Is the new games rating system working?

This is the content of joint media release from Flinders University and ACCM dated 2 May

The new classification system for video games, introduced in January this year, is not providing the promised better protection for Australian children, according to Elizabeth Handsley, Professor of Law at Flinders University and President of the Australian Council on Children and the Media Australia.

“Our review of the statistics for the past three months has shown that violent material that was considered too extreme for teens in the US, Canada and Europe is readily available to that group in Australia,” Professor Handsley said.

“Over two thirds of the 23 video games to receive an MA15+ rating since the introduction in January of the new classification system are rated for adults overseas. Those ratings have principally been for extreme or intense violence,” she said.

“The introduction of the new video game classifications was a response to a concern in the community that the material available at MA15+ was too strong for 15 to 17-year-olds.

“The new guidelines were supposed to be stricter, so that such material would go into the new R18+ category. However, 16 of the 23 games rated MA15+ were deemed not suitable for 15 to 17-year-olds by either the Entertainment Software Rating Board (US and Canada) or Pan European Game Information or both. It would appear that the new system has not resulted in a tightening-up of the classification system at all.”

While 13 titles have earned the new R18+ rating, Professor Handsley said the classification discrepancy between Australia and other parts of the world showed that the new guidelines have not achieved the intended result.

The Australian Council on Children and the Media calls on the Standing Council on Law and Justice to review the guidelines in light of these findings, and to open the matter up for public comment.

Buy Steve Biddulph’s latest book, and support ACCM

Raising Girls:
From babyness to womanhood
- helping your daughter to grow up wise, warm and strong

Paperback - $24.00 including GST and Delivery in Australia

Purchase online at:
http://www.trybooking.com/CLXT

Victory for the ‘Get Maccas out of Toys ‘R’ Us’ Campaign

The Parents Jury have announced a successful campaign to get playfood toys representing McDonald’s products off the shelves of Toys ‘R’ Us stores. A Parents Jury member noticed the toys and alerted the organisation. An online petition was launched and Toys ‘R’ Us Australia have promised that remaining stock will be removed from stores by the end of May 2013.

http://theparentsjury.org.au

Inquiry deadlines: have your say

Free TV Australia (Free TV) is proposing amendments to the Commercial Television Industry Code of Practice (the Code) to reduce and control the promotion of live odds in live sporting broadcasts. The proposed amendments reflect an agreement reached by commercial radio, commercial television and subscription broadcasters which was announced by the Minister for Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy last year.

Public comments must be received by 20 May 2013.


The Australian Communications and Media Authority is conducting the Contemporary community safeguards Inquiry into the core principles that should guide the content of contemporary broadcasting codes of practice. They are hosting a series of Citizen conversations in June. Topics to be included in these discussions include “Classification and the time-shifting audience” and “Advertising and the changing world.”

For more information or to register for a session go to http://engage.acma.gov.au/

St Andrew’s Cathedral School and the Australian Council on Children and the Media present

Grand Theft Brainspace?
Games, apps & mobiles - issues & practical strategies

Dr Wayne Warburton, Macquarie University, NSW
Grand theft brainspace: What science tells us about the impact of violent media on children

Dr Kate Highfield, Macquarie University, NSW
Pocket games and media - benefits and concerns of gaming and media with mobile technologies

6.30 pm, Thursday 30 May 2013
M C Newth Auditorium, St Andrew’s Cathedral School
51 Druitt Street, SYDNEY

Tickets $20.00
Bookings online at http://www.trybooking.com/CVMW

IS THE NEW GAMES RATING SYSTEM WORKING?
FAST FOOD TOY VICTORY
EDITORIAL:
CLASSIFICATION: WE CAN DO BETTER FOR CHILDREN
NEW SEMINAR
INQUIRY DEADLINES : HAVE YOUR SAY
**EDITORIAL**

**Classification: we can do better for children**

The basic shape of our classification systems for films, DVDs and games, and for television has not changed in over 30 years- and it’s time that it did.

For all of that time, the classification categories have revolved around the age of 15 years.

While G content is supposedly suitable for everyone, PG content may contain some material that will confuse or upset those under 15 years, M content is not recommended for those under 15 years, and MA15+ content is not suitable for that age group. So what’s so significant about the age of 15 years? No one can really say.

And the criteria that define what goes into each category, seem focussed on preventing fright in children and offence to adults, rather than having as their principal aim, to support the healthy development of children, based on 60 years of well developed child development theory, and the latest research.

Indeed, the 2011-2012 Australian Law Reform Commission (ALRC) review of the National Classification Scheme (NCS) placed more emphasis on retaining compulsory classification at the upper levels (mature and adult content) of the system than on recommending ways of making the NCS more effective in preventing harm to children. In fact their proposals that content under MA15+ level might not need to be classified at all, or if so, done by self regulation, constitutes a real backward step.

However, there is some hopeful movement at the station. The Standing Council on Law and Justice Ministers have agreed to “a program of research to examine current classification categories, symbols and community standards in relation to media content”.

The Attorney General’s Department is planning to implement a three-stage research program into classification issues. The priority areas for research, to be commenced and progressed in stage one, are the existing classification categories and how well they are understood; and ways in which classification categories and consumer advice might be improved for better comprehension by the community and/or alignment with community standards.”

ACCM is broadly supportive of these plans but is concerned that while “community standards” might well provide a good measuring stick for the upper levels of content, criteria at lower levels should be shaped by the evidence about what is harmful to children at different age levels under 15 years.

And in another development, the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) is beginning a review of the principles guiding the content of Broadcasting Codes and will hold a series of Citizen Conversations (in Sydney)* on different aspects, such as news and current affairs, advertising and classification.

We look forward to some real progress soon.


**Generation Next Seminars**

ACCM Vice-President Dr Glenn Cupit will be speaking at the Generation Next seminar series - *Mental Health and Wellbeing of Young People*. Glenn is a Senior Lecturer in Child Development at the deLissa Institute, University of South Australia.

Glenn’s topic will be *Healthy Media Consumption – Practical Strategies*. Electronic media can have a very positive influence but it can also be misused with unhealthy results on mind and body. Glenn will provide established strategies to shift children’s media usage in a positive direction.

Glenn Cupit will be speaking at the following seminars:

- Brisbane - Friday 17 May - University of Queensland
- Sydney - Friday 31 May - Wesley Conference Centre
- Adelaide - Friday 21 June - St Peter’s Girls School

Other seminars in this series include:

- Melbourne - 10 May - Greater Union Cinemas
- Canberra - 14 June - The Playhouse

CONTENT REGULATION IS A CAN OF WORMS

FALLOUT from Stephen Conroy’s crazy-brave — and failed — attempt to have parliament pass legislation to regulate TV stations continues to be felt throughout the industry.

Jeffrey Browne, affectionately known as “Buckets” because of his belief that TV stations are merely “a bucket of contracts”, has resigned as the chairman of the industry lobby group Free TV. He was a victim of the perception that he lacked independence, being the boss of the Nine Network while ostensibly representing Seven, Ten and regional owners as well.

The problem for Browne centred on the fact that you had to work hard for the removal of the 75 per cent reach rule that limits the extent of audience available to any single network. Nine wanted the rule abandoned, as recommended by last year’s Convergence Review, so its way would be cleared to merge with Southern Cross Austereo, owners of a raft of regional TV stations affiliated with the Ten Network. But the Seven Network and Ten, sensing a threat and seeing no need, pushed back strongly and the proposed legislation died in Conroy’s take-it-or-leave-it “reform” package.

According to reports, Nine and SCA are persisting with their efforts to merge by exploring ways to get around the 75 per cent reach rule. This would necessarily result in asset sales by SCA, but that might be the easy part — unscrambling a very complex omelette of affiliations and shared coverage in some regions is sure to be fiercely resisted by the incumbents as well as second-tier regional operator WIN TV.

A can of worms. WIN owner Bruce Gordon is the biggest shareholder in Ten and sits on the board, but he owns Adelaide and Perth stations affiliated with Nine and would be the biggest loser in a Nine SCA merger. Seven has affiliation deals with SCA in Tasmania, parts of regional South Australia and Darwin, which will add further complexity.

Another victim of the legislation is the broadcasting regulator itself, the Australian Communications and Media Authority. It is now searching for ways to competently regulate a modern converged industry using 21-year-old laws designed for yesterday’s analog world.

All in all, it’s a mess, and there’s no snowflake of hope left that it will be fixed this side of the September 14 election. It would probably be another year or two at best before an incoming Coalition government got around to addressing all the industry pressure points and designed legislative answers to the problems.

ACMA’s regulatory remit is extensive. It regulates fixed and mobile telephones, data systems, radio frequency spectrum, along with television and radio. It has published papers, one boldly stating the regulatory system in Australia is broken and another providing an outline of what it sees as a new approach designed to serve the future.

They are, in my view, on the right track, uncoupling the old system of regulating by “allo” — that is, each element such as radio and television is treated separately — and replacing that with a “layered” approach where issues across any platform are dealt with in terms of infrastructure, distribution, applications and content. The only contentious connection with the public comes in the content sector.

ACMA chairman Chris Chapman gave his annual speech to the Command Day congress last week. It was a long and detailed review of where ACMA was and where it was going. Much of its content was highly technical and couched in impenetrable bureaucrats, but for those willing to poke through the entratls it revealed some interesting insights to the way Chapman is approaching the dilemma of regulating without a modern legislative framework.

Most public interest in ACMA matters centres on how it regulates radio and TV. It has been laughed at and branded a toothless tiger for its failure to act against radio bad boys Kyle Sandilands and Alan Jones, for instance, when the public has been outraged by what it considers behaviour beyond common decency.

Chapman’s problem has been that while the law allows him to cancel a radio or TV station’s licence, he has no intermediate or scalable powers. The law does not allow ACMA to revoke, fine or order miscreants off air. The best ACMA can do is to issue in instances where the public believes a broadcaster has gone beyond community limits is to engage station management and to negotiate undertakings if breaches of content regulations are repeated.

We saw an example of this last Thursday when ACMA commenced Adelaide radio station 5AA for apologising for remarks made by its shock jock Bob Francis, who said he hoped boat people drowned. ACMA found 5AA guilty of breaching codes of decency and in the absence of penalty provisions, recommended an apology. What ACMA saw as a suitable outcome was achieved through negotiation rather than law.

In his speech, Chapman gives a clue that he is thinking of using agreed codes of conduct as a way of providing ACMA with a choice of remedies for breaches. Commercial radio and television, as well as community stations, all have agreed codes of practice registered with ACMA. These are reviewed each half decade or so and some are up for review.

Chapman’s plan is to try to get in front of the game by getting each industry sector to agree to put penalty options into their codes, along with education and training practices designed to prevent breaches in the first place.

This sounds a bit like turkeys voting for Christmas. It is hard to imagine radio station bosses agreeing to pay hefty fines if one of their personalities, often employed for the sole purpose of grabbing listeners’ attention and building ratings by being unusual, different or controversial, should run afoul of the rules.

This is especially so when the law says they don’t have to. ACMA and its predecessors have always had the power to revoke licences, but it has never been used.

Chapman’s powers of persuasion should not be underestimated, and he might end up cobbling together a workable form of content regulation.

But for a simpler and better solution would be for a new set of laws, designed for today’s age of converged media.

The Australian, 22 April 2013

GADGETS

POPULAR INTERNATIONAL TV guide app On Air TV has finally launched in Australia, three years after it debuted in Europe, where it received 1.5 million downloads. The app offers listings for Australian free-to-air channels, along with images, trailers and videos on YouTube, and has extensive social media functions. You can set up alert reminders for your favourite shows and get personalised TV recommendations. These are based on the user’s preferences and curated choices of the On Air editorial team. The app has listings for six countries, including Australia. It’s available for the iPhone, iPad and Android devices for free.

CHRIS GRIFFITH
The Australian, 19 April 2013

GAMING ADDICTION

No consensus to treat ailment

TREATMENT for video game addiction would be improved if psychologists adopted a standard definition for the problem, University of Adelaide researchers say.

In a study, published in the latest issue of the journal Clinical Psychology Review, the university’s Dr Daniel King found there was no clear consensus on what constituted pathological video gaming, and how it should be measured.

“It’s really hard to treat people effectively if, as a profession, we don’t have a standard definition of pathological video gaming,” he said.

The Advertiser, 20 April 2013
Convergence Review is unlikely to revive

MICHAEL BOSEY  
REGULATION

AFTER more than two years of work, discussion and politicking, the federal government’s Convergence Review appears all but dead.

After Communication Minister Stephen Conroy’s suicide bombing of his media reform package last month, Media understands the Coalition is unlikely to adopt any of the review’s recommendations as policy platforms before the September 14 election or in government.

While the Coalition is unwilling to dismiss the review into the changing media landscape and emerging technologies as there would be no “upside” in doing so, it is understood there is a belief the Convergence Review and Finkelstein are “functionally of no use”.

After two years of deliberation, including terms of reference, framing paper, drafting paper, interim report and copious industry consultation and submissions, the Convergence Review committee released its final report in April last year. Just under a year later, Senator Conroy delivered a “take it or leave it” ultimatum of a week for his legislative response to the recommendations of the inquiries.

Only two of six bills proposed were passed, including minor changes to the ABC and SBS charters, a TV licence fee rebate for the free-to-air networks, worth tens of millions to each network, and diminished local content responsibilities.

Two parliamentary committees are due to report in June, one on the abolition of the controversial “75 per cent reach rule” for media organisations. Nothing is expected to come of that report as it will be due in the last two sitting weeks before the election.

Media academics believe there is still a place for the work and findings of the Convergence Review, even if they don’t agree on its findings.

“There was difficulty for the Convergence Review as soon as the Finkelstein review (Indepen- dent Media Inquiry) was announced,” said Terry Flew, professor of media and communication at Queensland University of Technology.

“The Finkelstein review was always seen more explicitly in political terms and as having an agenda to rein in the press, which was never the remit of the Convergence Review, whose remit was to reduce the amount of regulation on media and increase harmony across platforms.

“Finkelstein completely overtook the agenda and came to dominate what people then thought media reform would be,” he said, adding that Conroy’s focus was primarily the Public Interest Media Advocate “rather than about what changes should be made to ownership, content and standards laws. It was a lot of misplaced energy.”

Outsiders agree that a converged media landscape demands attention. “It’s a missed opportunity if nothing comes of it at all. But beyond that I actually think it’s unlikely that nothing will happen,” said Ben Goldsmith, senior research fellow at QUT’s ARC Centre of Excellence for Creative Industries and Innovation.

The Australian, 22 April 2013

Girl, 4, receiving treatment for iPad addiction

ELEANOR HARDING  
DAILY MAIL, LONDON

A Girl aged four is having psychiatric treatment after becoming Britain’s youngest known iPad addict.

She is one of many child patients displaying compulsive behaviour after using the tablet device from an early age.

Doctors say she is so addicted to games on her parents’ iPad that she experiences withdrawal symptoms when it is taken away.

It comes days after a poll showed more than half of parents let their babies use a smartphone or tablet, with one in seven allowing it for four or more hours a day.

The girl, from the south-east of England, has been hooked on the device from age three.

Her psychiatrist Dr Richard Graham, from Capio Nightingale Clinic in London, said there must be many more addicts of the same age. He commented her parents for seeking help quickly, saying that by age 11, her problem might have become so severe that she would have required in-patient care.

His clinic charges about £23,000 a month for a “digital detox program” to wean patients off tablets and other devices. Some spend 36-hour stretches online and operate up to 20 Facebook profiles.

Dr Graham said: “Don’t leave your iPad around because if you do, and children see all the pretty colours, they will want to use it too.”

“They can’t cope and become addicted, reacting with tantrums and uncontrollable behaviour when they are taken away.”

Internet Addiction Disorder is to be recognised by the NHS in a manual for GPs.

Childcare author Tannith Carey said: “IPads, iPads and smartphones have become the new dummies for babies and toddlers.”

A recent parent survey revealed that more than half let their babies use a tablet or smartphone, while one in seven give them access to them for four or more hours every day.

Although 50 per cent of parents admit to buying their children digital devices, as many as 81 per cent think they spend too much time on them.

Many parents also confisicate their children’s favourite electronic gadgets as a punishment — though more than half admit this approach has sparked a tantrum — branded an “iPaddy”.

The Advertiser, 23 April 2013
Get ready for addiction to Bioshock’s shoot-em-up fun

STUART KENNEDY

BIOSHOCK Infinite is whacky, smart, horrific and vastly entertaining. Once begun, get ready to lose a chunk of your life to this addictive role-playing shoot-em-up game. It is about as visually enticing as computer entertainment can be. Set mostly in the impossible city of Columbia, which floats high above the US of 1912, Bioshock Infinite offers vistas of pre-WWII skyscrapers that really are nuzzling up against the clouds.

The city is connected by Skyline, an airy roller coaster. Hijacking rides on Skyline with a hi-tech hook, which you must learn to do, provides a new style of play and a wildly gyrating view of Columbia.

Bioshock Infinite is about as good as it gets for computer visuals. While Columbia looks wonderful, especially during the opening sequence where there is much exploration and no combat, the place soon becomes a nasty dystopia with an underclass treated as sub-human, especially the Irish and African Americans.

Your character is Booker DeWitt, a seedy private detective who is rocketed up to Columbia to find and set free the mysterious Elizabeth, a young woman held captive there for most of her life.

Once found, your partnership with Elizabeth becomes a whole new feature of the game. As well as lots of conversation that backgrounds the game plot, she provides insight into trips, traps and extra goodies and has her own — very slick — artificial intelligence that has her performing all sorts of different actions depending on where you lead. In a beach scene early in the game, Elizabeth will wander over and try to lift a medicine ball, but only if you approach the dudes working out on the beach.

She also comes in handy during combat, when she will throw you vital stuff, such as health packs and extra ammo, usually just when needed. So symbiotic is the Elizabeth/Booker relationship that in sections of the game where she disappears, I really missed her.

Combat uses a mix of projectile weapons such as the wonderfully destructive crank (Gaeting) gun and powers known as Vigors, which can do everything from levitate enemies for easy execution or allow you to torment them with a murder of crows. Enemies range from local cops to the hilarious Patriot, a mechanical, flag-draped George Washington.

One fault lies in the ageing inards of the Xbox 360 and PlayStation 3 game consoles, which are hard-pressed to keep up with all the graphic action. The PC version was played on a machine with strong, contemporary hardware with all the graphics quality settings maxed out. The game looked stunning on the PC, with great depth, detail and smooth as butter animation. The Xbox 360 version was lacklustre, especially in graphic detail.

PRICE: PC $79.99
Consoles $99.99
RATING: 9.5/10

Dangerous prescription for health

There can be fewer shows that are potentially more toxic than The Biggest Loser: the Next Generation. The inclusion of children as young as 15 has the potential to have harmful effects on both the physical and psychological health of these young contestants. Furthermore, some viewers may be negatively influenced, setting them up for a lifetime of body-image issues and an unhealthy relationship with food and exercise. I don’t think anyone would argue that healthy eating, exercise and maintaining a healthy body weight are behaviours we should be promoting. However, the guilt, shame and fear tactics used on the show are not the way to go about ‘changing the shape of Australia’. A warning should be provided at the beginning of each episode stating the excessive nature of the activities and the potential health risks, and that these activities should not be attempted at home without medical advice.

Dr Michael Carr-Gregg, Balwyn
The Age Green Guide, 4 April 2013

Girls worry about image

NEARLY a third of girls are unhappy with their appearance, official figures show.

Looks are the biggest worry for older children and young teenagers, according to the report by the British Office for National Statistics. A quarter of those aged 11 to 15 were unhappy about their appearance and fewer than one in five said they were entirely happy with it.

A study last year showed girls as young as 12 skipped meals to be skinner.

-Daily Mail
The Advertiser, 6 Apr 2013
It's happy birds at Rovio as profit doubles

JUHANA ROSSI

ROVIO Entertainment continued to grow at a rapid clip last year, but a top executive said maintaining momentum would hinge on how well it made the transition from a popular Nordic game developer into a global entertainment powerhouse.

The Finnish company, which struck gold in 2009 with the launch of its Angry Birds mobile game, said its revenue doubled last year compared with 2011 and it posted a steep increase in net profit.

Staff more than doubled to 518 and its closely watched active-monthly-user count passed 250 million.

Still, chief financial officer Herkko Soininen said in an email that Rovio needed to focus on new game launches and find success on a gambit of new entertainment initiatives, including a new cartoon series and a feature film planned for later in the decade.

“The rate of growth and profitability are dependent on the success of new games launches, our ability to maintain and strengthen the relationship we have with our fans and the speed and success of our new initiatives,” he said.

Mr Soininen's comments will be closely studied by potential investors waiting for Rovio to detail plans for an initial public offering. In recent years, executives at the closely held company have expressed interest in an IPO — including statements made to The Wall Street Journal — but have given no indication of specific plans.

“At the moment we have nothing new to tell on that front,” Mr Soininen said.

Rovio posted a net profit of €55.5 million (€68.2m) for last year, representing a 57 per cent increase year on year. Revenue grew 106 per cent to €152.2m.

Mr Soininen didn’t disclose Rovio’s liquidity position but said “the company has a solid balance sheet with a healthy amount of cash and equity”.

Since the launch of Angry Birds, Rovio chief executive Mikael Hed has been focused on building the company through an aggressive expansion in licensed merchandise — ranging from soda to children’s books to hoodie sweatshirts — while also launching new game titles.

About 45 per cent of Rovio’s revenue comes from the sale of licensed merchandise, up steeply from 2011.

The Australian, 5 April 2013

ABC2 daytime the nation’s ‘babysitter’

MICHAEL RODAY
TELEVISION

ABC2 may be the designated children's channel for the public broadcaster but ABC2 has firmly established its position as the country’s daycare provider.

The ABC’s major multichannel is the dominant digital channel during the daytime and during Tuesday last week the channel had 18 of the top 20 highest-rated shows across any multichannel or the subscription television platform.

ABC2 is the major digital channel during the daytime but its impact is not seen as only evening viewing shares are released by ratings provider OzTAM.

So far, ABC2 has a share of 7.6 per cent for the year to date in daytime against the next best, Ten’s Eleven (3.2 per cent) and ABC3’s 3 per cent. This compares with ABC2’s 6pm-midnight channel share of 2.4 per cent for the year to date.

On Tuesday, Eleven’s Neighbours was the only non-kids program to rank in the top 10, with a relatively low audience for the soap of 228,000. ABC2’s animated series Peppa Pig (285,000 viewers in the five capital cities), Olivia (263,000) and Octonauts (244,000) topped the day with Bananas In Pyjamas the top local program with 240,000 viewers.

ABCTV’s controller of children’s television, Tim Brooke-Hunt, said the growth in the audience for ABC4Kids “reflects above all the quality of the channel’s programming” and the popularity of the channel’s hosts, Giggle & Hoot.

“I believe that ABC4Kids’ ratings will continue to grow as more parents discover the channel,” he said.

ABC2’s daytime share is slightly up this month although the ABC2 daytime schedule averages more than 80,000 daily with a solid consistency across programs. The obvious conclusion is ABC2 is being used as a national babysitter.

Barbara Biggins, chief executive at the Australian Council on Children and the Media, noted a 2011 research study commissioned by the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth showed parents placed great faith in the ABC. “We did some focus groups with parents and they all demonstrated a very high reliance on ABC Kids, especially those who were busy about exposing their kids to ads and violence,” she said.

The Australian, 22 April 2013

LAST POST

How does the ability to download simultaneously several high-quality entertainment videos assist in improving productivity? If only our schoolchildren focused more on improving literacy and numeracy skills than being entertained, our prospects would be brighter.

Gordon Thurlow, Launceston, Tas
NEW PUBLICATIONS

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Grecu, Corina (2013)
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Kuss, D J; Griffiths, M.D (2012)

Festl, R; Scharkow, M; Quandt, T (2013)

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The allure of the forbidden: Breaking taboos, frustration, and attraction to violent video games. Psychological Science, Vol. 24, No. 4, Pp507-513

Starcevic, Vladan (2013)

Martin, Jennifer (2013)

VIOLENCE
Bushman, BJ & Newman, K, Co-Chairs (2013)

CONFERENCES

Southgate Theory Club:
Children’s rights and interests in an adult world

Presenters include
ACCM President
Professor Elizabeth Handsley

Wed 22nd May 5-7pm

http://www.flinders.edu.au/events/show/event/southgate-theory-club
**KIDS’ TV**

Content, it talks about how to cope when you are being mistreated or harassed and also how to approach a safe adult or get help to manage the situation.


**Free-to-play children’s games may be unlawful in the UK**

The Gamasutra website reports that the Office of Fair Trading in the UK has announced that it plans to investigate free-to-play apps and games aimed at children. They are looking at whether children are being unfairly pressured into buying additional content or virtual money for free-to-play games.

The OFT has written to a number of companies that offer web and app-based free-to-play children’s games in order to gather information about how these games are being marketed to children.

In particular, the organization wants to know whether these games include “direct exhortations” to children, strongly encouraging them to purchase extra content, or persuading parents that this extra content needs to be bought.

According to the OFT if this is happening, it would be classed as unlawful under the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008 act.


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**WORLD NEWS**

**Coke focuses on teens and mobiles**

According to Adweek the beverage firm Coca Cola has unveiled an initiative that will eventually include dozens of digital games and other content likely to appeal to teens, all to be accessed from mobile phones.

Seventeen digital experiences, such as games called “Ice Toss” and “Guide the Bubble,” are live via dedicated sites. Coke believes most of the activity will happen on smartphones and tablets, but the effort can also be accessed from desktops. A digital media push involving 19 teen-friendly media partners like Alloy, Vevo, Buzzfeed, Facebook and Twitter is coming.

This is the first all-digital campaign by Coca-Cola and Coke marketers envision this content-based strategy to be long term.


**Website to help deal with the aftermath of ‘sexting’**

A recently launched Canadian website aims to help children and teens regain control of their lives in the aftermath of ‘sexting’ or cyber bullying. This follows the suicides of two Canadian teenage girls who were bullied online.

The website NeedHelpNow.ca is designed to give teens and their parents the tools to get through those types of situations without resorting to desperate measures. The resource has information for parents, it has a step-by-step guide on how to remove content, it talks about how to cope when

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**Membership rates (renewable on July 1st each year)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>National</th>
<th>$210.00</th>
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<td></td>
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**small screen subscription (for non-members)**

<table>
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<th>In Australia</th>
<th>Outside Australia</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$66.00</td>
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**New membership**

**Renewal**

**small screen subscription**

**Donation (tax deductible $2 & over)**

**Total**

Payment by:
- [ ] cheque
- [ ] credit card: Bankcard / Visa / Mastercard
- Expiry date:

Name on card: __________________________

Card no: ______________________________

Signature: ______________________________

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**KIDS’ TV**

A selection of children’s programs screened on TV during the period:

**ABC 1 (afternoon only)**

Play School; Connie the Cow; Tilly and Friends; Pat and Stan; Majority Rules; Five Minutes More; Pingu; Planet Sketch; Cornel and Bernie

**ABC 2**

Kioka; Iconicles; Chuggington; Fireman Sam; The Hive; Peppa Pig; Grandpa in my Pocket; Zigby; Thomas and Friends; Poko; Sesame Street; Barbar; The Mole Sisters; Florrie’s Dragons; Milly Molly; Maya the Bee; Arthur; Igam Ogam; Bookaboo; Peppa Pig; Octonauts.

**ABC 3**

3 on 3; Backyard Science; Animalia; total Drama Island; Kid vs Kat; The Adventures of Figaro Pho; Tracey McBean; I got a Rocket; Sumo Mouse; Bushwhacked!; Escape from Scorpion Island; BTN Extra; Rush TV; My Place; News on 3 Update; M.I. High; Wolfblood; Grizzy Tales; Gasp!; Chop Socky Chooks; Total Drama Island.

**SEVEN**

Saturday Disney.

**NINE**

Dora the Explorer; Bubble Guppies.

**TEN**

Totally Wild/Paradise Cafe; The Elephant Princess; Scope.

**NICKELODEON**

SpongeBob SquarePants; Max and Ruby; Team Umizoomi; Lalaloopsys; Peter Rabbit; Rocket Monkey; The Fairly Odd Parents; Dora; Bubble Guppies.

**DISNEY CHANNEL**

Good Luck Charlie; Jessie; Phineas and Ferb; Austin & Ally; So Random; Mind over Madie; Dog with a Blog; Mr. Young; Just Kidding; Shake It Up.