV shows contains scenes of violence, sex and drug abuse.

Moreover, lots of programs that are claimed to be originally oriented on the child audience may include such type of information. Supervising children in their choice of what to watch may be quite important. Firstly, it will help cope with youth violence and disobedience. Opposition may claim that there is an every likelihood that children may observe violence displays in the real life, for example, at school, but still they are not as numerous as on the television

screen. Secondly, preventing children from watching advertisements promoting cigarettes or alcohol will help reduce smoking and alcohol drinking rate among adolescents, which is one of the burning issues nowadays. Besides, while supervising shows and programs that a child is usually watching, parents have an opportunity to understand better interests and hobbies of their infant.

Final step that parents are highly recommended to take is to encourage their children to practice different sport activities and spend more time with their friends. As it was mentioned, particular television programs may be informative and educative, but they are not able to replace the live interaction with other children. Practicing some kinds of sport activities, especially the ones that require work in team, helps not only keep fit, but also improve social and communication skills, self-confidence, and develop team spirit. Children become more organized as they are responsible for their time management and have to combine their studies and sport activities. It was found that people who spend their quality time doing physical exercises are healthier and more satisfied with their life than those who spend their time watching TV. In addition, it helps children avoid such conditions as obesity and diabetes, which are usually a result of propaganda of fast-food and sweets.

Actually, it was observed that many students spend most of their time behind a TV or computer screen instead of doing their homework. That is why parents should motivate children to focus on their studies and reduce time that is usually spent on television watching. Thus, it may help improve a

child's general performance at school and prevent his or her learning curve from descending. To conclude, different measures should be taken into action in order to prevent children from the negative effects that television may have. Parents should spend more quality time with their children, discussing everyday issues and practicing different family activities. They should also control programs and shows their children are watching in order to make sure they do not contain inappropriate information.

Parents may also explain children what they seen on the screen and teach them to analyze critically information they get. Finally, encouraging children to practice sport activities or focus more on the studies may be more beneficial than television watching. Overall, excessive television watching may lead to such undesirable effects as physical conditions, youth violence and aggression outbursts, discipline problems, communication problems. That is why, reasonable usage of television is the best way to protect children and avoid any negative effects.