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## Pitter-patter of a quieter life for children

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Darcy Fitzgerald

Australian parents are ditching mainstream children's TV over fears it's having a drug-like effect on kids – and creating their own, calmer alternatives.

Victorian couple Josie Mackerras and Darcy Prendergast built Pit Pats, a low-stimulation kids' program, after struggling to find suitable content for their sensitive daughter. Filmed at their home studio near Melbourne, the show swaps flashing lights

and rapid edits for breathing exercises, meditation and gentle movement.

"She'd be shot to the moon by fast edits, loud music, flashing colours," the pair said. "Pit Pats seeks to create engaging slow TV for kids – a plate of veggies rather than cotton candy."

An online parent forum with more than 400 responses named Peppa Pig, Cocomelon and Paw Patrol as the biggest offenders for

overstimulation.

Experts back the concerns. Australian Psychological Society chief executive Dr Zena Burgess said studies showed children's planning and memory performance drops after just nine minutes of fast-paced viewing.

Pit Pats is streaming now on YouTube.



Josie Mackerras and Darcy Prendergast created Pit Pats. Picture: Supplied