


Tips to Tame the Tube



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▶ Time

Limit the amount of time your kids watch.

Experts recommend no more than 10 hours a week.

Plan your viewing carefully based on time limits you establish.

Emphasize what the family or children can do with time not spent watching television (family activities, outdoor play, creative projects).

▶ Train

Train your kids to be choosy viewers.

Show them how to use program guides and schedules.

Encourage them to make conscious choices about what to view and ask them why they have made this selection.

Be clear in advance if there are any shows you deem off-limits.

▶ Talk

Talk to your kids about what they are seeing on TV.

Ask questions that encourage critical viewing. (Do you think this would happen in real life? How would you handle this situation?)

If possible, watch programs with them and provide appropriate information to put the program in perspective. Don't assume they understand what they see.

Television viewing is part of your children's experience. Ask them about programs they have seen, how it made them feel, how it made them think differently about themselves, their lives, their world.

▶ Teach

Teach your kids lessons based on the shows they watch.

Plan viewing around certain topics or issues your children have shown interest in.

Plan follow-up activities or books which reinforce a program's messages and add value to your children's television viewing experience.

▶ Turn

Turn to public television.

Choose the programs your children watch as carefully as you would the toys they play with or the books they read.

Public television offers the best shows for following these tips.

Education experts agree that the content and presentation of public television programs are educational and enriching.