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APRIL 2011 | THE SCIENCE BEHIND RAISING MEDIA-SMART KIDS

Screen-Free Week is April 18-24, 2011

The Center on Media and Child Health is proud to be an official endorser of [Screen-Free Week](#), the annual celebration where children, families, schools, and communities turn off screens and turn on life. Please visit www.screenfree.org to learn how you can participate! If going screen-free for a whole week is daunting or impossible, consider participating for one day or cutting out just one kind of screen media for the whole week.

The Science

These studies may be helpful during screen-free week and beyond. Search the [CMCH Database](#) to read more research about children, media and health.

- **Parent rules work.** When children and parents agreed on the presence of household rules limiting television viewing, the children had significantly lower odds of exceeding screen time limits. [see this study](#)
- **Parenting styles that encourage open discussion may fuel media literacy.** Study results showed that parents who seek to avoid conflict used co-viewing and discussions of positive content as mediation methods, and were more likely to use the TV rating system to guide their child's viewing. Alternatively, parents who emphasize the importance of open discussion, talked about both positive and negative television content and encouraged more discussion of TV content in general. [see this study](#)

The Q & A

Learn from questions other parents are asking on [Ask the Mediatrician®](#). In this role, [Dr. Michael Rich](#) -- father, pediatrician, former Hollywood filmmaker and lover of media -- answers questions about: [advertising](#), [bullying](#), [sleep](#), [sexual behavior](#), and more. To submit your question about kids and media, email cmch@childrens.harvard.edu.

- **Q:** Why should my family participate in Screen-Free Week? [Answer](#)
- **Q:** Is there anything wrong with cutting electronic media entirely? [Answer](#)
- **Q:** Is it OK that my toddler doesn't like TV? [Answer](#)

The Tips

Looking for support on how to make it through the week screen-free?

- [Education.com](#) - Search by grade and by topic to find arts & crafts, games, and recipes.
- [TV Turn Off Kit](#) - Ideas on how "re-program" family leisure time.

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