

## TEACH YOUR CHILDREN

### 1. Tell your children that...

What they see on TV is not real; it is fantasy, make-believe. The guns, knives, and bullets they see on TV are not real and do not hurt people like real weapons.

### 2. Talk about consequences of violence...

Explain that real-life violence causes injuries, both physical and emotional. Violence can ruin friendships and can make people feel afraid and angry.

### 3. Talk about Heroes, Good Guys, and Bad Guys

Who are the bad guys on TV? What do they do? Why do they kill and hurt people? Who are the good guys, and what do they do? Who are the good guys or heroes in your family or neighbourhood? What do they do? How are they different from TV characters? Talk about what true heroes are: people who are courageous, brave, and do good things to help others.

### TALK ABOUT THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A HERO AND A CELEBRITY

Heroes make a difference in real life. They do things to help others and to contribute to society. Heroes inspire us. Celebrities are highly visible personalities known for their talent, beauty, or material quality. Media often features and promotes celebrities. TV, in particular, has made many people celebrities. The hero is distinguished by his or her own achievement, the celebrity is often distinguished by an image.

## SHOW BY EXAMPLE

- Watch TV with your children, that way, if the programming turns out violent or too mature, you can discuss what happened to put it in context and have your kids learn from it.
- Schedule limited TV viewing hours for yourself
- Play, read books, draw, do puzzles, sing, or listen to music with your children to show that there are fun alternatives to TV.
- To minimise peer pressure to watch violent shows you may want to talk to the parents of your child's friends and agree to



A PARENTS'  
GUIDE TO

# HEALTHY TV HABITS

*Issued in the public interest.  
Department of Information and Media [DoIM],  
Ministry of Information & Communications,  
and the Bhutan Centre for Media and Democracy.  
[www.doim.gov.bt](http://www.doim.gov.bt) / [www.bcmed.bt](http://www.bcmed.bt)*



DoIM, MoIC

འགྲུལ་གྲུབ་འཕེལ་བྱེད་ཁང་།

BHUTAN CENTRE  
for MEDIA AND DEMOCRACY



UNDEF



The United Nations  
Democracy Fund



## IMPACT OF TV ON CHILDREN

### “TV IS BRINGING UP OUR CHILDREN”

As a concerned mother in Mongar commented, TV is beginning to develop a tremendous presence in the lives of Bhutan's youth. The majority of urban youth have access to at least one TV, and the 2008 Media Impact Study revealed that one-third of children watched at least one hour of TV programming per day. Because there is limited local programming for youth and children, this time is mostly spent digesting foreign TV programmes and watching programmes for adults. Our children and youth are growing up on more adult and foreign content than Bhutanese content for youth and children.

Extensive research evidence indicates that excessive and uncritical TV consumption:

- Can lead to aggressive behavior
- Can terrify children
- Provides violent heroes to imitate
- Shows that violence is OK

And involves:

- Less use of imagination
- Less direct contact with other people
- Less pretend play and creativity

In addition, TV can discourage and replace reading. Reading requires much more thinking than TV, and we know that reading fosters young people's healthy brain development. Kids from families that have the TV on a lot spend less time reading and being read to, and are therefore less likely to be able to read.

TV has its good side — it can be entertaining and educational, and can open new worlds for kids. It can give them a chance to travel the globe, learn about different cultures, and gain exposure to ideas they may never encounter in their own community.

However, the reverse can also be, and often is, true; kids can learn things from TV that parents don't want them to learn. Most children's programming DOES NOT teach what parents say they want their children to learn; many shows are filled with stereotypes, violent solutions to problems, and demonstrations of mean behavior. Television emphasises celebrities more than real life heroes.

