



4-H School-Age Child Care  
University of California Cooperative Extension

# PARENT STYLES II

## Tips for Busy Parents

### HOW MUCH TV IS OK?

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*Not even the experts agree on how much TV viewing is right for children. But there's no doubt that most children watch too much.*

**TV reduces reading ability and lessens physical activity.** Children lose interest in exploring new and creative activities. It can also contribute to obesity. A steady diet of super heroes and violence can cause aggressive behavior. When children pursue other activities, they improve their personal and communication skills.

#### What can you do?

- ★ *Decide how much TV you're willing to let your child watch.* Then, check television listings and plan together what programs to watch.
- ★ *Watch TV programs, including advertisements, together.* This shows that you really value his opinion.
- ★ *Plan alternative activities.*

★ *Spend time with your child at the library or book store.* Collect items like games and science materials. Make it a point to learn about them together.

★ *Set viewing limits.* Establish viewing guidelines. Rule out TV at certain times of the day.



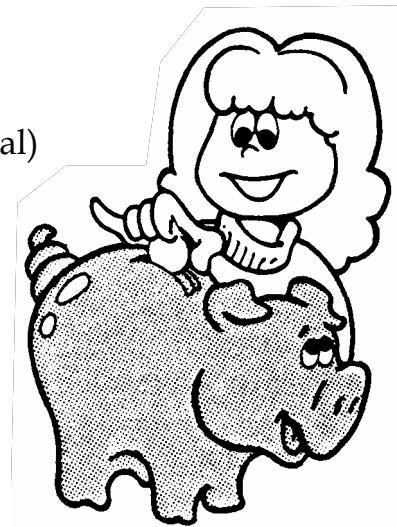
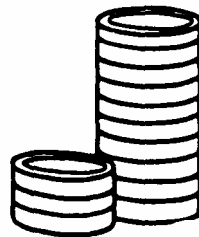
**Resource:** Adapted from National Association for Family and Community Education, "*Children and Television*" and the UWEX "*Family Times*" Program.

## *PAY PER VIEW*

***School-agers and other family members can learn to be "choosy" TV viewers. Try this activity together and decide ahead of time what is worth watching and what isn't.***

### WHAT YOU NEED:

- ☆ A "piggy" bank
- ☆ Colored poker chips or play money (optional)



### WHAT TO DO:

- ★ Put the piggy bank on the television set. Explain to your family that each person must now pay for the television programs he or she watches.
- ★ Decide how many hours should be spent watching TV each week, and how much it will cost for each half hour of viewing. Set up a "sliding fee scale", based on your child's ability to pay. Elect a family treasurer to collect and tally the money, every few days.
- ★ Decide on something the entire family would like to do, as soon as a certain amount of money is collected.
- ★ **Variation** - Use play money or poker chips
- ★ Assign a numerical value to different colored poker chips. (red = 15; blue = 25; white = 50, etc). Give each person enough play money or poker chips to pay for the number of hours you decided could be spent watching TV.
- ★ When a family member runs out of 'money', he won't be able to watch any more TV that week.

Adapted from University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension "Family Times" Program.