

---

# **Influence of Media Violence on Children: The American Academy of Pediatrics' Recommendations**

XXI century is a century when technology is developing rapidly. From the second half of 20 the century all types of media like movies and video games are spread in the world. Most of this media are have violent scenes. And today, with developing technologies these scenes can be seen clearly. Almost all children and adolescents are grown by seeing bloody scenes and they are used to these scenes. However, does this situation have consequences to the children's psychology and body? Answer – yes. Children and adolescents are negatively influenced by violence in media such as video games, movies, and the Internet. However, The American Academy of Pediatrics gives some recommendations to solve this problem.

## **Problem 1**

Exposure to violence in media, including television, movies, music, and video games, represents a significant risk to the health of children and adolescents as a physical and mental. Browne (2005) states that there is consistent evidence that violent imagery in television, film and video, and computer games has substantial short-term effects on arousal, thoughts, and emotions, increasing the likelihood of aggressive or fearful behavior in younger children, especially in boys. American children between 8 and 18 years of age spend an average of 6 hours and 21 minutes each day using entertainment media. This data gets from the American Academy of Pediatrics' journal that came out in 2009. You can imagine what happens to this data after a decade. Also, it has been researched that the influence of computer video games to children and young man are much more than television and films. The reason of that was viewers can interact actively with the image. Computer games amplify physiological arousal, aggression-related thoughts and feelings, and reduce pro-social behavior. Almost all introverts are gamers. So, one of the results of playing computer games is decreasing or not developing of social abilities in children and this can lead to difficulties in adulthood.

## **Problem 2**

Children are influenced by media— they learn by observing, imitating, and adopting behaviors. In Pediatrics journal (2009) states that high exposure to violent video games increases physical aggression especially in American and Japanese school-aged children. There are games like GTA, Mafia and Hitman, where players control characters' action. These games have scenes of beating and killing people. Some children who played these games have low level of self-control and they are wants to imitate violence in games in the real life. In the media and internet you can find many incidents where children or teenagers commit a crime like a bullying, sexual harassment or even murder cases. For example, Browne (2005) mentioned that Sue Baily investigated 40 adolescent murderers and 200 young sex offenders. She claimed that repeated exposure to violent and pornographic videos was an important factor in violent and sex crimes including, in some cases, actual imitation of the screen image. Indeed, a prevalence study of copycat crime claims that one in four violent juvenile offenders have attempted to imitate crime depicted in the media.

---

## **Solution**

Solving these problems will not be easy but there are some tricks that can be used. The UNESCO review of research findings suggests that everyone is negatively affected in some way by media violence, but that these effects depend on an individual's cognitive appraisal and physical and social environment. For example, a child who lives in poor family or his/her parents are not given proper education have more chance to get mental influence. On the contrary, if parents control their children and children grows in the good environment, these children should not or not so hard negatively affected by media violence. Removing television, internet connections and video games from children's bedroom can decrease the influence of media violence. Also, parents should be with children as much as possible and watch films and play video games that have not violent imagery. If child will be more active and plays in the court with other children, the mental stability of child will be stronger. Children should not be at home and spend a lot of time to video games. Even children spend time to various media it should be nonviolent media. Contrariwise this should be more child-positive media like media education and thoughtful media.

## **Conclusion**

Finally, the influence of violence in the media such as Internet and video games is huge. Children and young adults that are negatively influenced by media violence may be smaller throughout the world, but this problem should not be ignored. Every life is priceless. However, this problem can be solved by some methods indicated above. Yes, it can't be eliminated full. But, if every family uses these recommendations, number of children who have mental or physical problems because of media violence should be decreased. This also applies number of young offenders.