

Student Media Awareness to Reduce Television (SMART)



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Purpose of the Curriculum



Primary goal is to reduce the amount of time children spend watching television and videotapes/DVDs, and playing video and computer games.

Television Facts



- On average, kids spend nearly 4 hours a day watching television, DVDs and videotapes, and almost 2 additional hours on the computer (outside of schoolwork) and playing video games.
- Nearly 70% of 8 to 18 year-olds have a TV in their bedroom.
- In 53% of households of 7th- to 12th-graders, there are no rules about TV watching.

What the Research Tells Us About the Effects of Too Much TV



- A child's ability to learn is negatively affected.
 - Less time to read
 - Less homework completion
 - Lower test scores and grades
- Children become less sensitive to violence and behave more aggressively.
 - An average, a child will see 200,000 violent acts and 16,000 murders on TV by age 18
 - Use aggression to solve conflicts and problems
 - More tolerant of violence (numbed by it)
 - Difficulty understanding the consequences of violence

What the Research Tells Us About the Effects of Too Much TV



- Youth have a greater risk for alcohol and tobacco use at an earlier age
 - Alcohol is the most common beverage seen on TV and is most often portrayed in a “favorable” light
 - Kids who watch more TV start smoking at an earlier age. The relationship between television viewing and age of starting smoking was stronger than that of peer smoking, parental smoking, and gender
- Children are less active and consume high calorie foods in front of the screen
 - Television viewing is a double-edge sword

What the Research Tells Us About the Effects of Too Much TV



- **Television viewing results in an increased desire for material possessions.**
 - The average child views over 30,000 TV commercials each year
- **May affect self-esteem and body image.**
 - Unrealistic body images
- **Increased risk for unhealthy sexual behaviors**
 - Overexposure to sexual content
 - Increased risk for early sexual behavior

Sources: Fouts, 2000; Stanford School of Medicine, 1996, 2004; Collins, 2004;

Theoretical Foundation



Social Cognitive Theory demonstrates that learning and behavior change occur through the interplay of the following factors:

- Personal – change in values
- Behavioral – change in actual behaviors
- Environmental – overcoming environmental barriers

How to use this curriculum



Intended to be used over the course of the school year.

- ✓ **FALL** – students gain a greater awareness of their TV viewing habits and participate in a 10-day TV Turn-Off.
- ✓ **WINTER** – students learn to be selective TV viewers.
- ✓ **SPRING** – students practice promoting healthy viewing for themselves and others.

Incorporating the TV Reduction Theme in Other Curriculum Areas



- **Writer's Workshop** – create television reduction newsletters, or write and illustrate how stories about the harmful effects of television for younger classes.
- **Math** – graph the amount of time spent viewing television at the beginning of the year, then compare at the conclusion of the curriculum.

Incorporating the TV Reduction Theme in Other Curriculum Areas



- **Creative Arts** – drawing, story-telling, and skits can help students practice their new skills for handling the temptation to watch TV.
- **Science** – use the inquiry or scientific method to pose the question, “What happens when we turn off TV, videos, and computer games for 10 days? Collect data in the form of a journal or graphs depicting participation rates, homework scores, or other related items, then report the results.

National TV Turn-Off Week



- **April 20-26, 2009**
- **September 20-26, 2009**
- **April 19-25, 2010**
- **September 19-25, 2010**
- www.tvturnoff.org



Questions?