



Facing The Facts:

Reports show that children spend an average of 6 hours 32 minutes per day with various media, including television, computers and video gamesⁱ. Parents now more than ever realize the need to put controls in place to help regulate their children's exposure to these stimuli. Read on for more interesting facts about over exposure to media and the potential consequences for our children.

Plugged In: Television

- Children in the United States watch more than three hours of TV daily.ⁱⁱ
- The American Academy of Pediatrics does not recommend television for children age 2 and younger, and no more than 1-2 hours daily for older children limited to educational nonviolent programs^{xiii}
- Two out of three children under six live in homes where the TV is left on at least half the time, even if no one is watching.ⁱⁱⁱ
- By the time children complete elementary school, the average child will witness more than 100,000 acts of violence on TV.^{iv}
- Childhood exposure to media violence predicts young adult aggressive behavior regardless of the intellectual capabilities, social status, or parenting style.^v
- 25% of all MTV videos contain alcohol or tobacco references.^{vi}
- According to a study conducted by the National Institute for Health, The Center for Disease Control, John Hopkins University and The University at Buffalo, the incidence of obesity was highest among children who watched four or more hours of television per day.^{xvi}

Virtually Hooked: Internet & Video Game Addiction

- Young people on average clock 17.7 hours per week online, not including time spent sending and receiving emails^{vii}
 - In it's first three months on the market, **Grand Theft Auto: Vice City** sold over 4.4 million copies.^{viii} In this game, players have the opportunity to engage prostitutes, have sex with them, and beat them to death to avoid paying for sex.
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- Nearly half of kids surveyed go online at least four times a week, and 20% go online every day, according to a recent report by American Online and Digital Marketing Services.^{ix}
- By 2007, 57% of kids aged 11 and under will be online.^x
- Among 7th through 12th graders surveyed, more than half play video games by themselves.^{xi} In addition, over dependence on video games can foster social isolation.^{xii}

Children's Learning and The Media

- Researchers and educators are finding that electronic entertainment is leading to a disturbing decline in imaginative play among children.^{xiii}
- Children who play more imaginatively generally develop better vocabulary skills than children who engage in less imaginative play.^{xiv}
- Good early play skills predict the ability to be creative and generate alternative solutions to everyday problems.^{xv}
- In one experimental study, reducing the amount of television children watched by half improved Performance IQ, and increased the amount of time children spent reading.^{xvi}
- Of children watching at least 10 hours of television per week, school performance declined proportionately to the amount of television they watched.^{xvi}

ⁱ Roberts DF, Foehr UG, Rideout VJ, Brodie M. *Kids and Media at the New Millennium: A Comprehensive National Analysis of Children's Media Use*. Menlo Park, CA: The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation Report; 1999.

ⁱⁱ American Academy of Pediatrics, Television & the family, accessed @www.aap.org

ⁱⁱⁱ Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, "Zero to Six: electronic media in the lives of infants, toddlers and preschoolers", Fall 2003

^{iv} Center for Media Education, Children & Television FAQ, accessed at http://www.cme.org/children/kids_tv/c_and_t.html

^v L. Rowell Huesmann, Jessica Moise-Titus, Cheryl-Lynn Podolski, and Leonard D. Eron, "Longitudinal Relations Between Children's Exposure to TV Violence and Their Aggressive and Violent Behavior in Young Adulthood: 1977 - 1992," *Developmental Psychology*, Vol. 39, No. 2. (March 2003)

^{vi} DuRant RH, Rom ES, Rich M, Allred E, Emans SJ, Woods ER. Tobacco and alcohol use behaviors portrayed in music videos: a content analysis, *Am J Public Health*, 1997;87:1131-1135

^{vii} Harris Interactive and Teenage Research Unlimited, "Swimming in Media", (2000) survey

^{viii} CNN.com, "Vice City Sales top 'Toy Story,' 'Indiana Jones' and 'Gone with the Wind'" January 27, 2003

^{ix} America Online/Digital Marketing Services, Inc., "Youth Wired", September 29, 2003

^x Jupiter Research, "Consumer Survey Report: Music 2003", July 2003

^{xi} Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, *Communication Initiative*: "Key Facts: Children and Video Games, Fall 2002

^{xii} National Institute on Media and the Family, *Effects on Video Game Playing on Children*, accessed at www.mediafamily.org/facts

^{xiii} Kalb, C., Sutherland, B., Adams, J., Raymond, J., "The End of Make Believe", *Newsweek*, August 25, 2003

^{xiv} Singer, D. Yale University, "Playing Ye Olde Way", *Newsweek*, September 8, 2003

^{xv} Russ, S., Case Western Reserve University, "The End of Make Believe", *Newsweek*, August 25, 2003

^{xvi} National Institute on Media and the Family, "A Normative Study Of Children's Media Habits", (Gadberry, 1980), (Jan 2002)