

Fact Sheet



The American Academy of Pediatrics says:

- Children age 2 and under *should not watch any television.*
- Older children should keep television time, including movies and video games, to *less than 2 hours a day.*

Why reduce TV time?

Early childhood is an important time for children to learn and develop the skills they need to grow up healthy!

- Children age 2 and under should not watch any television. During a child's first 2 years critical brain development is occurring. TV can get in the way of exploring, learning, and spending time interacting with parents and others. This is an important time for young children to develop the skills they need to grow!

Children need a lot of physical activity every day to be healthy and happy!

- Children who are physically active are less likely to be overweight, are sick less often, do better in school, sleep better, and are less likely to feel sad, depressed, or stressed.
- Most children watch more than 20 to 30 hours of television every week, or about 3 to 4 hours a day! Time spent watching TV or using the computer is time they could be playing, riding a bike, or having fun with family or friends. Even quiet play like board games or reading is more active than watching TV.
- Being physically active outside of school is more important than ever. Only one in four children has a physical education class at school every day!
- The more time a child spends watching TV, the greater the chance he or she has of becoming overweight. Overweight children face many health problems, such as type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, respiratory (breathing) problems, trouble sleeping, and depression.

Children often eat unhealthy food when watching TV!

- Children often snack on high calorie, high fat, and/or salty foods when watching TV.
- Children eat less healthy meals when eating in front of the TV.

Television advertising impacts children's food choices!

- The average child sees more than 40,000 commercials each year! Most ads targeted at children are for candy, cereal, and fast food.
- Food ads children see on TV can pressure them to choose unhealthy foods to eat. Even watching 10 to 30 seconds of food commercials can affect what a child wants to eat!
- Children who go grocery shopping with their families often ask for unhealthy foods they see in TV ads. The more TV they watch, the more likely they are to ask for these foods.
- Popular TV and movie characters encourage kids to buy and eat unhealthy foods.
- Children as young as 14 months of age will imitate what they see on TV.



www.metrokc.gov/health/reduceTV



How Much TV?

How much TV do your children *REALLY* watch? Think about your family's TV viewing habits. For each of the following questions, **circle** one answer which best fits your family.



1. Does your child have a TV in his or her own room?
A) Yes B) Sometimes C) No

4. Do you talk with your child about what he or she watches on TV?
A) Never B) Sometimes C) Always

2. Does your child watch more than 1 to 2 hours of TV per day?
A) Always B) Sometimes C) Never

5. Do you set limits on the amount of TV your child watches?
A) No B) Sometimes C) Yes

3. Do you have the TV on during meals?
A) Always B) Sometimes C) Never

6. Is your family TV on for more than 2 hours a day?
A) Yes B) Sometimes C) No

Add up the number of **A**, **B**, and **Cs** you chose.
• for each **A** give yourself 3 points
• for each **B** 2 points
• for each **C** 1 point



What is your total score? Total score
Flip card to see how well you did! →

The Live Outside the Box Challenge

**Choose any week and challenge yourself and your family to go "TV FREE."
That's right, no TV for one full week!**

Using the log sheet, each day either write or draw the activities that you choose to do instead of watching TV. Record how much time you spend watching TV. You'll be surprised at how many things you can do and how much fun you can have when you are not watching TV!

Use this log to keep track, and good luck!

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
TV:	TV:	TV:	TV:	TV:	TV:	TV:



Erase and Reuse!

Check out www.tvturnoff.org for fun ideas and support for you and your family during TV Turnoff week!

*Adapted from Live Outside the Box



If your score is between 6 and 8

Congratulations! You are doing a great job of keeping your kids healthy by monitoring the type and amount of TV they watch. Check out the list of 50 Alternatives to TV for more ideas!



If your score is between 9 and 12

Good job. You are doing a good job of keeping your kids healthy by monitoring the type and amount of TV they watch. However, there is more you can do! Check out the Strategies for Reducing TV, and try some you think might work for your family.



If your score is 13 and above

Your kids might be watching too much TV, which can be unhealthy for them. Check out the Strategies for Reducing TV, and try some you think might work for your family. Try some of the 50 Alternatives to TV for fun and healthy ideas your kids can do!



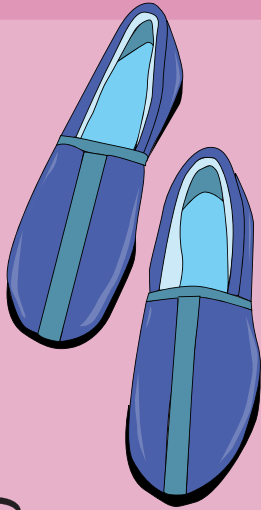
The American Academy of Pediatrics says:

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Alternatives to Watching Television

50 Ways to Live Outside the Box!

Turning off the television means more time for kids to be active!



25 Indoor Activities

1. Act out a story
2. Build a fort out of pillows and blankets
3. Have a carpet picnic
4. Play a card game
5. Play a board game
6. Invent a new game and teach it to a friend
7. Play flashlight tag at night
8. Make shadow puppets on the wall
9. Play charades
10. Read a book
11. Dance to your favorite music
12. Color or paint pictures
13. Do Show and Tell with your friends or family
14. Work on a puzzle
15. Play dress-up
16. Have story-time. Either read a story aloud or make up your own story to tell!
17. Sing songs
18. Do an art project
19. Cook dinner together
20. Make a fruit smoothie together
21. Play indoor basketball
22. Play Twister
23. Build an indoor obstacle course
24. Blow up a beach ball and keep bouncing it in the air as long as possible
25. Holiday coming up? Make cards or decorations for it. If not a holiday, make one up!



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Family Activities

4 Simple Ideas!

1. Indoor Basketball

Who says you can't play basketball indoors? You'll need: a wastebasket, lots of paper (can be old paper or newspapers), and masking tape (optional).

Use the masking tape to make lines on the floor which mark certain distances from the wastebasket. You can also use other paper or clothes to create a line. Scrunch up the paper for balls. Now it is time to start shooting baskets! Begin at the closest line (the easiest) and try to make a basket by throwing the paper ball into the wastebasket. Work farther back to more difficult lines as you get better at making baskets.

2. Walking Scavenger Hunt

Want to make a fun game out of walking around the block with your kids? You don't need anything except your imagination!

Kids love scavenger hunts! As you leave the house for your family walk around the block, give your children a list of things to find. Each scavenger hunt can have different themes, such as "Color" where kids look for a green car, a blue flower, a red door, a black cat, and a white fence. Or try "Size" and look for a big cat and a small cat, a big car and a small car, and a big person and a little person. Have your children think of different themes and things to look for!



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Alternatives to Watching Television

50 Ways to Live Outside the Box!

Turning off the television means more time for kids to be active!



25 Outdoor Activities

1. Walk to the library and get a book
2. Have a picnic
3. Jump rope
4. Walk around the block with friends
5. Watch the sunset with your family
6. Play Frisbee
7. Fly a kite
8. Organize a scavenger hunt
9. Play basketball with a friend
10. Build an obstacle course
11. Play flag football
12. Do 50 jumping jacks
13. Skip



14. Go skateboarding
15. Play catch with friends
16. Play hopscotch
17. Blow bubbles
18. Draw pictures with sidewalk chalk
19. Play follow the leader
20. Play tag
21. Go to the park
22. Use sidewalk chalk to draw different Hopscotch shapes and JUMP!
23. Play Red Light Green Light
24. Play Simon Says
25. Play Duck Duck Goose

Some of these activities can be done inside, too! On rainy days try numbers 23 to 25 in an open space in your home!

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Family Activities

4 Simple Ideas!

3. Obstacle Course

This can be indoor or outdoor fun! You can use normal household items to make an obstacle course, such as chairs, pillows, stuffed animals and pots and pans. Set up an obstacle course around your house using any items you choose. Have rules for each item, such as "hop on one foot around the chair" or "walk backwards 6 steps with the pillow balanced on your head" or "play a song using a spoon and a pot." Have your children think of different challenges they could do at each obstacle.

4. Make and Play With Play Dough

- 2 cups flour
 - 1 cup salt
 - 2 cups water
 - 2 tablespoons oil
 - 4 teaspoons cream of tartar
- Can add drops of food coloring if colors are desired

Combine all ingredients in a large pot. Heat the ingredients on the stove top for 3 to 4 minutes at medium heat, stirring constantly. The ingredients will start to dry up, and form a ball. Remove from heat and knead the dough for a minute or so. To keep it from becoming dry, store the play dough in a zip-lock bag or container. If it starts to dry out, a little water can be added and kneaded into the play dough.



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Quick & Easy Fried Rice

Makes 6 Servings

1. In a large pan, heat oil on medium-high heat. Add onions and rice. Stir and cook until onions are soft, about 5 minutes.
2. Reduce heat to medium; add vegetables and meat to rice mixture. Cook 2 minutes for frozen vegetables and 5-7 minutes for fresh.
3. Spread the mixture out to the sides of the pan, leaving space in the middle for the eggs. Add the eggs and scramble until cooked.
4. Mix the eggs with the rice and vegetables, and then sprinkle with soy sauce.



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Quesadillas

Makes 10 Quesadillas

1. Preheat oven to 350°.
2. Sprinkle about 2 tablespoons of cheese on half of each tortilla.
3. Top cheese with about 2 teaspoons of salsa.
4. Fold each tortilla in half and fasten with toothpick. Place in baking dish and bake in 350° oven for 5 minutes or until cheese melts.

Options:

- Layer thinly sliced tart apples and grated cheese.
- Bake until cheese melts.
- Add jalapeño peppers before heating.
- Add fresh grated vegetables.



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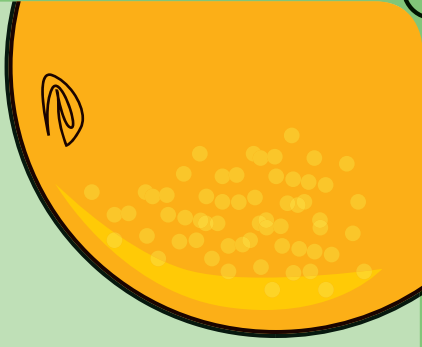
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Recipes for Children and Families to do Together!

Very Berry Smoothie

Makes 4 servings

- 2 cups apple or orange juice
- 1 cup low or non-fat vanilla yogurt
- 2 small (or 1 large) ripe bananas
- 1 cup frozen berries (blackberries, raspberries or strawberries)

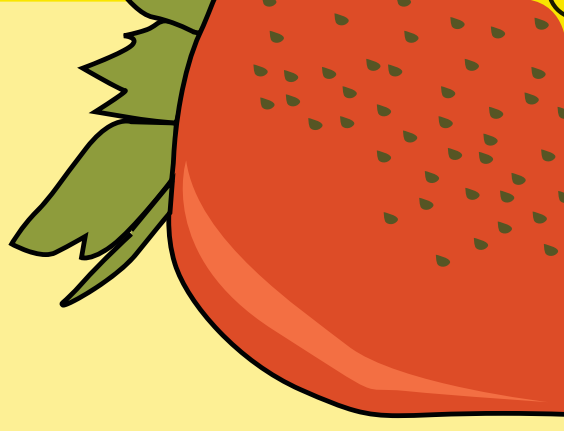


Recipes for Children and Families to do Together!

Fruit Parfait

Makes 4 Parfaits

- 1 cup apples, chopped
- 1 cup strawberries, sliced
- 1 banana, sliced
- 1 cup vanilla lowfat yogurt
- 1 cup lowfat granola
- 1/2 cup raisins



Very Berry Smoothie

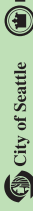
Makes 4 Servings

1. Place all ingredients in a blender.
2. Blend for about 20 seconds or until all ingredients are smooth.



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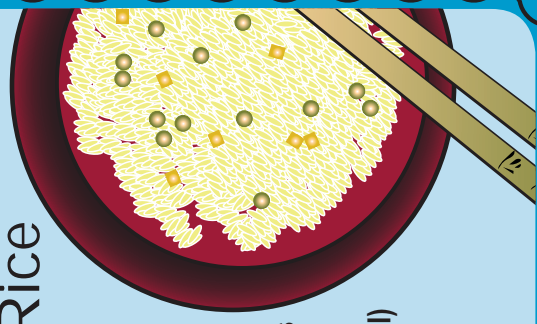
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Recipes for Children and Families to do Together!

Quick & Easy Fried Rice

Makes 6 Servings

- 2 teaspoons vegetable oil
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 3 cups cooked brown or white rice
- 1—10 oz. package frozen mixed vegetables or 2 cups fresh vegetables, chopped
- 1 cup cooked poultry, fish or meat (optional)
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce



Fruit Parfait

Makes 4 Parfaits

Using a clear glass, layer ingredients starting with a layer of one fruit, then a layer of another fruit, then the yogurt, then some granola, then another fruit, and top with raisins. Be creative and layer it the way you like.

Variations:

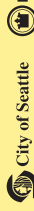
Use any of the following fruits in place of the ones called for in the recipe: kiwi, orange, pear, pineapple, grapes, other berries, apricot, nectarine, peach, plum.

Change the flavor of yogurt for a change in taste: raspberry, lemon, peach, plain.



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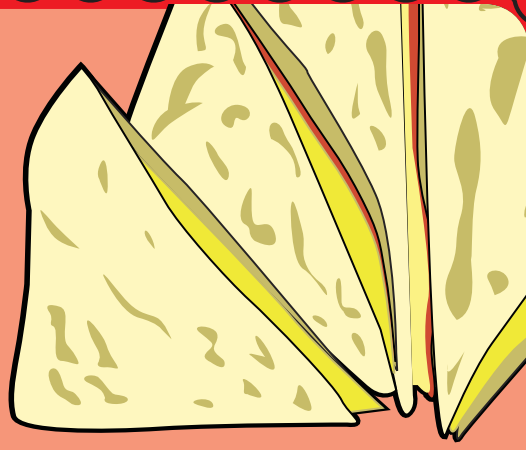
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Recipes for Children and Families to do Together!

Quesadillas

Makes 10 Quesadillas

- 8 oz. cheddar or jack cheese, grated
- 10 corn or flour tortillas
- Salsa or hot sauce



- Don't let TV take away time from what is important: time for family to talk with each other, play together, read together, or to think and imagine about the world.
- Set an example for your kids. Let them see YOU turn off the TV. Then invite them to join you in some activity!
- Try to watch TV *with* your children and to talk with them about what you are watching. You are showing that you care about them and about what they watch.
- Instead of using the TV as a babysitter, try encouraging your kids to do other activities on their own. Think about how careful you are when you choose someone to baby-sit your children—watching too much TV can be dangerous for your kids.

SHOW YOUR CHILDREN HOW FUN LIVING OUTSIDE THE BOX IS!

- Move the TV away from the family room. TV is less tempting when it is not in the main family room.
- from family activities and distracts them from homework, thinking, reading, and sleeping.
- DO NOT HAVE A TV IN YOUR CHILD'S BEDROOM. This is the most important thing you can do. Even if your child has a TV in the bedroom now, you can remove it! It is hard to monitor what TV or how much TV your child is watching. It keeps kids away from family activities and distracts them from homework, thinking, reading, and sleeping.

PUT THE TV WHERE YOU HAVE CONTROL OVER IT

- Don't worry if your children say "I'm bored!" For children, being bored often leads to creativity. It may take a little while, but they will find ways to entertain themselves!
- When your children say they are bored: Start an "Idea Box" full of different activities your family can do instead of watch TV. Have your children decorate the box, and whenever you think of a good idea write it on a slip of paper and place it in the box. Whenever your children say they are bored, send them running to the box for a new activity. Put both family activities and activities your children can do on their own.
- Make a box of "Fun Questions" and choose one for the entire family to answer at each mealtime. For example, "If I could be any animal, what animal would I be and why?"

WHAT IF YOUR KIDS SAY THEY ARE BORED?

Strategies to Reduce Television Viewing in Your Home



Remember, the American Academy of Pediatrics says:

- Children age 2 and under *should not watch any television.*
- Older children should keep television time, including movies and video games, to *less than 2 hours a day.*

SET LIMITS

- Set TV limits for your children. Allow them 2 hours or less of quality television a day.
- At the beginning of the week, give them the TV Guide and together pick out the specific programs they want to watch that week – no more than 2 hours of television, including movies and video games, each day.
- Make certain days of the week "TV-free" days. Try no TV on school nights or no TV on Tuesdays.
- Rather than let your children just "watch TV," ask them specifically what program they will be watching. When the TV show is over encourage them to do something else.
- Have your children complete their homework and chores before watching TV.
- Explain your rules in simple, concrete, and positive words. Instead of saying "You can't watch TV," try "Let's turn off the TV so we can..."
- You don't have to stop watching TV all at once. Try watching a little less each day.



JUST TURN THE TV OFF

- Turn TV off during meals. Meals are a great time for conversation.
- Instead of TV, listen to your favorite music or the radio.