

Pastoral thoughts on television and kids at Broadway

Here is some information from a 2010 study by the University of Michigan:

- *TV viewing among kids is at an eight-year high. On average, children ages 2-5 spend 32 hours a week in front of a TV—watching television, DVDs, DVR and videos, and using a game console. Kids ages 6-11 spend about 28 hours a week in front of the TV. The vast majority of this viewing (97%) is of live TV.*
- *71% of 8- to 18-year-olds have a TV in their bedroom; 54% have a DVD/VCR player, 37% have cable/satellite TV, and 20% have premium channels.*
- For more, see <http://www.med.umich.edu/yourchild/topics/tv.htm>

Under the best of circumstances, our church programs with children and youth get an average of a couple of hours a week to influence young minds. Some TV viewing is great for kids, and we certainly don't keep our kids from watching TV at our house. But unsupervised TV is like inviting a stranger into your home to influence your kids however they see fit. If our church is statistically average, that gives our ministries 2 hours and "the stranger" 28 hours. Again, if we are statistically average, then I guess I'm about to risk offending 71% of you, but I think allowing a child to have a TV in their bedroom is a really, really bad idea if you are trying to raise a morally intelligent child.

Our church is committed to doing all we can to help you "train up your children in the way they should go." Thanks for partnering with us. If you didn't want your children to be morally intelligent people, you wouldn't be reading this. I just hope you recognize that in the case of most TV programming, "the stranger" does not share our common goal. For more assistance, I recommend <http://www.common sense media.org/> as a resource.