

Reminder: National Turn Off Your TV Week starts on April 19

National Turn It Off Week is April 19-24.

Did you know?

- Average number of TVs per household: 3
- Number of TV murders elementary-aged children see: 8,000
- Households with no TV rules: 53%
- Kids who have a TV in their bedroom: 68%
- How much more likely these kids are to smoke cigarettes than kids who don't have a TV in their bedroom: 3.5 times.

Love it or hate it, TV is part of American family life. Americans watch three to four hours

of TV daily. This time includes watching prerecorded movies, playing video games and surfing the Internet, sometimes simultaneously.

We undeniably enjoy these activities, which can be relaxing, entertaining and educational. Like too much of any good thing, however, research suggests that the amount of time we spend in front of the screen can have negative consequences:

- We are more likely to snack on high-calorie foods while watching TV and less likely to be physically active.
- No other waking activity burns fewer calories than

watching TV – not even other sedentary activities like playing video games, reading and talking on the phone.

• Adults who watch three hours of TV a day are far more likely to be obese than adults who watch less than one hour. The same goes for children. The risk for becoming and remaining overweight before the age of 9 increases with the amount of TV time.

National Turn It Off Week, April 19-24, is a good time to take a look at your family's viewing habits. How many hours are spent in front of a TV or computer screen compared to other activities?

• Instead of turning on the TV and plopping down on the couch, gather the family and come up with a list of alternative activities (see suggestions below). Jot down lots of ideas and post them on the refrigerator.

• Make changes gradually. Set limits. Experts recommend no more than two hours a day of recreational TV, computers, video games and DVDs for kids.

• Going "cold turkey" can backfire. We crave what we can't have.

• Know what your children, at any age, are watching – whether it's cartoons, sitcoms,

sports, news or educational programs. Talk to them about what they're seeing. Ask open-ended questions.

• Take TVs out of bedrooms. Sleeping with the TV on, even with the sound off, can disrupt sleep patterns and contribute to fatigue. Kids who have TV sets in their bedrooms also score lower in math, reading and language arts than kids who don't.

• Turn off the TV during meals. Use the time to talk about everyone's day.

Source: Sara Gable, Ph.D., Human Development & Family Studies, University of Missouri Extension

Just for Fun

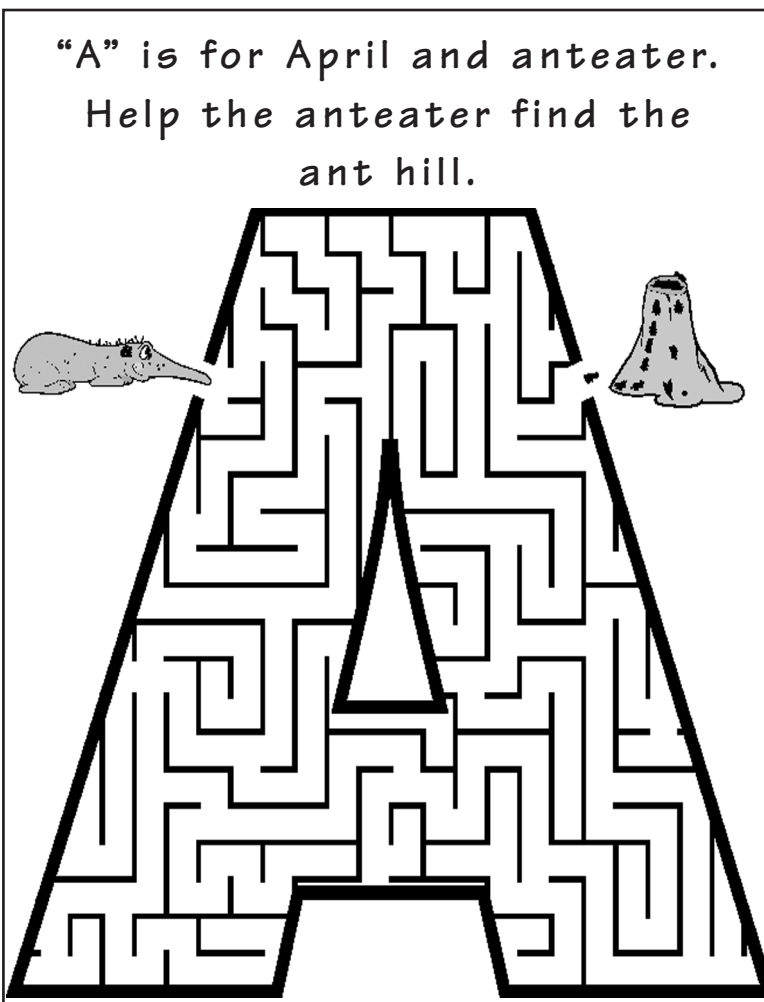
Casey and Kyle by Will Robertson



Solve this Sudoku

		1					9	
	3	4		6	5			
2	8		4					
				1		8		6
7								3
5		8		3				
					3		2	8
			2	9		6	1	
2						9		

Answer to March 17 Sudoku is on page 22



A youth is to be regarded with respect. How do you know that his future will not be equal to our present.

CONFUCIUS
Chinese philosopher
(551-479 BC)