

## Study links excessive TV watching with learning problems in young people

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Teens who watch three or more hours a day are at higher risk of developing attention problems and learning difficulties as they mature, according to a study by Jeffrey G. Johnson, Ph.D., Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons.

The study appears in the May issue of *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine*, one of the JAMA/Archives journals.

According to a news release issued by the Journal of American Medicine, lead author Johnson and his colleagues studied 678 families in upstate New York between 1983 and 1993.

"Television viewing time at mean age 14 years was associated with elevated risk for subsequent frequent attention difficulties, frequent failure to complete homework assignments, frequent boredom at school, failure to complete high school, poor grades, negative attitudes about school (i.e., hates school), overall academic failure in secondary school and failure to obtain post-secondary (e.g., college, university, training school) education," the authors write.

The findings have important preventive implications, according to Johnson and his colleagues. "... By encouraging youths to spend less than three hours per day watching television, parents, teachers and health care professionals may be able to help reduce the likelihood that at-risk adolescents will develop persistent attention and learning difficulties."

Source: Columbia University

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