

DOES TV CAUSE ATTENTION DEFICITS?

Early television viewing is a risk factor for later attention problems, according to new research. Dimitri Christakis et al. evaluated the records of children participating in a long-term, large-scale health study. By the age of seven, 10 percent of the children had been diagnosed as having attention disorders.

The researchers analyzed the television viewing habits of the children, controlling for environmental factors including cognitive stimulation and emotional support. They report that for every hour of television watched daily between the ages of one and three, the risk of developing attention problems increased by 9 percent. The researchers suggest limiting young children's exposure to television during the formative years of brain development.

"Early television exposure and subsequent attentional problems in children," Dimitri Christakis, Frederick Zimmerman, David DiGiuseppe, and Carolyn McCarty, *Pediatrics*, Vol. 113, No. 4, April 2004, 708-13. Address: Dimitri A. Christakis, Child Health Institute, University of Washington, Bldg. 29, 6200 NE 74th Street, Suite 210, Seattle, WA 98115.

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"Study finds link between television viewing and attention problems in children," news release, Child Health Institute, April 5, 2004.