



ISSN 2543-506X

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.12775/CSNME.2017.007>

Received: November 3, 2017 / Accepted: a) December 16, 2017; b) December 17, 2017

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# Social factors determining 5–6 year-old children's absorption of aggressive behavioural patterns from television programs

**Abstract.** The article presents research results concerning social factors determining 5-6-year-olds' absorption of aggressive behavioural patterns from television programs. The study was conducted among pre-school children in three settings: cities, towns and rural areas. The findings refer to the influence of various social factors, such as family, peer community and place of residence, on children's aggressive behaviour.

**Keywords:** the media, aggression, pre-school children.

Aggression among children has found its way to numerous pedagogical dissertations, which have inspected the problem from personal, collective, social, legal, or cultural angles. The broad spectrum of researchers' interest is, on the one hand, rooted in the complexity of problems within school environment, and on the other hand, in the significance of prevalence of aggressive behaviour at educational premises, as well as in the scope of emphasis on its prevention and elimination. In literature, we often encounter interchangeable use of the notions *violence* and *aggres-*

*sion*, which further obscures the depiction of educational processes and is conducive to many divergent definitions. Some derive the origin of the term aggression from the Latin word “*aggressio*” (assault, invasion), others emphasize the factors conditioning its creation, yet others draw attention to the emotional and motivational state of the individual. One definition defines aggression as an intentional action, the purpose of which is to cause harm or cause distress. Such action can be physical or verbal and aggression regardless of whether or not achieving it (Aronson, 2001). Taking into account the multitude of opinions and positions towards the issue and the multifaceted character of accompanied discussions, we wish to adopt Jolanta M. Wolińska’s (2000, p. 14) division into groups of criteria determining aggression:

- presence of emotional components, such as anger, rage;
- intentionality of wrongdoing, the motive of doing evil, harming the addressee of the aggressive act;
- producing specific aftermath, such as suffering;
- modifying the impact of the social context, e.g. related to a social role, social status, a given task, etc.

By referring the above criteria to the media, we may generalise on the basis of aggression consisting of two basic dimensions: social and individual. Due to the volume of the problems, we will focus on the social dimension of aggression, and precisely, on factors determining 5-6 year-olds’ adoption of aggressive behavioural patterns from television programs.

## **Preliminary remarks**

For many years, we have been observing pedagogues adopting learning theories as a basis for the explanation of aggressive behaviour. Predominantly, researchers such as L. Berkowitz, J. Izdebska explain aggression in children by the violence seen in cinema, television and other media. This view is eagerly quoted during discussions on violence. The more so that it is confirmed in the reports of international institutions, e.g. UNESCO (1961), where the importance of the influence of violence in the media on aggressive behaviour is emphasised. This view is based on the concept of Albert Bandura, assuming that children learn aggressive behavior through imitation and modeling. Unfortunately, the theory of learning

only partially explains the mechanisms that determine aggression. It is worth paying attention to C.A. Anderson and B.J. Bushman's the authors of General Aggression Model (GAM) (Anderson, Bushman, 2002). As a result of many years of research conducted within neuro-sciences, a theory operating in the space of cognitive science assumes a dominant position (see: Siemieniecki, 2013, p. 204–232). It incorporates the influence of biological, mainly hereditary and environmental, and especially social conditions. In the research described in this article, cognitive perspective was adopted in defining social determinants of aggressive behavioural patterns in children.

The study was conducted in the 2014/2015 in the Kuyavian-Pomeranian Voivodship. It included girls and boys, 5 and 6 years old attending seven kindergartens in urban, provincial and rural environments. In total, 318 children took part in the study: 163 girls (51.26%) and 155 boys (48.74%); 182 five-year-olds (57.23%) and 136 (42.77%) six-year-olds. Among the examined families, full families dominated in every environment: in big city – 37 (86.05%), in small city – 60 (84.57%), in the village – 46 (82.14%). In the environment of the big city the most numerous were three-person families – 19 (44.19%) and four-person families – 15 (34.88%). In a small town environment, four-person families predominated – 28 (39.44%) and three-person families – 20 (28.17%). However, in the rural environment four-person families dominated – 24 (42.86%), three-person families – 10 (17.86%) and six-person families – 10 (17.86%).

Most parents of the examined children are between 31 and 40 years of age. In the big city environment, there are 27 mothers in this age (62.79%) and 28 fathers (70%), in the small-town environment 51 mothers (72.86%) and 52 fathers (73.24%), and in the rural environment 34 mothers (65.38%) and 34 fathers (63.27%).

Among the surveyed families predominated families declaring good material conditions of the family: in a big city – 28 families (65.12%), in a small town – 40 families (56.34%), in rural areas – 37 families (66.07%).

In relation to parents' education – in the urban environment, the majority of fathers – 19 (44.19%) and the majority of mothers – 19 (44.19%) both have secondary education. In a small-town environment, the majority of fathers – 25 (35.21%) have secondary and higher education – 24 (33.80%), the majority of mothers – 41 (57.75%) higher education. In contrast, in the rural environment the majority of fathers – 24 (42.86%)

have vocational education, and among mothers the majority of them have secondary education – 32 (41.07%).

The majority of the surveyed families live independently. In the big city environment 37 (85.05%) of families live independently, in a small town 54 (76.06%) of the families, and in the rural environment 34 (60.71%) of the families.

Most often families live in a single-family houses and block of flats: in big city - block of flats (53.49%) – 23 families, in a small town – a single-family house (52.11%) – 37 families, in a village – (67.86%) – 38 families.

Answers from parents indicate that all examined children have a place to play at home. Their own room has: in the urban environment 27 (22.79%) children, in a small-town environment 43 (60.56%) children, and in the rural environment 21 (37.50%) children. During the research, the program offer of selected television stations broadcasting children's programs was analyzed in terms of verbal and non-verbal aggression in them (including selected categories of behaviors). Cartoons and films for analysis were selected based on the interviews with children. Cartoons and movies with the highest turnout (over 5 indications) were analyzed. 18 tales and films for children broadcasted on children's channels in the period 27/07–01/08 2015 were analyzed.

The diagnostic survey method and the techniques of observation, interviews with children and teachers, a questionnaire for parents and document analysis were used.

The main research problem was formulated as follows: "What social factors affect children's adoption of aggressive behaviour from television programs?" In order to identify the main problem, three groups of specific areas were identified: family factors, peer communities and places of residence. Each of these groups has been extended with a number of questions related to the socio-economic status of the family, its structure, cultural situation, parents' educational awareness level, parents' knowledge of the media's influence on the child (group I), social and economic status of parents, the size of their peers' families, age of friends (group II), urban environment, rural environment and the environment of a small town (group III).

## The findings

On observing 5–6-year-olds, it was noted that children's preferences for choosing programs or cartoons have changed. Inspiration from television is noticeable in their play. Cartoons with considerable emotional charge, with distinct, strong characters are very popular. Quiet cartoons with positive characters fail to gain comparable approval, being sometimes referred to as "boring".

Preschool children are not yet able to separate the fictional from the real, believing that the world is the way it is presented on television. It also perceives what is real differently. Children aged 5–7 start to notice that television programs are not real, but they are not sure whether their heroes perform the roles assigned to them (only 11-year-old children fully understand that the actor playing the policeman is not him every day) (Kołodziejczyk, 2005). The child accepts images seen on television literally, is not looking for a symbol or metaphor. Particularly small children significantly lack of objectivity in the reception of the viewed content (Jandy-Brudło, 1993). As the child grows up, it notices more and more, enlarges his world of experiences. This is reflected in the games that are getting richer. The contents of these games are greatly influenced by both the children's books and the movies watched (Prus-Wiśniewska, 1995). One of predominant activities in early childhood is imitation (see: Siemieńcki, 2013, p. 67–71). Children tend to learn while watching others. So they take an example of the heroes of their favorite cartoons, and whether they are real or fictional heroes is irrelevant to them (Geisler, Winnicka, 2001). Thus, aggressive characters become role models. This leads not only to tensions between peers, but also justifies aggressive behaviour.

Considering the phenomenon of imitation, it would be legitimate to seek answers to the following questions:

- What social determinants condition children's adoption of aggressive behaviour from TV programs?
- How do family factors, peer community factors and the place of residence condition the adoption of such behaviour?

The findings demonstrate that children are well versed in TV listings of various television stations, they are able to list many cartoons and characters appearing in them. The recognition of illustrations of cartoons

and their characters was very high, higher in cities and lower in the rural environment. Children living in big cities most often recognised: *Maya the Bee*, *Tom and Jerry*, *Spiderman* (over 90%) and least often: *Star Wars*, *Ben 10*, *Lego Batman* (under 50%). In towns *The Smurfs*, *Scooby Doo*, *Maya the Bee* (were the most popular (over 90%) and least recognisable were: *Star Wars*, *Ben 10*, *Lego Batman* (over 60%). In rural areas, *The Smurfs*, *Maya the Bee*, *Peppa Pig* were the most commonly recognised: (over 90%), and the least mentioned were *Star Wars*, *Lego Batman* and *Lego Ninjago* (over 60%).

The findings indicate that cartoons with aggressive, brutal content were less recognisable than those without such content (*The Smurfs*, *Maya the Bee*, *Peppa Pig*). This may attest to the fact that a large proportion of children do not watch them, so they do not experience emotions based on aggressive patterns that are present in them. Similar results were obtained in the case of the recognisability of characters from these stories. In big cities, the most recognizable characters were: Shaggy, Maya, Peppa Pig (over 90%), and the least recognisable – Lord Vader, Ben 10, Batman (over 40%). In small-town environment, more than 90% of children recognised Maya, Peppa Pig and the Smurfs, and over 60% Lord Vader and Ben 10. In rural studies, the results were similar.

*Lego Ninjago*, *My Little Pony* (in urban areas), *Hello Kitty* (in cities and in rural areas), *the Smurfs* (in towns) and *Peppa Pig* (in rural areas) are favourites. When choosing a favourite cartoon, children most often justified their choice by liking the plot or the characters. They emphasised that they „had power” and that they could charm, that they were strong, or that they were ridiculous. Sometimes the justification was unexpected, for example: „because he has a bow” (Minnie Mouse) – Olga, 5 years old; „Because she is pretty” (Smurfette) – Dominika, 5 years old; „Because he has such a nice dress” (Barbie) – Nicole, 5 years old; “Because she likes nature like me” (Flora) – Michalina, 6 years old; “Because he likes to sing and dance like me” (Violetta) – Marcelina, 6 years old; „Because it runs fast” (Jerry the Mouse) – Simon, 6 years old; „Because she has a purple dress, and this is my favourite colour” (Daphne) – Karina, 6 years old.

When choosing their favourite characters, children paid attention to their appearance, accessories (magic swords, wands, lasers, watches). However, even when their favourite character featured in cartoons permeated with scenes of great brutality (*Star Wars*, *Ninjago*, *Ben 10*, *Spider-*

man), the children insisted they liked them because they “help” and “save”. The motive of saving the world or people is present in many statements (similarly to fight against evil). Several most popular characters were chosen for similar reasons, e.g.:

- Green Ninja (Lloyd): “Because he has powers and is very strong” – Adam, 6 years old; “He knows how to change and save the world” – Tadzio, 5 years old; “He saves the world” – Nicholas, 5 years old; “Because he kills the baddies” – Simon, 6 years old;
- Ben 10: “Because he has a watch that turns him into an alien and he saves the world” Paul, 5 years old; “Because he beats, he is good and he defends others” – Kuba, 5 years old; “Because he is a super hero and has saved the world a million times” – Kuba, 6 years old; “Because he can change in everything that he wants and save the world – Maksio, 6 years old;
- Spiderman: “Because he saves the world” – Patryk 5 years old; “Because he saves people and catches criminals” – Nadia, 6 years old; “Because he is so strong” – Marcin, 5 years old.

Similar statements were given when children were to choose a cartoon character they wanted to be. The most popular were Ninja (small towns), Spiderman (big cities), Ben 10 (villages). Often in conversations with children there appeared a motive of helping, rescuing, acting in good intentions. Conversations failed to attest to fascination with evil, fighting, or aggression in pure form. It was usually referred to as „fight against evil”, „overcoming the baddies”. This was also reflected in games that children play (usually with their peers, but also with siblings or parents). Children from big cities are most likely to embark on play inspired by *Ninjago*, *My Little Pony* and *Star Wars*. Similar cartoons inspire children from small-town environment, whereas children living in the country are most likely to be inspired by *Ninjago*, *Bolek and Lolek*, *Peppa Pig*.

Children often possess items from their favourite cartoons. Most often they are ponies (figurines), mascots (usually *Winnie the Pooh*) or *Hello Kitty* figurines. They do not have combat gadgets (pistols, swords). For games in which such weapons are necessary, they make use of blocks to create military accessories (confirmed by teachers' observations collected in interviews). Also in this case good intentions are emphasised (“saving the world”).

When watching cartoons children are mostly accompanied by adults (parents, grandparents), siblings, seldom peers. Predominantly, children from rural environment (37.25%) watch TV on their own, followed by those from cities (34.55%) and small towns (28.30%). Parental statements confirm that children usually watch in company. TV sets, in all three environments, are most often found in a room other than children's bedroom (more than 50%). Thus, children do not have free access to them, which means more control over what they watch.

Despite the fact that in all three environments a cartoon with a large number of aggressive scenes (*Lego Ninjago*) was chosen as favourite, the findings indicate that the vast majority of surveyed children displayed no or insubstantial aggressive behavioural patterns: 280 children (88 % displayed five and fewer aggressive instances (out of 80), and only two children (1.82%) displayed more than 20. It should be noted that these two children reported cartoons with the highest rates of aggression (*Ninjago and Star Wars*) as favourites.

The analysis of the occurrence of aggressive behaviour in different settings indicates that aggression is most prevalent in children from large cities, and least noticeable in small-town environments. The two children with the highest rate of aggression (30) came from metropolitan environment. Mainly non-verbal aggression prevails in 5 to 6 year-olds, such as: jostling, shaking, beating, kicking, scratching, pinching or snatching objects. Verbal aggression usually occurs in the form of ridicule, insults, and name-calling. The findings indicate that random aggressive (verbal and nonverbal) behaviour was observed in the vast majority of children (88%). Among them, there are 209 children (65.72%) who displayed no aggressive behaviour whatsoever (either verbal or non-verbal).

The factors within family environment that may affect children's adoption of aggressive behaviour are: socioeconomic status, size, structure, use of cultural assets, parental educational awareness and knowledge about the impact of the media on children.

Studies demonstrated that these factors correlate positively with aggressive behaviour. This occurred in each of the surveyed environments. The higher the socio-economic status in the family and parental level of educational awareness, as well as the greater the knowledge of the impact of media, the less aggressive behaviour.

It is worth noting that the level of parental awareness is linked to the way families spend their free time. Lack of knowledge, lack of parental interest or low level of educational awareness may be accompanied by the selection of low-value leisure activities. Conversely, high parental awareness influences shaping children's rational selection of leisure activities. The findings indicate a good level of parental education and their high educational awareness. Vast majority of children have a variety of responsibilities (permanent and temporary) at home, and are committed to helping with daily housework chores. Parental awareness is also related to spending free time together and to the amount of time that parents spend with their children. More than 90% of parents spend afternoons together with their children, amounting to up to two hours a day, typically between preschool and bedtime. The decision about how to spend free time is usually taken together (over 55% of the surveyed families). Thus, it can be concluded from the findings that parents are well-educated, which translates into low-key aggressive behaviour manifested by their children.

Children's aggressive behaviour inspired by television programs is also affected by parental awareness of the impact of the media. It can be seen from several perspectives, one being the time spent in front of the screen. Most children in small towns and rural areas watch TV for 1–2 hours per day, whereas in big cities more than 2 hours. Parents know their children's preferences with regard to their favourite cartoons or favourite cartoon characters. They point out that children play out scenes from their favourite cartoons and have fun based on stories (over 40% in each of the studied environments). In all environments, more than 60% of respondents recited dialogues or lines from programs they had seen. Parental media awareness is confirmed by their declarations with regard to keeping their company while watching television, talking about programs or listening to children's stories about what they had seen. Parents say that their children typically watch television with adults or together with family members. Children, on the other hand, state that they watch on their own or with their siblings. There is a discrepancy between children's and parents' statements. Parental statements testify to their conviction as to the importance of television for their children. This is why they officially emphasise the factor of mutual involvement despite the fact that this is not always the case. The vast majority of parents (more

than 60% in every community) state that they talk to their children about the stories they have seen, explain incomprehensible situations, explain unclear events, and listen to children's stories.

Peer environment constitutes yet another factor. Peer relationship is very important for social development. At the age of 5–6, they want to play with their peers, to organise mutual activities together and to create close relationships. Judith Rich Harris (1998) maintains that peers are more influential than parents. Therefore, the study emphasises the influence of peer environment on children's aggressive behaviour.

A characteristic feature of the surveyed children's environment was a relatively high socio-economic status. This was the case both in cities, small towns, and in rural areas. The findings demonstrated that there is positive correlation between aggressive behaviour and socio-economic status of children's peers' parents. The higher it was, the lower was the number of instances of aggressive behaviour. This attests to the fact that both children's parents' socio-economic status and children's peers' parents' socio-economic status vastly instigate aggressive or non-aggressive behaviour.

Also, the size of peer families determines the adoption of certain behavioural patterns from television programs. Small families constitute a vast majority, in which there is low level of aggression.

With regard peers' age, a very similar number of instances of aggressive behaviour per child can be observed, i.e. 0.578 aggressive behaviour per one 5-year-old and 0.586 aggressive behaviour per a 6-year-old child. Thus, it is a safe assumption that age has no significant influence. The apparent difference (0.008 instances) can be considered negligible.

Local environment is the last factor that can affect the adoption aggressive behaviour. Based on the studies, it was found that big city environment has insignificant effect – 87,27% of children ranging from 0–5 instances, only two (1.82%) displaying more than 20. In contrast, in a small-town environment, no child ranged between 10 to 20 instances, 95.28% exhibited fewer than 5, none showed more than 20. It can be said that small town environment hardly conditions the adoption of aggressive patterns from television programs. On the other hand, in relation to rural environment, the largest group of children (81.37%) ranged within fewer than 5 instances and no child in this environment ranged more than 20 aggressive instances. Based on the findings, it can be con-

cluded that rural environment hardly conditions aggressive behavioural patterns.

In conclusion, it can be stated that local environment is only marginally or negligibly affected by the adoption aggressive behavioural patterns from television programs.

## **Summary**

Studies conducted within three separate environments failed to determine heightened propensity to aggressive behaviour in 5–6-year-old children. As stated earlier, this involves both family, peer and local environments. However, the role of preschools and teachers working with children must be seen as important for the discussed issues. Discussions with teachers reveal that in the vast majority they are aware of the threats instigated by TV programs saturated with violence and brutality, and they recognise the need to undertake preventive actions. Nearly all of the surveyed teachers (92% from large cities and 100% in rural areas) are in possession of materials and teaching aids on the subject of aggression and use them in their work. Only in small towns 71% of teachers have no such materials and adequate help at their disposal. This is, perhaps, rooted in the absence of children with increased levels of aggression. As many as 71% of teachers in small towns maintain that there are no such children in their groups. Likewise, 67% of teachers from big cities and 100% of teachers from rural areas are of the same opinion. Since most teachers are aware of negative effects of aggression in children, they organise group activities and games that teach the principles of collective coexistence. This is most common in metropolitan areas (92%) and least often in small towns (57%). In rural areas, such games are organised by 80% of teachers (20% occasionally). Being aware of risks posed by aggressive television programs makes teachers working with children concerned about safe use of television. 71% of teachers working in small towns, 68% in rural areas and 35% in big cities declare activity within the area.

Both parents and teachers observe in children activities inspired by television programs. Most often such activities are undertaken by children from urban environments, as attested by 83% of teachers. In rural areas, 20% of teachers notice children's inspiration by watching

television programs, and in small towns the figure is 57%. When watching children's play, teachers pay attention to imitation of aggressive content. The occurrence of such imitation was pointed out by 75% of teachers from big cities. On the other hand, teachers from small towns and rural areas agree that children fail to reflect such content during their playtime. This is attested by 71% of teachers in small towns and 80% of teachers in rural areas.

When playing, children sometimes use props. Only in big cities 50% of teachers maintain that children make use of them. Most commonly used props, such as guns, bombs, laser weapons or swords are built from blocks. On the other hand, in small cities and rural areas, most teachers state that children do normally not make use of props. Their use is noted by 29% of teachers from small towns and 20% of teachers working in rural areas. These props are also built from blocks.

Teachers also declare that they all observe in children a variety of behaviours and activities related to television programs. Like parents, they point out that children repeat dialogues and phrases from stories that they have seen. It accounts for 83% of teachers from urban areas, 57% from small towns and 40% from rural environment. Both children's and parents' statements reveal that children have their favourite cartoon characters. This is also observed by teachers working with children (80% in rural settings and 75% in big cities). The Smurfs, Batman, Tom and Jerry, Ninja, Madagascar penguins, Anna, Elsa, Winnie the Pooh, Thumbnail, Scooby Doo, Monster High are indicated as favourites in big cities and Ponies, Anna, Elsa, Olaf, Zorro, Spiderman, Scooby Doo, Ninja, Kitty in rural areas. Only teachers from small towns maintain that children do not have their favourite characters (86%). However, they observe that children often draw characters from their favourite cartoons. This phenomenon is observed by 58% of teachers from large cities and the same percentage from rural environment.

Teachers from big cities point to the difference in the choice of depicted characters between girls and boys. Girls usually draw characters from: *Hello Kitty*, *Monster High*, *Ice Land*, *My Little Pony*, *Dora Meets the World*, and boys draw Lord Vader, Young Titans, Batman, characters from Ninjago stories. Teachers in rural settings indicate that SpongeBob Squarepants, Patrick, Elsa, Ben 10, Mickey Mouse, Barbie, Dora, Batman, Hello Kitty kitten, Ninjago heroes are most often drawn. Sometimes, in

addition to favourite cartoon characters, children draw scenes from aggressive shows, as attested by 67% of teachers from big cities. On the other hand, 100% of teachers from small towns and 80% of rural teachers say that their students do not draw aggressive scenes inspired by television programs. The observation made by teachers demonstrates that most of their pupils do not remain under the influence of television, as stated by 71% of teachers in small towns and 60% of teachers in rural areas, and only 33% of teachers in big cities. They note that the overwhelming influence of television is most likely to occur in any type of activity (58% of teachers in large cities attest to it), in role-playing games (8% of teachers) and in aggressive behaviour (25% of teachers).

Interviews with teachers reveal that the issues of aggression in general and aggression occurring in the media are brought up during meetings with parents, as attested by 92% of teachers from large cities, 86% from small towns and 80% from rural environment. Also, the problem of the influence of television programs on children is addressed in the course of their educational activities. This is reported by 50% of teachers from large cities, 57% of teachers from small towns and 60% of teachers from rural areas. They discuss with parents safe use of television, as attested by 58% of teachers from big cities, 57% from small towns and 80% from rural areas, vast majority of whom concluded that parents had failed to report problems with their children watching television (100% from small towns, 80% from rural areas and 75% from big cities). However, it also happens that working with children (also aggressive) requires the help of specialists. 75% of teachers from big cities, 60% of teachers from rural environment and 43% from small towns make use of such assistance.

The presented findings on social factors determining 5 to 6 year-olds' adoption of aggressive behaviour from television programs confirmed the hypothetical assumptions implemented in the research procedure, i.e. that the instances of imitative aggression are conditioned by various social factors: family, peers and place of residence.

In conclusion, it is a safe assumption that teachers are mostly well prepared to work with aggressive children and are well aware of aggression in general and aggression in the media. They undertake a number of activities both for children and parents and realise the importance of this issue. Their participation in the process of pre-schoolers' upbringing is of utmost importance, as it facilitates the process of information exchange,

indispensable in establishing the right direction of intervention as well as in joint decision-making in various aspects of educational interactions. This leads to the integration of endeavours on the part of family members and preschool teachers. It is important to emphasise the role of parents as exerting fundamental influence on children's attitudes and behavioural patterns. Making parents aware of the negative impact of aggressive TV programs on their offspring, shaping correct TV viewing habits as well as making materials on broadly understood media education available are all important initiatives that shape attitudes, foster desirable development and eliminate unwanted behavioural patterns.

The findings attest to insignificant degree of aggression experienced by children at this developmental stage, which may prove that pre-school children are not hopelessly encompassed by the influence of television. It appears that peer pressure ("everyone watches") is not yet prominent and it is parental influence that is decisive on the viewed content. As Michel Desmurget writes, "as long as the offspring is 5 to 6 years old, they are relatively closely monitored and their TV consumption is limited both in terms of program selection and time (Desmurget, 2012, p. 60)". The presented findings appear to confirm this opinion.

The process of educating children to rational use of television requires the involvement of both parents and teachers. It is parents who typically decide what their children watch. They determine the rationale for using programs, select the right content and inspire alternative ways of spending free time. It is family home that consciously strengthens valuable communications and discourages bad proposals. In the case of teachers, it seems important to organise activities for parents and children related to proper use of television (not all teachers realise the importance of this issue), as well as to activate parents. As attested by the interviews with teachers, the vast majority of parents do not report parenting problems with their children watching television. This may be due to ignorance or deliberate disregard of the problem. Close cooperation is strongly advisable in order to provide optimal conditions for children, to prepare them to develop their own passions and interests, and to enrich their personalities. Parent-teacher partnership and broadly-understood media education seem to be key issues in the process of timely identification of disturbing phenomena of children's adoption of corrupt patterns from the media.

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