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Should I always share in the TV viewing experience with my baby?

ANSWER: The more you share the viewing experience with your baby, the more she is encouraged to exercise her learning skills. It's always recommended for parents to actively participate in their baby's viewing experience. It's helpful to talk about what your toddler is watching, and how it relates to her everyday life.

Should I always ensure my baby watches age-appropriate TV?

ANSWER: It is definitely recommended that babies and toddlers watch programs that are age-appropriate and tailored to their needs. This type of programming is specifically designed to enhance developmental skills in areas such as creative thinking, math, sensory skills, language, social skills and creative play. Most importantly, always be aware of what's on the TV when your child is present.

Can my child distinguish between fictional characters and reality?

ANSWER: Under the age of three, a toddler's boundaries between fantasy and reality can become blurred. When you watch a program with your child, you can actively point out the difference between fantasy and reality to help him understand this important distinction.

Are there any tips on talking about the program with my toddler?

ANSWER: Talk to your toddler about what he saw on television in the same way you would talk to him about what he saw in the park or at the library. For example, chat about the pretty flowers, fluffy bunnies, noisy birds, story-time, etc. Keep the conversation light and relaxed.

Can television be harmful to my baby or toddler?

ANSWER: When used responsibly, age-appropriate, educational television programming has been associated with very positive results such as improvements in vocabulary. Television also can enlighten your baby's experience by opening up a world of imagination and images that she ordinarily wouldn't see in everyday life.

How much time per day should my baby or toddler watch TV?

ANSWER: There is no exact answer to this very important question. In addition to the length of viewing time, the quality, diversity and appropriateness of the programs also play a huge part in this decision. Most importantly, parents should use their best judgment in determining the amount of time they allow their child to watch TV and they should always try to co-view with their child when possible. Remember, babies' attention span is very short – so bear this in mind when allocating viewing time.

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