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An informative, provocative and essential newsletter:

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The Health Reformer



Health
&
Temperance
Team

Possible consequences of allowing children to have televisions in their bedrooms

“The National Institute on Media and the Family announced...that children who have televisions in their bedrooms watch more TV, have less family interaction, and have worse grades than those who don't. The findings are updated statistics from...**MediaQuo tie nt**TM: National Survey of Family Media Habits, Knowledge and Attitudes study, a comprehensive database of American family media habits.

The study reveals a concrete relationship between a family's media habits and school performance. It also indicates that parents who demonstrate a high awareness of the effects of media on their children's lives, monitor media's use, and encourage alternative activities to electronic media, are more likely to have children who do better in school.

MediaQuo tie nt also revealed that kids who have TVs in the bedroom:

- Get worse grades
- Watch 5.5 hours more TV each week (the average is already 25 hours a week!)
- Engage in fewer activities that don't involve electronic media
- Read fewer books

‘None of this means that every child who has a television in his or her bedroom will stop reading, playing baseball, or receive failing grades,’ said David Walsh, Ph.D., President and Founder of the Minneapolis-based National Institute on Media and the Family. ‘But because most of the parents in this country are allowing children to have TVs in their bedrooms, they should know that there may be some consequences attached to that decision.’ ”

National Institute on Media and the Family, August 3, 2000

What about the content of what children see on TV? “Parents who grew up watching TV themselves several decades ago say the content has degenerated in recent years, with more sex, sexism, bad language, off-color jokes and just plain bad manners.

...The commercials bother a lot of people too – for the speed with which they send images flashing by on the screen, for their seductiveness, and for their success at convincing children what they want and need.

...The violence on TV also bothers parents. Last summer, the American Medical Association and three other national groups linked the violence in television, music, video games and movies to increasing violence among children.” *HealthCentral.com, March 27, 2001*

“Parents, you are the ones to decide whether the minds of your children shall be filled with ennobling

thoughts or with vicious sentiments...Parents should endeavor to keep out of the home every influence that is not productive of good. In this manner some parents have much to learn.”

AH, pp. 410, 411

Did you know this about the Columbine tragedy?

“ ‘One of the overlooked facts, as far as I'm concerned, in Columbine, was that the perpetrators consumed a fifth of Jack Daniel's (intoxicating whiskey) before their acts...’ ”

—Council member Howard A. Denis (R-Potomac-Bethesda), referring to the deadly 1999 (high) school shooting in Colorado.

The Washington Post Company, April 4, 2001

Yes, crime has always been tied to alcohol. “How often it is found that theft, incendiarism, murder, were committed under the influence of liquor. Yet, the liquor curse is legalized, and works untold ruin in the hands of those who love to tamper with that which ruins not only the poor victim, but his whole family.

...the guardians of the public welfare have proved unfaithful to their trust, by legalizing the sale of liquor....They know that in doing this, they are virtually licensing the commission of crime; and yet their knowledge of this sure result deters them not....Is it not their duty and in their power to remove this deadly evil?” *Temperance, pp. 24, 26, 38*

The solution to most of our health problems

“The solution to most of our health problems today does not depend on physicians, technological advances, or on the quality of our hospitals. Our health today is determined largely by our lifestyle choices, our physiological inheritance, and our physical environment. Good health in today's world mainly depends on what we're willing to do for ourselves—how we choose to live, especially how we eat, drink, exercise, and whether or not we smoke.

...Americans are eating too much of nearly everything—too much sugar, too much fat, too much cholesterol, and too much salt. We eat to many calories. And we eat too often.

Such abundance has helped lay the foundation for coronary artery diseases, stroke, high blood pressure, arthritis, adult-onset diabetes, obesity, and several kinds of cancer. These diseases are responsible for three out of four deaths. There are related to our lifestyle, especially to how we eat.”

(Over, please)

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High-heeled Shoes

“Women may like the way they look in high-heeled shoes, but Boston researchers say whether they’re wide-heeled or stiletto style won’t make a difference in their risk for osteoarthritis of the knees. In a new study of knee joint pressure, researchers at Harvard Medical School in Boston discovered that women are just as vulnerable to osteoarthritis in their knees when wearing wide-heeled shoes as they are in narrow-heeled shoes of the same height...D. Casey Kerrigan and colleagues studied 20 healthy women with an average age of 34 and an average weight of 130 pounds. Each woman received one pair of shoes with a heel of approximately 1.75 inches wide and another pair of shoes with a heel width of about half an inch. Both pairs were 2.7 inches high. Study participants were then asked to walk 10 meters or about 32 feet, once in narrow-heeled shoes, once in wide-heeled shoes, and once barefoot. Researchers then measured knee torque -- how much the knee twisted during each walk. Both types of shoes increased knee joint pressure: 26 percent more for wide-heeled shoes and 22 percent for narrow-heeled shoes. This kind of repetitive stress to the knee joint elevates the risk for osteoarthritis. Low-heeled shoes or no heels, researchers conclude, are a woman’s safest bet against osteoarthritic knees. ‘The only thing wide-heeled shoes would do versus a stiletto type is give you the perception of more stability when you’re standing,’ Dr. Brian Parsley, an orthopedic surgeon and a member of The Arthritis Institute in Houston, told UPI. Otherwise, any high heel, he said, is going to ‘change the biomechanics of the lower leg’ because women overextend and lock their knees more when wearing high heels, eroding the knees’ ability to act as a shock absorber when walking.”

Living Today, April 10, 2001

Tips for building good health habits in children

- Daily exercise—preferably outdoors—for at least an hour.
- Three meals a day, at regular times, with lots of whole grains, fruits, and vegetables. Discourage snacks, and the child will have a better appetite for nutritious food at mealtimes. If a snack is needed, offer a piece of fresh fruit.
- Plenty of water. Save sodas for special occasions.
- Control TV. The hours a child watches TV relate directly to weight gain and elevated blood cholesterol levels.
- Adequate rest. Most children are chronically tired—not surprising when you remember that teenagers do best on nine hours of sleep a night, and younger ones need more. Put the kids to bed early enough so they awaken naturally in time for a healthy breakfast.
- Cultivate a wide range of interests—schedule library visits, music lessons, arts and crafts, hobbies, and family outings. Children who spend time with their parents and develop deep spiritual roots experience less stress and improved mental health.
- Set a good example. The life choices you are modeling day by day are the strongest determinants of your children’s future behavior. *Health Power, Health by Choice Not Chance, p. 23*

Our world is being bombarded with positive images of alcohol

“The drinks industry is conducting a ‘systematic campaign’ of manipulation, glamorizing alcohol in an attempt to lure young people to its products, a new report claims...”

In the study she (Gina Defalias, the author of the report,

Marketing Alcohol to Young People) draws attention to the Budweiser website, offering free e-mail and electronic postcards, and its popular television advertisements featuring animated frogs and lizards. A recent study showed that schoolchildren were more familiar with these characters than with cartoon cereal characters such as Tony the Tiger.

...She said: ‘Children are bombarded with positive images of alcohol from the moment they begin to understand their surroundings until they grow up. The alcohol industry is carrying out a systematic campaign to turn young people into drinkers as a way to consolidate and increase its profits.

‘As a result young people are drinking at an earlier age and increasing the number of drinking occasions and the quantity drunk. The exploitation of vulnerable young computer users is a new form of alcohol marketing. The internet is subject to no regulation and as a result, alcohol companies are able to pursue children and young people with very few restraints.’ ”

By Nicole Martin, electronic Telegraph

Warning: Number of Americans who are infected through heterosexual sex is on the rise

“New York (Reuters Health) - While AIDS-related deaths have begun to decline overall in the US, the number of Americans who are infected through heterosexual sex is on the rise.

Now, researchers report that one in five newly-infected heterosexual patients say they did not know that their partner was HIV-positive when they were exposed to the virus, or that their partner had engaged in any high-risk behaviors such as homosexual sex or intravenous drug use.

These findings may help to explain why the rate of HIV among heterosexual adults rose to 15% of all infections in 1999, from just under 2% in 1985.

.... This suggests that a significant number of Americans do not perceive themselves to be at risk for HIV infection or are unaware of the risks, and are therefore unlikely to get tested for HIV, the study authors explain.” *HealthCentral.com, April, 24, 2001*

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