

**PASSAGE - 1**

1. The children probably don't know, or they don't care, the hugely popular WWF wrestling matches are actually all staged acts. The Hulks, the Undertaker or whatever else they are called-never really punch or kick as hard as they might appear doing on the show. It's all a show, a thrilling show.
2. So, you can't really blame children for getting hooked. But does that necessarily mean the show is entirely responsible for beating 12-year-old Subin Kumar got from his WWF inspired friends? Can viewing or watching violence on TV actually promote aggressive behaviour in children?
3. Media experts and social scientists have been wrestling with this question for decades and thousands of studies have been done on it. And most of them reached the same conclusion-media violence is responsible for aggressive behavior in children.
4. Research has found that the more violence children watch on television, the more likely they may act in aggressive ways towards others. Also, they become less sensitive to others pain and are less likely to help a victim of violence.
5. A study of violence on Indian television and its impact on children commissioned by UNESCO accused the idiot box of "bombarding young minds with all kinds of violent images, cutting across channels, programmes and viewing times."
6. Not only studies, but also incidents go to prove that children who watch violent episodes show increased likelihood of behaving aggressively.
7. There have been reports from all over the country of children hurting themselves while trying to ape the superman feats of Shaktiman, the superhero of Indian TV. Then there was the six-year-old child of Lucknow who leapt off the balcony of his second floor flat trying to imitate a bungee jumping drop shown in a soft drinks commercial.
8. There's no doubt that media is a powerful teacher and contributes greatly to the way we act and behave. In some cases like these, the effects are immediate and in others there is a "sleeper effect", where the results show up much later.
9. Experts say it's incorrect to blame the media squarely. How would you explain the aggressive behavior of a child who has never been exposed to television or any other media? So, while there is mounting evidence to link media violence and actual violence, most of it does not prove a direct cause-and-effect relationship. Because no one so far has been able to prove why and how TV affects some people and not the others. "we also have to take into account individual differences and vulnerabilities as human behavior is result of many factors," points out Dr. Vasantha R. Patri, a counsellor, adding, "violence viewing is only one of the myriad influences on a growing child."
10. Patri says there exists a population of risk individuals whose anger, aggression and anti-social tendencies are already quite high for whatever reason. Other factors like individual predisposition of the child, parental attitudes and reaction to aggression are probably equally important. In fact, she says that in most cases media is only the fourth most important



influence in child's life-with parents, teachers and peers being the first three.

11. Patri points out that the growing "here-and-now" culture in which kids are getting used to immediate gratification is leading to an intolerant society on the whole. "Children are not taught how to handle failure and conflict," she says. "As a result, they resort to aggression."
12. But media critics refuse to buy it. They insist the content of media needs to be monitored and care be taken to reduce violence if not remove it. But even if all the gore and violence is completely removed from the media, will it make a significant difference in aggressive behavior of children? And then how do you justify the facts that studies have shown that viewing violence on TV also provides an opportunity to discharge the pent-up, aggressive feelings of anger, hostility and frustration.
13. "The problem is not with the media, but the lack of media education," points out Patri. "No one teaches the children how to assess the reality status of TV programmes." Good parenting, she says, is perhaps the greatest defence against the negative effects of violent images on TV.
14. Experts say it's time that parents and teachers took a long, hard look at themselves in the mirror. Says Patri, "Most parents treat TV as a baby-sitter when it suits them. And when something goes wrong, they turn around and blame TV for it!"

- Shweta Rajpal

QUESTIONS

A. Choose the most appropriate option:

- (a) Violent behaviour is the outcome of.....
 - (i) Lack of media awareness
 - (ii) Lack of sensitivity
 - (iii) Increase in population
 - (iv) imperfection
- (b) Children fail to understand that the stunts shown on the screen are.....
 - (i) Real
 - (ii) Fake
 - (iii) Manipulated
 - (iv) None of the above
- (c) Parents consider TV a
 - (i) Babysitter
 - (ii) Problem



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- (iii) Boon
- (iv) None of the above
- (d) Aggressive behavior in children can be best handled by.....
- (i) Teachers
- (ii) Parents
- (iii) Both teachers and parents
- (iv) Children themselves
- B. Answer the following questions briefly:
- (a) Does violence on TV promote children's aggressive behavior? What is the opinion of media experts and social scientists?
- (b) What two points have emerged from research on media violence?
- (c) What two incidents are cited to prove the aggressive behavior of children as an outcome of watching violence on TV?
- (d) What factors other than violence viewing are important for causing aggressiveness in child?
- (e) How, do you think can the problem be solved?
- (f) How are children becoming impatient?
- C. Find words in the passage similar in meaning as:
- (a) Exciting (Para 1)
- (b) An extremely large number of something (Para 9)