

Evolving measurement of parent-child discussion patterns regarding television

Most of the following can be found in Austin, E. W. (2001). Effects of family communication on children's interpretation of television. In J. Bryant & J. A. Bryant (Eds.), Television and the American Family, 2nd Ed. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Restrictive Mediation (rule making):

Used with parents (Valkenburg et al., 1999, alpha=.79)

How often do you:

- Say to your child to turn off the TV when s/he is watching an unsuitable program?
- Set specific viewing hours for your child?
- Forbid your child to watch certain programs?
- Restrict the amount of child viewing?
- Specify in advance the programs that may be watched?

Coviewing without assumed concurrent discussion:

Used with parents (Fujioka & Austin, 1999, alpha=.66)

- Sports
- Educational shows
- News programs
- Movies
- Prime time

Social Coviewing:

Used with parents (alpha=. 79, Valkenburg et al, 1999)

How often do you:

- Watch together because you both like a program?
- Watch together because of a common interest in a program?
- Watch together just for the fun?
- Watch your favorite program together?
- Laugh with your child about the things you see on TV?

Instructive Mediation:

Used with parents (alpha=. 80, Valkenburg et al., 1999)

How often do you:

- Try to help the child understand what s/he sees on TV?
- Point out why some things actors do are good?
- Point out why some things actors do are bad?
- Explain the motives of TV characters?
- Explain what something on TV really means?

Positive Mediation:

Used with children of varied ages and with parents (e.g., Austin & Chen, 1999, alpha =. 83)

How often parents or guardians said:

- They like a product in TV ad
- They like a person or character seen on TV
- They agree with something seen on TV
- Say that something on TV happens in real life
- Repeat something heard on TV
- Say that something seen on TV is OK

Negative Mediation:

Used with children of varied ages and with parents (e.g., Austin et al., 1999, alpha =.74)

How often parents or guardians:

- Say that something seen on TV is not OK
- Say that something in a TV ad is not OK
- Say that something on TV is not real
- Say that something in a TV ad is not true
- Tell more about something seen on TV
- Explain what ads are trying to do

Negative Mediation:

Used with older children (alpha = .75; Austin, et al., 2000)

How often parents or guardians:

- Speak up when they see something on TV they dislike
- Say something in a TV ad makes looks better than it really is
- Say something on TV is not true
- Tell more about something seen on TV

Talk about what ads are trying to do
Say they disagree with something shown on TV
Comparing Family Communication Styles and Mediation Frequency

Concept Orientation (Emphasis on ideas)

How often (do you) does a parent:

Say that you should look at both sides of an issue?
Encourage you to question other people's opinions?
Say that getting your idea across is important even if others don't like it?
Ask for your opinion when the family is discussing something?
Say that every member of the family should have some say in family matters?
Admit that kids know more about some things than adults do?

Socio Orientation (Emphasis on conformity)

How often (do you) does a parent:

Say his or her ideas are correct and you shouldn't argue with them?
Answer your argument by saying you'll know better when you grow up?
Tell you not to say things that make people angry?
Say there are some things that just shouldn't be talked about?
Say that you shouldn't argue with adults?

Communication Warmth:

How often:

I can laugh and joke with a parent.
We find time to do fun things in our family.
I can tell a parent how I feel about something.
A parent and I hug each other.
A parent and I talk.

Original Mediation Index:

How often:

Parents tell me something on TV isn't really so.
Parents try to help me understand what I see on TV.
Parents suggest I should learn more about something I saw.
Parents explain to me what something on TV *really* means.