

Television – Friend or Foe?



How much time do you and your family spend watching TV?

Tick the number of hours you watch TV on most days:

- ◊ 1 Hour or Less
- ◊ 2 – 3 Hours
- ◊ 3 – 4 Hours
- ◊ 4 Hours or More



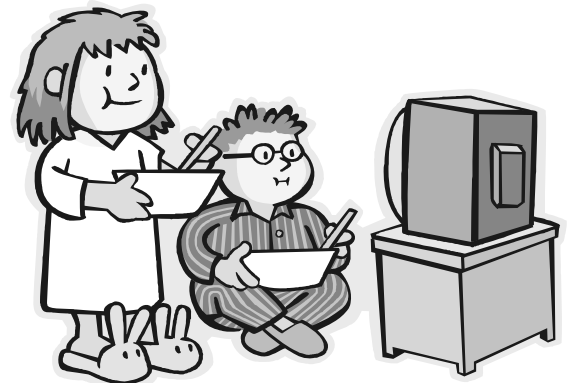
Did You Know ...

- ◊ 49% of Bermuda teens report spending 3 or more hours per day, watching TV.
- ◊ By the time a child reaches 18 years of age, they will have spent 18,000 hours in front of the TV as opposed to 12,000 hours in the classroom.
- ◊ Studies indicate that the risk of being overweight increases between 1 to 2% for each hour of TV a person watches a day.
- ◊ Among adults the incidence of weight gain is 4 times greater for those who watch 3 more hours of TV a day, compared to those who watch 1 hour or less.
- ◊ Recent studies indicate that children and adults who watch 3 or more hours of TV a day are more likely to have elevated blood cholesterol levels than individuals who watch 1 hour or less.
- ◊ On average, adolescents who spend over 5 hours a day watching TV have lower test scores than other teens.
- ◊ Watching TV can result in sleep loss.

What Can Parents Do?

- ◊ **SET LIMITS** – Limit viewing to 1 to 2 hours a day as this will also limit your own TV time.
- ◊ **PLAN VIEWING** – Plan your viewing time more carefully to get the most enjoyment from TV
- ◊ **WATCH TV WITH YOUR CHILD** – To discuss difficult topics such as love, sex, and family life, watch TV with your child.
- ◊ **DISCUSS REAL ISSUES** – Explain the difference between reality and television as some programs provide unreal solutions to real-life problems.
- ◊ **DISCUSS COMMERCIALS** – Explain how commercials may make viewers want some things not needed as well as things that may be harmful to them.
- ◊ **DON'T ALLOW PRIVATE TELEVISION'S** – You will have no control over what or how much time your child spends watching TV. It may also interfere with the amount of sleep your child gets.

TV should not be a child minder. It can be an unwelcome guest, teaching your child lessons that you do not agree with.



How much sleep do you and your family get?

Tick the number of hours of sleep you get most nights:

- ◊ 7 or Less
- ◊ 7 – 8 Hours
- ◊ 9 – 10 Hours
- ◊ 10 – 12 Hours

Getting all the sleep a child needs will help them feel great and do well at school.



The Importance of Sleep

Adequate sleep improves mental efficiency, memory, and productivity.

- ◊ Overtiredness makes a child irritable, grouchy, more prone to fight and argue, and unable to concentrate in school.
- ◊ Lack of sleep can affect alertness and judgment which can result in more bike accidents.
- ◊ 62% of Bermuda teens report getting less than 9 hours of sleep a night.
- ◊ 13% of Bermuda teens report getting less than 7 hours of sleep a night.
- ◊ Growth hormone is largely secreted during sleep, simulating an “anti-aging” effect.
- ◊ Sleeping also acts as a brain antioxidant.



What Can Parents Do?

- ◊ **DETERMINE HOW MUCH SLEEP YOUR CHILD NEEDS** – The amount of sleep each child needs varies. In general a child needs 10 – 12 hours sleep, a teen needs 9 – 10 hours, and an adult 7 – 8 hours.
- ◊ **DECIDE ON A SUITABLE BETIME** – Establish a set bedtime so your child knows what time they are expected to be in bed. The parent’s attitude to bedtime should be pleasant but firm. Some working parents feel guilty about working and may find it difficult to establish an early bedtime.
- ◊ **HAVE QUALITY TIME** – Reading to, or encouraging your child to read before bedtime can be an ideal way of rounding out your child’s day. Most children enjoy having the undivided attention of a parent, even for just a few minutes.

People Who Suffer From Fatigue...

- ◊ Find their immune system depressed and are more prone to illnesses.
- ◊ Are more likely to be depressed or unhappy with life.



To Improve Sleep Habits...

- ◊ Avoid late hours.
- ◊ Avoid late meals.
- ◊ Be physically active daily.
- ◊ Expose yourself to sunlight.