

WAME THE TUBE!

Did You Know?

- In a recent study of 6-13 year olds, children reported using screen media for nearly 5 ½ hours daily.
- Over the past 30 years, the obesity rate has quadrupled for children ages 6–11 years (from 4 to 19 percent).
- Over two-thirds of 8-18 year olds have a TV in their bedroom and nearly a third have a computer in the bedroom (20% have Internet access in their rooms).
- Children ages 8-12 years old see an average of 30,000 advertisements each year. An estimated 10 billion dollars a year is spent on food and beverage advertising aimed at youth.
- Two-thirds of 8-18 year olds live in homes where the TV is usually on during meals, and half live in homes where the TV is left on most of the time.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends:

- No screen time for children under age two
- Limiting screen time to 1-2 hours of quality programming for children 2+ years
- No screen media in the bedroom

School-Age Children (K-5)

TV/Screen Time Facts, Guidelines, and Parent Tips

Why It Matters...

There is a connection between hours spent watching TV and childhood obesity.

Children with TV sets in their bedroom watch more TV, snack more and are more likely to be overweight than those with no TV in their bedroom.

Over 90% of food advertisements aimed at youth are for products high in fat, sugar, or sodium. This advertising influences preferences, purchases and consumption.

Middle school students who watch more TV, play more video games, and have more cable channel availability during the week are more likely to do worse in school compared to students with less screen time exposure and cable availability.

Sharon Glick



The majority of obese children, ages 5–10 years, already have signs of heart disease.

Exposure to media violence through TV, music videos, cartoons, video games and DVDs is significantly associated with bullying, aggressive behavior and violence. Nearly two-thirds of all programming contains violence and children's shows contain the most violence.

"Screen time" = TV, videos, video games, computer use, DVDs etc.

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What to Do!

Tips for parents to reduce screen time:

- **Monitor your child's TV/screen time viewing:** Determine how much they are watching, what they are watching and how they are watching.

- **Set limits on the amount of TV your child watches.** Be firm. Limit children's screen-time to an hour or two daily.

- **Watch with your kids:** Talk about inappropriate content as well as advertising claims. TV can provide a great learning opportunity when you talk with your kids about what they see.

- **Do not allow your child to have a TV set in his bedroom.** When a child watches TV in his or her own bedroom, it is harder for parents to guide program choices. Kids may get less sleep, causing them to be tired at school the next day.

- **Make meal time family time...** turn the TV off and encourage more cooking together, talking and social interaction.

- **If TV causes arguments or fights, simply unplug it for a while.** Children can be creative when TV is not taking up all their time and attention.

- **Talk to your child about Internet safety.** Explain that people they meet online are not always who they say they are; what they read may not be true; and what they write may not be private.

- **Be a good role model.** Keep a check on your own viewing habits...limit your own screen use. Your kids pick up habits from you!

Sharon Glick

***"All television is educational television.
The question is: What is it teaching?"***

-Nicholas Johnson, University of Iowa law professor,
and author of *How to Talk Back to Your Television*

*This flyer was developed by the Montana Nutrition and Physical Activity Program with the help of many sources. These sources and many other resources and tips for families can be found on our website at www.montanana.org.

For questions please contact Cathy Costakis at (406) 994-5734 or e-mail her at costakis@montana.edu.

This publication was supported through a cooperative agreement (CDC-RFA-DPO8-805) with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity and through the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the US Department of Health and Human Services. The Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services attempts to provide reasonable accommodations for any known disability that may interfere with a person participating in any service, program or activity of the Department. Alternative accessible formats of this document will be provided upon request.



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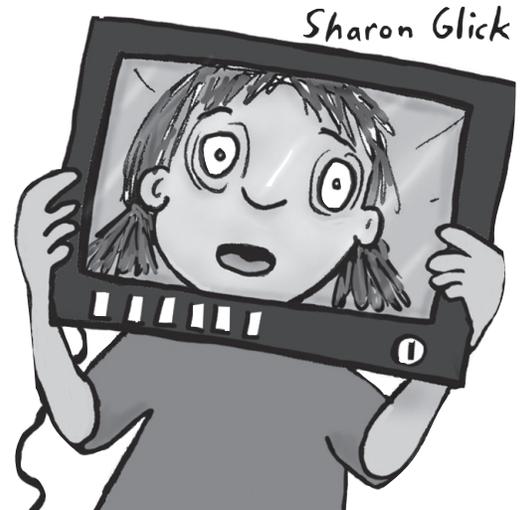
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