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Background Television in the Homes of American Children (Top Paper)

Abstract:

Research has shown the negative consequences associated with children’s exposure to background television. Despite this evidence, researchers do not have reliable estimates of the prevalence of background television in American homes. This study sought to address this gap by providing the first nationally representative estimates of exposure. American parents (N = 1454) were surveyed to determine the amount of background television that their children (ages 8 months to 8 years) are exposed to as well as isolate demographic factors associated with this exposure. We also investigated how certain home media practices are linked to exposure. Results indicate that the average American child is exposed to 232.2 minutes of background television on a given day. Younger children and African American children are exposed to more background television. Lastly, leaving the television on even when no one is viewing and children’s bedroom television ownership are associated with increased background television exposure.