Sex, violence and rock and roll:
Using old and new media safely

World Summit on Media for Children
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Barbara Biggins

Children spend much time with media, both old and new, and

their media experiences have the potential for considerable influence on their development.

This influence can be positive, but without care, can be negative.

Quality media experiences can,

"help a child to understand
the mysterious world outside and
the equally mysterious world within, and
help children enjoy themselves."

Edward Palmer (founder Children's TV Workshop)

Negative media experiences essentially tell children falsehoods about the world

• about how they need to live in it,
• how they need to look and behave, and
• detract from children's enjoyment through the creation of unnecessary fears
  about themselves and what's around them.

The Australian Council on Children and the Media, collects research information to support

• advocacy on behalf of child audience for a media environment that supports their healthy development
• parents and professionals with reliable information and strategies about healthy use.
• parents in starting smart and soon with screens

Young children are our focus,

  early years are the time when parents can
• have most impact in shaping children's attitudes to screen use.

• have best opportunities to establish balance between screens and real life.

• more easily avoid exposure to unhealthy content

well before dependence on screens develops

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Research evidence shows
- benefits and hazards from time spent / content
  Hazards include
- obesity and overweight / poor sleep,
- slower language development / reduced attention,
- reduced school performance,
- aggressive attitudes / unnecessary fears
- premature sexualisation

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Media violence

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Media violence research literature:

 a compelling case for
- minimising exposure to glamorised violence
(hero/ good cause/ few real life consequences/
        rewarded / applauded/ humorous context.)

- avoiding products linked with violent media
Fantasising about violent acts via linked products (costumes/ toys) increases impact violence.

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Sexualised images:

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Sexualised images:

include depictions adult sexuality and children posed in a sexy fashion in clothing catalogues

occur often in marketing and music videos.

Many young girls suffer poor body image, self esteem. Too many think have to be
        hot, thin and sexy even though only 6.

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Children's sleep.

Poor sleep now linked to risks of obesity, plus poor school performance.
Avoiding
- scary images, TVs in bedrooms, and
- media use right to bedtime/ mobiles late night
promotes important sleep hygiene.

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Old media/ new media

Young children spend more time with TV
• more hours /day every day, cf internet
• relative risks
Governments put millions into internet safety
often directed at older children- too late

but neglect safety with old media

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What would help parents?

• info and strategies for managing screens
• promote "start smart, soon with screens"
• access to reliable recommendations of
quality age-appropriate product.
• provision of research-based classification
systems
Supports choice of age-appropriate products

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Convention on Rights of the Child

urges such support for parents

Article 18(2) says:

For the purpose of guaranteeing and promoting
the rights set forth in the present Convention,
States Parties shall render appropriate assistance to
parents and legal guardians in the performance of their
child-rearing responsibilities and shall ensure
the development of institutions, facilities and services for
the care of children.

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Parents should not be blamed or undermined

Governments, marketers, industry all
tell parents it's their responsibility to keep
their children safe, **but**
fail to provide effective support

Some marketers use underhand tactics to
sell to children without parents' knowledge or
permission,
Undermines parents' best efforts, behind backs

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Who's supporting parents?

• community groups like Commonsense Media
(US) and in Australia, the ACCM.
• ACCM has South Australian Government
support to provide movie and app reviews from
a child development perspective.
Know before you go and *Know before you load*

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Research-based classification systems

• support choice of age-appropriate media
• Netherlands Kijkwijzer scheme a model
• online games and apps are so numerous,
many governments are unable to classify them
with traditional schemes.
• development of International Age Rating
Coalition (IARC) for apps and online games.

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Parents do have responsibilities to protect their children, but

• Governments have an obligation to provide effective support in media management, including reliable consumer advice through classification systems.

• Industry needs to examine its practices (especially marketing).

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• Advertisers have responsibilities for
    outcomes of their advertising of
    unhealthy products to children

• Children's program creators
    where's the diverse story lines ?
    Stop endlessly repeating "there's this group of baddies who do bad things and there's nothing better for goodies to do but try to stop them by being better at using violence."

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Regulators, creators of mature content should heed Sonia Livingstone (2011)

• not all users equally equipped
    to protect themselves and their children

• unfair to expect all to do so, or to blame them for failure.

• media education and filters not universal remedies

• adopt strategy of "safety by design"

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Children have a right to protection from information and material injurious to his or her well-being

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For information about this paper
please contact:
Barbara Biggins
Hon. CEO
Australian Council on Children and the Media
PO Box 447, Glenelg SA 5045
bbiggins@ozemail.com.au
www.childrenandmedia.org.au

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Australian Council on
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