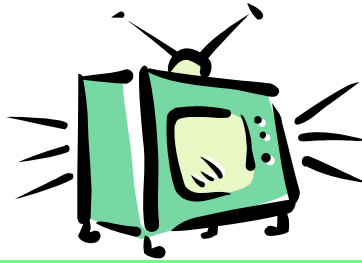


# TV TurnOFF Week

April 25– May 1, 2005



*In many families the television seems to be a substitute for, rather than the facilitation of dialogue among people. A "fast" from television could be a wise thing.*

- Pope John Paul II

As an abundance of evidence makes clear, our television habits have serious negative consequences. ***Excessive TV-watching cuts into family time, harms our children's ability to read and do well in school, encourages violence, and promotes obesity and sedentary lifestyles.***

Even though studies show that reading and proficiency scores are dramatically lower for children who watch more than 4 hours of television daily, ***American children continue to spend more time watching TV than any other waking activity.***

A full 40% of Americans report always or often watching television while eating dinner—many where family members watch different programs in different rooms.

And there's more cause for concern: 3,500 research studies over 40 years have made clear the ***link between watching media violence and committing acts of violence.*** Additionally, TV desensitizes viewers to real-life violence, and dulls emotional response to violence and its victims.

There is something you can do: start by participating in TV-Turnoff Week. Most parents notice that their children enjoy more creative play time, read more, argue less, and spend more time talking with them and siblings when the TV is off. Who knows? The week may go so well that you decide to commit yourself to reducing (or even eliminating) the time the TV is on at your house!



*Television is no substitute for a parent. It doesn't help develop language skills; it's simply background noise.*

- First Lady Laura Bush

## FAST FACTS

- ☑ American children watch nearly 3 hours of TV daily
- ☑ 40% of American households always or often have TV on during dinner
- ☑ TV is on in a US household almost 8 hours a day
- ☑ 50% of US homes have 3 or more TV's
- ☑ Children spend more time watching TV than in school
- ☑ Children spend a mere 5.5 minutes a day in meaningful conversation with a parent

*Given our national television habit, it is no surprise that we are raising the most sedentary and most overweight generation of youngsters in American history. As they grow, these children will run increased risks of diabetes, heart disease, and other health problems -- unless they turn off the tube and become physically active.*

US Surgeon General David Satcher, M.D., Ph.D.

*Students who read for pleasure scored almost 10% higher on proficiency tests than those who never read for fun.*



I really didn't like TV-Turnoff Week, but I did notice that my grades went up and I was in a good mood all week.  
2nd grader

## TV-Turnoff Tips



- Be selective about what you watch
- Do not use television as a reward
- Limit TV time
- Move the TV to a less prominent location
- Listen to music or the radio
- Read aloud to your children
- Play board games, chess or checkers
- Exercise, hike, take bike rides
- Make frequent visits to the Library
- Write letters to family and friends
- No TV in your child's bedroom
- No TV on school nights
- No TV before school
- No TV during meals
- Designate a day of the week as "No TV Day"
- Cancel cable and use the money saved for books, craft supplies, classes, or "field trips"
- Visit [www.tvturnoff.org](http://www.tvturnoff.org) for more ideas.

*And don't worry if at first children claim to be bored... boredom passes and usually leads to creativity!*



I had a great time without TV... so why don't we turn it off the other 51 weeks a year?

3rd grader



### MORE FAST FACTS

- ☑ In one year an American child will have watched over 1,000 hours of TV. During that time s/he will have seen:
  - Over 11,100 violent acts
  - Almost 900 murders
  - 40,000 commercials
- ☑ Says Ted Turner: "TV is the single most significant factor contributing to violence in America."
- ☑ Television's emphasis on image, speed, and emotion limits the skills crucial to reading success: comprehension, analysis, questioning, and rational thinking.