

## The Effectivity of “Goodnight Children” Project in 7-12 Age Group of Children

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### Abstract

*Nowadays most of the children spend more time in front of television than at school. On one hand mass media provide opportunity for children to recognize outer world by affecting their socialization, on the other hand they cause some negative effects on children. In this study it was aimed to identify awareness of students in years 2, 3, 4 and 5 of Kırıkkale primary school about “Goodnight Children” Project as well as the effect of Project on children and watching television habits of children. The research group of this mass research contains of 436 students of Kırıkkale primary school in years 2, 3, 4 and 5. The students of chosen schools were informed about the study and the acceptor students filled the questionnaires under researcher’s supervision. 70.6% of students stated that the most watching television time was weekends, 44.3% of them stated television was on for 3-5 hours. They also stated that the most watching programme was series with 39.1% and with 22.3% the following programme was the news. It was found that 86.5% of children were watching the news and 53.9% of them were thinking that especially series were not suitable for children. 77.5% of them noted that television programmes involved violence. 59% of them mostly encountered violence in series and 15.4% of them in the news. 78.2% of the students that were in the scope of study knew television characters visually whereas 21.8% of them did not. It was discovered 81.9% of students found television warning effective. 95.2% of students gave right answer to the question “What is the warning of television for children about going to bed?” whereas 4.8% gave wrong answer. As a result it was obtained that the students in the study mostly complaint about violence on television, mothers mostly watch series and fathers mostly watch the news. It was also found that television warning is effective on students and on their bedding time.*

**Keywords:** Child, Media

### Introduction

The most important mass media among wide communication net where every kind of information and broadcast can be transmitted all over the world is television that enters undoubtedly every house and where hundreds of broadcasting corporations can broadcast for 24 hours. According to the survey done in Turkey in 2002 the average television watching age was  $2.7 \pm 1.6$  years and was shown that 62% of children were watching television at least 2 hours whereas 8.3% of them were watching television more than 4 hours in a day. The survey “Television Habits of Primary School Children” of Radio and Television High Council showed that students mostly read and with a little difference they secondly watch television in their free time. Even television becomes a babysitter for families in our country and in the world. Children spend most of their time in front of television (İrkin A. 2012). Besides the good sides of television, it has got many negative effects if it is not used properly because since children are passive receiver during watcing television, they do not ask questions, ask for explanations and they do not object anything (Küçükcan, 2011). With the idea of having many receiver of message via television, in recent years commercial concerns head off cultural and ethical concerns and this caused priority of raiting rather than informing, breaking news and showing different point of views (Kaya, Tuna, 2008). Overwatching television makes children dependent and as a result of this there comes out behaviour disorders.

Also the more children spend time for watching television, the less they make time for game, education, sleeping and cultural activities such as cinema and theatre. As a result of this creativity lessens, children become passive and desire for learning decreases. Television reduces the relation of children with their age groups and causes them to become self-enclosed people. By this way the life of children becomes to be regulated by television programmes (Kaya, Tuna, 2008). Television becomes an inseparable part of our lives. Since television has a very important part in daily life, our people spend most of their leisure time. 95% of population just watch television whereas 5% of them read besides watching television in their free time. Television makes reading secondary in Turkish society. In Turkey the weekly television watching duration was obtained as 20.2 hours. Television reduces reading newspaper as 20%, magazine and book as 22%. Television stands as a rival of books and reading in daily life. According to the survey published in 2003, Turkish people on average spend their four hours in front of television every day. This number equals to 9 years of 75 years life of a person

### ***Children between Age of 7–11, Television and Sleeping Routine***

Sleeping can be defined as a condition of losing communication of organism with its surrounding temporarily, partially and periodically with different force stimulants. Sleeping shows difference in newborn, infancy, preschool, schoolchild and adolescence periods. Babies spend 16-18 hours with sleeping in their 3 months period. As this period is formed of day and night equal sleeping periods in polyphasic sleeping pattern, sleeping gains biphasic property of adolescence in preschool period. In schoolchild and adolescence period because of obligations of school life biphasic sleeping turns out to be a monophasic night sleeping which is done one in 24 hours. Daily need of sleep is 8.5-9.25 hours for children which is more than the need of adolescents. Despite of increased need of sleeping, if daily need of sleeping decreases due to cultural, parental or physiological reasons, many problems come out depending on this. Sleeping late at night and getting up late in the morning are the properties of this period and has got two important reasons. The first reason is insufficient sleeping because of academic and increased social activities; the second one is tendency of sleeping late and waking up late with getting older. The experienced changes in childhood period, increasing of stress can increase the problems about sleeping. In children having sleeping problems aggression, lack of attention and behaviour disorders are seen. In school children the resistance for bedding time are seen as 10-20%. The insufficient sleeping affects functionality all day long. Sleeping disorders in children cause important physical (growth deficiency, mental deficiency etc.) and behavioral disorders (attention deficit disorder, hyperactivity etc.)

Insufficient sleeping can also cause the occurrence of depressive syndromes and even depression. Studies done on children and teenagers having different sleeping types and durations showed that children and teenagers sleep six hours have significantly high depressive affectivity than the ones sleep eight hours. Also the anxiety scores of ones sleep late are significantly higher than the ones sleep early. After 5 hours of night sleep there are not any changes seen in routine activities, however a decrease can be obtained in high cognitive activities such as verbal creativity and abstract thinking.

The relation between television watching habits even having a television in a room and sleeping disorder was reported by Owens and his colleagues and stated that bedding time resistance, sleep-onset insomnia and shortness of sleeping are the most related sleeping disorders with television. Besides the children that are accustomed to the visual stimulants consisted of moving visions and rapid transitions, want rapid transitions with innovations in life and desire rapid satisfaction (İrkin A. 2012). In children that are accustomed to rapid transitions on television show impatience, getting bored quickly, rapid satisfaction and inaccordance towards indulgence so they show negative behaviour towards education at school (İrkin A. 2012).

### ***“Goodnight Children” Project***

“Goodnight Children” Project which was organised by the cooperation of Radio and Television Supreme Council and Television Broadcasters Association aims to gain early bedding time habit for preschool and school children, to increase the sensibility of parents about early bedding time and to protect children from possible harmful effects of late night programmes. In “Goodnight Children” Project that started in October 2011 gives messages to children as “Goodnight Children”, “Let’s go to bed children” and “Television is enough for today, goodnight to all children” in three different animations by television characters of smart tags, logos of symbol system.

“Goodnight Children” Project aims to advance responsibility and sensibility instead of prohibition and enforcement, stands for regulating authority with civil society cooperation, broadcasting responsibility as well as parents’ responsibility.

The most important provision for the Project to be successful is considered as parents' attention to reminder on screen and send their children to bed early and with this application the more increasing effectivity of audience in front of television is expected ([www.rtuk.org.tr/sayfalar/icerikgoster.aspx?icerik\\_id=f1c09246](http://www.rtuk.org.tr/sayfalar/icerikgoster.aspx?icerik_id=f1c09246)). Within the context of Project four spot film was prepared besides three animations that explains children the importance of sleeping. In spot films bedding time is reminded to both children and families by the people known and loved in the society.

In this term children are in term of concrete operations of cognitive development. The child starts to see things from the eyes of other people, develops in subjects such as gender roles, distinction of fantasy and truth. In this term of children performing the expectations of society and effort of behaving in accordance with rules are observed. By this means, there is acceptance of authority, rules and behaviours of authority are not questioned. That's why it may be expected from children to accept people took part in this Project as authority and to behave accordingly. In this study it was aimed to identify awareness of students in years 2,3,4 and 5 of Kırıkkale primary school about "Goodnight Children" Project as well as the effect of Project on children and watching television habits of children.

### **Material and Method**

Our study was planned as a cross sectional research. The population of research is consisted of students in year 2,3,4 and 5. There are totally 82 schools in Kırıkkale province that 55 of them is primary school and 27 of them is high school and 46412 students are educating in these schools. By permission of Provincial Directorate for National Education between dates of April-June 2011, the study of "Goodnight Children Project Activity in 7-12 Year Old Children" was conducted by us. From the school list in the province given by Provincial Directorate for National Education, 5 primary school which socioeconomic level is low and 5 primary school which socioeconomic level is high were randomly selected by sampling method as a research area. In chosen schools before the beginning of lessons in the morning and in the afternoon, necessary information was given to children and the students that accepted to participate questionnaire were taken into study. The questionnaire forms involving demographic properties, the questions about "Goodnight Children Project" and questions about television watching were filled by children under supervision of researchers without writing names. The questionnaire forms were evaluated by SPSS 16 for Windows programme and statistical analyses (frequency, % percentage and Chi square) were done.  $p < 0.05$  value was accepted significant.

### **Findings**

436 students that are educating in Kırıkkale province primary schools were taken into the scope of research. It was reported that 35.8% of students are in year 4, 50.5 of them are girls, the average of having a sibling is  $2.6 \pm 1.0$ , the mothers of 67.4% are primary school graduate, the mothers of 88.6% are housewives, the fathers of 20.3% of them are university graduate, the fathers of 7.8% are having a profession and the financial situation of 48% is middle. When table 2 is examined 70.6% of students stated that the most watching television time is weekends and 67.9% of them stated television watching time is as the evening.

In Table 3 it is seen that 67.9% of students stated the most watching television time as evenings.

When "The Number of Television On Hours" are examined 44.3% of students stated the television is on for 3-5 hours within a day (Table 4).

When "The Most Watching Programmes" in Table 5 are examined, 39.1% of students stated as series and following after 22.3% of them stated as the news.

77.5% of students stated that their parents close television when something appears on screen unsuitable for children (Table 6).

When the students were asked the harms of late bedding, 43.9% of them answered as unable to wake up in the morning, 27.4 of them as unable to grow, 9.7% of them as being unhealthy, 11.8% of them as being sleepy and 1% of them as being aggressive and having punishment (Table 8).

78.2% of students in the scope of research know television characters visually whereas 21.8% of them don't.

4.1% of children claimed they never saw television warnings, 11.4% said once or twice and 84.5% said many times.

The students answered the question “What do you do when you see television warnings?” as 67.7% “I have to go to bed”, 23.3% “My parents warn me about going to bed” and 9% “Television warning is not effective on me”. It was observed that 81.9% of students find television warning effective whereas 18.1% of them find it unsuitable. When Table 7 is examined, 95.2% of students gave a right answer and 4.9% of them gave a wrong answer to the question “What’s the warning of television to the children about going to bed?”

In Table 9 there was not seen a significant difference between television watching duration and their genders. When television watching duration and mothers’ education statuses are examined the difference are significant ( $\chi^2:14,037$ ,  $p<0,005$ ), especially when mothers’ education status increasing, watching television duration decreasing.

### **Discussion**

In the scope of research, “Television Watching Habits” and the effects of “Goodnight Children Project” of 436 students educating in Kırıkkale province primary schools were examined. It was reported that 35.8% of students are in year 4, 50.5 of them are girls, the average of having a sibling is  $2,6\pm 1,0$ , the mothers of 67.4% are primary school graduate, the mothers of 88.6% are housewives, the fathers of 20.3% of them are university graduate, the fathers of 7.8% are having a profession and the financial situation of 48% is middle. 70.6% of students stated that the most watching television time is weekends and 67.9% of them stated television watching time is as the evening (Tablo 2). When “The Number of Television On Hours” are examined 44.3% of students stated the television is on for 3-5 hours within a day (Table 4).

In a survey done about how much the children watch television it was obtained as 3 and 5 age group of children watch television 19-20 hours in a week, at the age of 7 this watching time decreases to 15.5 because of school (Karaca, Pekyaman, 2007). In a research of Kaya and Tuna in 2008 it was found out that approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$  of students at least 1 hour, more than half of them at least 2 hours and approximately  $\frac{1}{4}$  of them at least 3 hours watching television in a day (Kaya Tuna 2008). In a research done by Doğan and his colleagues in it was obtained that students prefer reading after computer and television and there is a reverse relationship between computer and television duration and reading duration (Aksaçlıoğlu and colleagues 2007).

With 39.1% the children stated the most watching programme is series and following this comes the news with 22.3% (Table 5). In another research it was reported that the small children watch informative programmes more than the elder ones. It was also stated that these children are exposed to adult-oriented programmes more as well. (Karaca, Pekyama, 2007). Again in the same research, 67.5% of the students answered “Yes”, 32.5% answered as “No” to the question “Do you watch series regularly that are broadcasting now?”. This data shows the possible risk of  $\frac{2}{3}$  of primary school students being a serie addicted (Kaya, Tuna 2009).

Because the series start at eight and finishes between ten and half past ten, they can affect the bedding time of students. Serie addiction is important to affect the bedding time of child. In our study 53.9% of students stated that the series and movies are not suitable for children. Researches show that especially children and teenagers are affected from the violence in prime-time series, movies, reality shows and other programmes as perceptively and behaviorally (Doğan, 2006). The sedative effects before sleep ease the passing to sleep. Violent images, active and emotional programmes complicate the passing to sleep. Besides sleeping problems, the researches show that after watching television programmes involving rapid changing visions, the children cannot be caught up in long term attention required activities such as reading and solving jigsaw puzzle. Since most of the series are adult oriented, some problems can occur in children like perceiving the real world more risky, anxiety disorder or sleeping problems. Especially primary school children are disturbed from the real visions with an anxiety of experiencing the same things. Especially the more real and possible visions such as death of mother and father, natural disasters or wounding of children can be scary although they can be different for each children. The more a child exposed to scary programmes, the more they believe the world is scary. So this cause them to be an anxious person. Being exposed to frightening visions can create very strong and permanent effects on children. These effects can be short term such as deep horror and crying or can be long term such as fear of loneliness, traumatophobia, fear of death, sleeping disorders or doing extraordinary things before sleeping ([www.turkcebilgi.org](http://www.turkcebilgi.org) > Sağlık > Çocuk Sağlığı).

77.5% of students claimed that parents turn off television when something is on that is not suitable for children. Parents usually aware when something is not suitable for children during watching the programme. The awareness point that the programme is not suitable for a child is usually late point for prohibition.

Because the vision that is not wanted to be seen by children has already been seen, in other words “the early recognition” can not be done in order to make necessary prohibition. According to Nathanson (2001) the interference of parents decrease the value of television as an informative source in the eye of a child and this cause a child to evaluate television with more suspicious manner. Desmond, Singer & Singer (1990) stated that adapting rules give a message to a child that he is raised by his parents not by television and helps a child taking messages within the limits that are put by his parents (Bağlı, 2003).

When the students were asked the harms of late bedding, 43.9% of them answered as unable to wake up in the morning, 27.4 of them as unable to grow, 9.7% of them as being unhealthy, 11.8% of them as being sleepy and 1% of them as being aggressive and having punishment.

78.2% of students in the scope of research know television characters visually whereas 21.8% of them don't. 4.1% of children claimed they never saw television warnings, 11.4% said once or twice and 84.5% said many times. The students answered the question “What do you do when you see television warnings?” as 67.7% “I have to go to bed”, 23.3% “My parents warn me about going to bed” and 9% “Television warning is not effective on me”. It was observed that 81.9% of students find television warning effective whereas 18.1% of them find it unsuitable.

When desired behaviours are remained to children by suitable visual and auditory messages with repetitions, the desired behaviour change can be achieved. 95.2% of students gave a right answer and 4.9% of them gave a wrong answer to the question “What's the warning of television to the children about going to bed?”

“What are the damages of late bedding on Children?” is asked 43.9% of students answered as “I can't wake up”, 27.4% of them answered as “I can't grow up”, 9.7% of them answered as “I'll be unhealthy” and 0.5% of them answered as “I'll get a punishment”.

When television watching duration and mothers' education statues are examined the difference are significant ( $X^2:14,037$ ,  $p<0,005$ ), especially when mothers' education status increasing, watching television duration decreasing. Most of the children of mothers educating more than eight years (50,4%) watch television for 1-2 hours in a day. This result is thought that educated mothers achieve more sensibility towards the harms of television, can limit their children and being a positive modal. The strong sides of this study are, it is one of the first studies in Turkey to evaluate “Goodnight Children Project”, studying with wide sampling group and care of researches during data collecting period by being in classes to avoid interaction of children. The weak sides of research are sampling group was taken only from Kırıkkale province and applying of questionnaires with groups.

### ***Result and Suggestions***

In this study it was aimed to identify awereness of students in years 2,3,4 and 5 of Kırıkkale primary school about “Goodnight Children” Project as well as the effect of Project on children and watching television habits of children. The research group of this sectional study contains of 436 students of Kırıkkale primary school in years 2,3,4 and 5. The students of chosen schools were informed about the study and the acceptor students filled the questionnaires under researchers' supervision. 70.6% of students stated that the most watching television time was weekends, 44.3% of them stated television was on for 3-5 hours. They also stated that the most watching programme was series with 39.1% and with 22.3% the following programme was the news. It was found that 86.5% of children were watching the news and 53.9% of them were thinking that especially series were not suitable for children. 77.5% of them noted that television programmes involved violence. 59% of them mostly encountered violence in series and 15.4% of them in the news. 78.2% of the students that were in the scope of study knew television characters visually whereas 21.8% of them did not. It was discovered 81.9% of students found television warning effective. 95.2% of students gave right answer to the question “What is the warning of television for children about going to bed?” whereas 4.8% gave wrong answer.

As a result it was obtained that the students in the scope of study mostly complaint about violence on television, mothers mosly watch series and fathers mostly watch the news.

It was also found that television warning is effective on students and on their bedding time.

The awereness studies towards the “Harms of Television” must be increased and studies must be done to avoid children to be exposed to unwanted visions. The harms that televison give to our children must be avoided by making detailed studies with different sampling groups.

However all media cooperations must constitute their own self control policies and mechanisms by moving towards the rules about living, protection, growing and participation rights of children taking part in international and national agreements and laws and announce it to the public. Media cooperations must establish a system that provides inner inspection about the usage of their accepted broadcasting rules. This system must involve consulting organs that develop suggestions about children.

It can be suggested that since media organizations are the part of social responsibilities, whatever his/her duty is, all professionals that are working in media sector must sign a written contract before being accepted to a job, about acting suitable towards the right of children and children protection policies.

As a result media has got a power to affect individual positively or negatively. Media power must be used to educate and raise awareness of society.

**Table 1: The Distribution of Demographic Properties of Children**

<b>Class in progress</b>	n	%
2nd grade	19	4,4
3rd grade	106	24,3
4th grade	156	35,8
5th grade	103	35,6
Total	436	100
<b>Gender</b>		
Girl	216	49,5
Boy	220	50,5
Total	436	100
<b>Number of siblings: 2,6±1,0(Min 0, Max 9)</b>		
<b>Mother Educational Status</b>		
Primary school graduate	293	67,4
High school graduate	111	25,5
University graduate	31	7,1
<b>Mother Age: 34,9±6,1(Min 23, Max 54)</b>		
<b>Mother Occupation</b>		
Housewife	283	88,6
Working	25	5,7
Profession	17	3,9
Retired	8	1,8
<b>Father Educational Status</b>		
Primary school graduate	176	40,6
High school graduate	170	39,1
University graduate	88	20,3
No answer		
<b>Father Age: 39,9±6,1 (Min 25, Max 69)</b>		
<b>Father Occupation</b>		
Not working	221	50,9
Working	147	33,9
Profession	34	7,8
Retired	32	7,4
<b>Family Financial Status</b>		
Good	224	51,5
Middle	209	48,0
Bad	2	0,5

**Table 2: The Distribution of Answers given to the Question “When is the Most Watching Television Time at Home?”**

	Number	Percentage
Weekdays	125	28,7
Weekends	307	70,6
Both Weekdays and Weekends	3	0,7
<b>Total</b>	435	100

**Table 3: The Distribution of Answers Given to the Question “In Which Time Period Is the Television Mostly Watched at Home?”**

	Number	Percentage
Morning	57	13,1
Afternoon	62	14,2
Evening	296	67,9
Night	19	4,4
All the time	1	0,2
<b>Total</b>	435	100

**Table 4: The Distribution of Hours When Television is On**

	Number	Percentage
Never	5	1,1
1-2 hours	164	37,6
3-5 hours	193	44,3
All the time	72	16,5
<b>Total</b>	434	100

**Table 5: The Distribution of Answers Given to Question “What Kind of Programmes are Mostly Watched at Home?”**

	Number	Percentage
News	97	22,3
Series	170	39,1
Documentary	27	6,2
Magazine	9	2,1
Cartoons/ Movies	47	10,8
Multiple choice	85	19,5
<b>Total</b>	435	100

**Table 6: The Distribution of Answers given to the Question “What Do your Parents When a Vision on Television is not Suitable?”**

	Number	Percentage
Nothing	22	5,1
Keep me engaged	39	9,0
Close television	335	77,5
Change channel	36	8,4
<b>Total</b>	432	100

**Table 7: The Distribution of Answers to the Question “What is the warning of Television to the Children about Going to Bed?”**

	Number	Percentage
*Goodnight Children, Let’s Sleep and Grow	75	17,4
*Children Let’s Go to Bed	197	45,6
Go to Bed Early, Wake up Early	13	3,0
*That is Enough for Today, Goodnight to All Children	139	32,2
Sleep and Be Healthy	8	1,9
<b>Total</b>	432	100

\* The right warnings of television for children about going to bed

**Table 8: The Distribution of Answers to the Question “What are the Harms of Late Bedding for Children?”**

	Number	Percentage
Unable to wake up	189	43,9
Unable to grow	118	27,4
Being unhealthy	42	9,7
Being nervous and aggressive	2	0,5
Being sleepless	51	11,8
Having punishment	2	0,5
Other	28	6,3
<b>Total</b>	431	100

**Table 9: The Distribution of Relationship of Television on and Some Properties**

Television watching duration	Never	1-2 hours	3-5 hours	All the time	Total	Statistic
<b>Gender</b>	n %*	n %*	n %*	n %*	n %	X <sup>2</sup> :0,957 p:0,812
Girl	3 1,4	79 36,6	95 44,0	39 18,1	216 100	
Boy	2 0,9	85 39,0	98 45,0	33 15,1	218 100	
<b>Mother Educational Status</b>						
Illiterate	0 ,0	8 28,6	13 46,4	7 28,8	28 100	X <sup>2</sup> :14,037 p:0,029
Below 8 years	3 1,0	88 33,3	133 50,4	40 15,2	264 100	
Above 8 years	2 1,4	133 50,4	47 33,3	24 17,0	141 100	
<b>Mother Working Condition</b>						
Not working	4 1,0	145 37,9	172 44,9	62 16,2	383 100	X <sup>2</sup> :0,522 p:0,914
Working	1 2,0	19 38,0	21 42,0	9 18,0	50 100	
<b>Father Educational Status</b>						
Illiterate	0 ,0	8 50,0	6 37,5	2 12,5	16 100	X <sup>2</sup> :4,148 p: 0,657
Below 8 years	1 ,6	60 38,0	66 41,8	31 19,6	158 100	
Above 8 years	4 1,6	96 37,2	121 46,9	37 14,3	258 100	
<b>Father Working Condition</b>						
Not working	2 ,9	73 33,2	107 48,6	38 17,3	220 100	X <sup>2</sup> :10,846 p: 0,286
Working	3 2,0	61 41,5	56 38,1	27 18,4	147 100	
Profession	0 ,0	24 42,1	26 45,6	7 12,3	57 100	
Retired	0 ,0	6 66,7	3 33,3	0 ,0	9 100	
<b>Financial Status</b>						
Good	2 ,9	93 41,5	98 43,8	31 13,8	224 100	X <sup>2</sup> :5,866 p: 0,438
Middle	3 1,5	68 34,5	89 45,2	37 18,8	197 100	
Bad	0 ,0	3 23,1	6 46,2	4 30,8	13 100	

\*Row percentages were given

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