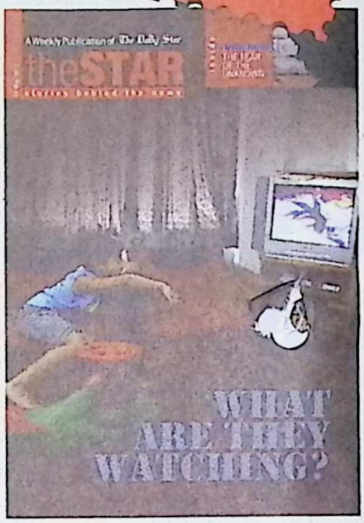



## What Are They Watching?

Children love watching television and movies, but too much of it during developmental years can have a significant negative impact on them.

Children also play video games, watch movies and use computers much more than they did a few years ago. As children do this, they tend to lessen other important activities that aid in development of reading, social and some types of thinking skills. Other concerns for children include that they maintain good eyesight and physical fitness. Studies show that long periods of television may hamper development of the pre-frontal cortex -- the area of the brain responsible for planning, organising and sequencing behaviour for self-control, moral judgment and attention. The visual nature of television or other media stimuli do not develop the part of the brain responsible for language. Children who watch too much television and do not read enough may have trouble paying attention and listening to comprehend language.

It's important that parents take time reading out loud to their children and help them develop their own reading and comprehension skills.

Children who have televisions or computers in their rooms tend to watch more programmes and play on the computer with less supervision. Adults should watch with their children to ensure they view appropriate programmes.

*Shafiqul Alam*
*Tongi, Dhaka.*

★★★

Children and TV often go hand in hand. Too much TV time has been linked to obesity, irregular sleep, behavioural problems, low academic performances, violence and less time for play. It is important for parents to understand the effects of too much screen time — and how to enforce reasonable limits. Some ways we can keep TV from dominating our children's lives are: keeping the TV off during family meal times, making conversation a priority at home, reading to children, not using TV as a reward or punishment, getting TV out of children's bedrooms and encouraging active recreational activities such as sports, games, hobbies and music.

*Zahidul Hasan*
*Motijheel, Dhaka.*




PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

★★★

In response to the last line of the feature, may I politely ask how bad is bad enough?

*Rezaul Karim*
*Mirpur, Dhaka*

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