



Make The Rules

Raising happy, healthy, and productive children takes guidance. Use the following tips in conjunction with the V-Chip, cable controls, or satellite controls and the TV Ratings to stay in control of your child's television consumption.

LAY THE GROUNDWORK

Get started on the path toward media management.

CREATE A BALANCE

Happy children lead well-balanced lives, so include a variety of indoor and outdoor activities in your child's day.

TEACH YOUR VALUES

Make sure that your child understands what your values are, and look for programs that reinforce those values.

SET PRIORITIES

Schedule TV time so that it does not interfere with homework, family time, and chores. Reinforce this idea by making sure that work is done before you turn on the TV.

CHOOSE AGE-APPROPRIATE PROGRAMS

Find the programs that include what you want your child to see on TV: educational material, strong values, age-appropriate lessons, and quality entertainment.

LEARN WHAT'S AGE-APPROPRIATE

Learn what program content is appropriate for your child with this grid.

PREVIEW THE PROGRAM

Watch a show without your child before you add it to his or her TV schedule. Ask yourself if you like the way the characters are portrayed, and check to see how issues like sex, religion, and race are addressed.

BUILD YOUR OWN LIBRARY

Record or buy the shows you want your child to see. Having your own library of family-friendly programming is a lifesaver during busy times.

WATCH TV TOGETHER

Make TV viewing a family activity.

MAKE TIME FOR FAMILY.

Schedule TV time for the whole family, and choose programming that everyone can enjoy. Use the time to relax, get together after a long day, and learn something new. Pass on the TV during meals to encourage your family to focus on conversation.

PUT THE TV IN THE FAMILY ROOM.

Once the TV is in the main gathering place, you'll have an easier time monitoring and explaining what's on.

TALK ABOUT IT

Talk with your child about what they see on TV, and address any concerns or misperceptions they may have.

TEACH RESPONSIBLE VIEWING

One of your goals as a parent is to raise a responsible, independent child who can choose quality programming and manage his or her own TV time. Here are some pointers to help you raise a media-savvy child.

TEACH YOUR VALUES

Make sure that your child understands what your values are, and help him or her identify programs that reinforce those values.

START A DIALOGUE

Talk with your child about what he or she sees on TV. Ask questions about how characters are represented and what behaviors are portrayed as normal. Ask your child how a program makes him or her feel, and encourage your child to ask his or her own questions.

HELP THEM CHOOSE

Help your child choose his or her TV programs wisely. Demonstrate how you look for TV shows with topics that interest you, and explain how your values play a role when you choose a program.

GIVE 'EM THE LOW-DOWN

Explain how TV differs from reality and how programs and commercials are created to achieve a specific result and elicit a particular reaction from the audience.

CLEAR UP MISUNDERSTANDINGS

Recognize that your child may not understand a TV program the way that you do. Ask your child to retell the story or describe what happened, and check for misunderstandings. Use this as an opportunity to reinforce your values.

SET THEM FREE

Give your child the freedom to create his or her own TV schedule. Encourage him or her to balance TV time with other activities and look for programs that are fun and educational.

USE THESE HELPFUL RESOURCES

Visit the following sites for more information on raising a media-savvy child:

Navigating the Children's Media Landscape:

<https://www.air.org/sites/default/files/CableChildMediaGuide.pdf>

Control with Cable:

Controlwithcable.org

BE A GOOD ROLE MODEL

You are the most important influence in your child's life. Use that power to set a good example by managing your television consumption wisely.

CREATE A BALANCE

Make sure that your free time includes a variety of indoor and outdoor activities.

CHOOSE WISELY

Carefully select and schedule your programming to show your child that you think about what you watch. Talk with your child about what you look for in a TV program.

GET INVOLVED

Make the most out of TV by talking about what you see. Use program content to create a discussion or debate, or play a game of "Guess what I learned on TV?" with your child.

SET YOUR PRIORITIES

Schedule your TV time so that it doesn't interfere with work, family time, and household chores.