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NEWS RELEASE

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Study Supports Limiting Television Time for Children

In a recent study published in the journal *Pediatrics*, researchers from the University of Texas at Austin and Harvard Children's Hospital found that children who spend more time watching television spend less time playing creatively and less time interacting with family.

Researchers surveyed time use in 2,900 children ages 12 and under around the United States and analyzed all of the children's activities over two 24-hour periods, one randomly chosen weekday and one weekend day. A child's primary caregiver was responsible for entering data into time-use diaries. The researchers compared television use with time spent on homework, reading, creative play, active play, and interaction with parents and siblings. Increased time watching television was associated with decreased time interacting with parents and siblings and playing creatively.

The study also found evidence that supports the television viewing recommendations by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) which states that children under age two should not watch television and children older than two should watch no more than two hours per day. When AAP made these recommendations, little was really known about the television viewing habits of infants and toddlers. The research proves that time spent watching television is negatively related to time spent with parents and siblings engaged in meaningful activities.

In celebration of National TV-Turnoff Week April 21st - 27th, UC Cooperative Extension has compiled research-based information and created many enjoyable family activities for use in observing the week. The information can be accessed by visiting <http://ceplacer.ucdavis.edu>. Additional questions can be directed to program representatives at 530 889-7350.

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