

Children and Media

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WATS

Television's Impact on Children's Development

- **Academic: **Educational**** TV can improve knowledge of numbers and letters
 - Non-educational TV viewing in early childhood leads to lower grades in secondary school
- **Cognitive:** TV viewing can lead to delays in cognitive development, and poor executive functioning
- **Language: **Educational**** TV can improve vocabulary
 - There are no other language advantages of television, and non-educational TV can harm language development
- **Physical:** TV increases body mass index (BMI), leads to obesity, and leads to delays in gross and fine motor skills
- **Social:** Higher TV viewing leads to higher aggression and lower social skills

Television's (as Drama) Impact on Development

Media and Young Minds
American Academy of Pediatrics
<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/138/5/e20162591>

- Well-designed television programs, such as Sesame Street, can improve cognitive, literacy, and social outcomes for children 3 to 5 years of age
- Unfortunately, most "educational" media (on television and apps on computers and phones):
 - Have no evidence of improving children's development
 - Target only rote academic skills
 - Use little or no input from developmental specialists or educators.
- **NOTE: Cartoons are NOT educational media**

Reducing the Harmful Effect of Screen Media on Children's Development (Canadian Paediatric Society, 2017)

<https://www.cps.ca/en/documents/position/screen-time-and-young-children>

- **3 M's**
 - **Minimize:** Digital media (TV, computers, handsets, etc.) should be minimized
 - Children under 2 years should not be exposed to media (except for video chats)
 - Children 3-5 years should consume less than 1 hour of ****educational**** media each day
 - Non-educational media should be avoided by all children
 - **Mitigate:** Adult or older responsible child co-views digital media to mitigate the risks of digital media usage
 - Ensure the child watches educational programming
 - Explain the difference between fact and fantasy
 - Explain right and wrong behavior
 - **Model:** Adults should model healthy use of media
 - Turn off screens that are not being used
 - Schedule media-free family time