

[IMAGE]

## Reality TV vs. the Reality of TV

With gimmicks like "reality TV" and catchy slogans such as "Must See TV," it's no wonder kids spend more time in front of the tube than in school.\* Yet, numerous studies have shown that excessive television watching in childhood can lead to attention and behavioral problems later on. And now, viewers can add sleep difficulties to that growing lineup of television-viewing troubles.

Researchers studied a sample of 750 mothers and their children at different stages of development - early and middle adolescence, and early adulthood - to assess the television and sleeping habits of the children during these times.

Adolescents who watched three or more hours of television a day were at increased risk for developing sleeping difficulties as young adults; the risk was significantly lower in those whose viewing habits decreased to one hour a day or less.

So parents, take heed: Turn off the "idiot box," and encourage your kids to engage in other activities, such as reading or playing outdoors. Better yet, why not set the example? Get off the couch, join your kids in a fun activity, and enjoy the reality of family, rather than reality TV.

For more on pediatric health, visit

[www.chiroweb.com/find/archives/pediatrics](http://www.chiroweb.com/find/archives/pediatrics).

*Reference:*

Johnson JG, Cohen P, Kasen S, et al. Association between television viewing and sleep problems during adolescence and early adulthood. *Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med*. 2004;158:562-568.

\*Sege and Dietz, 1994. [www.limitv.org/stats.htm](http://www.limitv.org/stats.htm).

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