

# Parenting PEOPLES

## TV Siphons Self-Esteem, Says Shari Lewis

“Television stones kids,” says Shari Lewis. An atypical comment from a stalwart of the small town screen since the Sixties. Lewis, who, along with her sidekick, LambChop, has won several Emmy Awards for her children’s programs, finds that today’s kids are comfortably numbed by television. She sees the information going through them like water through a sieve, “and very little sticks to a sieve,” she says. Longing for the days when children spent their free time playing and creating, the entertainer believes that watching TV actually robs children of their self-esteem. By observing without participating, kids get no feeling of accomplishment. “How do you develop from watching someone else?” she asks. Lewis urges parents to steer their children away from the tube and into imaginative play. But when they *do* watch, make it count—*Sesame Street* is one of her favorites. Or, stay tuned in January for her new PBS television program, *The Lamb Chop Play Along Show*. Promises the creator, “This show is different. It’s an anti-couch potato program that promotes interaction.”



—Vivien Santana Hughes

