

Top Tips for parents

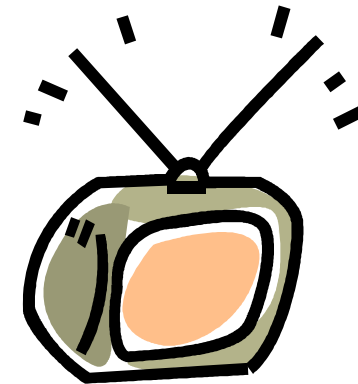
- Keep TV time to 30 minutes MAXIMUM per day for under 2's and 1 hour for 3-5 year olds.
- Keep the TV off when you are not watching it to reduce background noise and limit the access to inappropriate programmes.
- Stop TV use in children's bedroom and before bedtime. Try a story together instead.
- Make sure television programmes are appropriate for your child's age.
- Choose interactive programmes that your child can join in with using songs and signs.
- Watch programmes together. Talk about what you are watching, join in and have fun with songs or dancing. Make TV time 'communication' time. Comment on what is happening in a programme i.e. 'Look at the Lion –he's hiding in the bushes'.
- Use ideas from TV programmes as a part of your child's play. Pretend games are fantastic for children's language and communication development. You could pretend you are in a Jungle like the Lion in a programme by making dens with an old blankets, chairs and use soft toys/ figurines as the animals.

The most important thing for children is adults who listen and talk with them, and give them opportunities to interact and play.

Remember: too much TV can have a negative effect on your child's development and their ability to talk, listen and concentrate.



Redbridge Children's Centres



Television and your children

Redbridge Top Talkers Programme
based on ICAN's Early Language Development Programme (ELDP)

TV is often blamed for children's poor communication and language skills and poor school achievement. This can be true if children are left for long amounts of time on their own in front of the TV.

How can too much television affect my child?

Too much television can have a negative effect on your child's development and their ability to talk, listen and concentrate.

Children need opportunities to learn through interacting with others, when they can copy, ask questions and respond.

- **One way communication**

Children watching TV on their own do not have opportunity to discuss the programme with you and ask questions. They will not be able to take an active part in the learning on the screen

- **Two way communication**

Two-way communication where your children are interacting with somebody whilst watching TV allows them to listen and express ideas which will help to develop their communication and social skills.

Television is only beneficial when you are able to watch television programmes with your children. They may have lots of questions about what they have seen and want you to be able to give answers to help them understand and learn about what has happened.

TV programmes should always be age appropriate for a child. This includes any programmes on in the background when a child is playing nearby. Even daytime television can contain storylines with violence, inappropriate language and sexual content which are inappropriate for children to both see and hear. **Always turn off the television when no one is watching** as con-



Should I let my child have a TV in their bedroom?

Allowing your children to have a TV in their bedroom gives you less control over what and when they watch TV. This may lead your children watching inappropriate programmes for their age or watching TV late at night or for long periods of time.



What about using the TV as a part of bedtime routines?

Try to have a total stop to TV in the bedroom. Don't use TV as a way of your child relaxing before bedtime. This can actually be more harmful for your child's sleep patterns. They may become dependent on having the TV on before they sleep. They will be stimulated rather than soothed. Instead try reading a book together. It is more soothing to a tired child and offers opportunity to share stories and talk together.



My children like watching television, what is the best pro-

High quality educational programmes designed for your child's age group such as some programmes found on CBeebies can give your child opportunity to learn.



During TV time with your child, choose programmes such as 'Come Outside' and 'Mr Tumble' which encourage children to take part in the programme through singing, signing and talking about what they have seen.

Try to choose programmes that can tell your children about their world and community such as a trip to the farm. This helps children to understand their world and make connections.