



small screen

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Media violence hurts our kids

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Instagram for kids Would yours use it?

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KIDS' SCREEN TIME 'RISKY'

Increased screen time risky for preschool children's well-being

A [recent Finnish longitudinal study](#) of 699 children aged between 18 months and 5 years has found that high screen time has multiple risks for children's psychosocial well-being.

These risk factors have significance in the long term, and are related to problems in children's socio-emotional development later on. As well as the longitudinal associations between e-media use



at 18 months and psychosocial symptoms at 5 years of age, the study looked at cross-sectional associations between e-media use

and psychosocial symptoms at 5 years.

The researchers conclude that 'Although children's e-media use patterns might not seem problematic when considering use on a daily level, they do have risks in the long term. They urge health professionals play a key role in providing

information for parents on the safe use of e-media devices in young children in order to protect their healthy development."

UN: Children's rights in the digital environment matter

The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (UN CROC) released its [General Comment 25](#) on the rights of the child in relation to the general environment on March 2.

The UN CROC has held an extensive period of worldwide consultation commencing in March 2019, and ending in November 2020.

The Australian government's submission on the draft can be found [here](#), and ACCM's [here](#). [UK group 5 Rights](#), which had played a significant part in the development of the Comment, held [an online launch](#) of GC 25 on March 24.



Coalition wants 'surveillance advertising' ban

US groups unite to outlaw tech giants' main moneymaker

About [40 US groups](#), including the American Economic Liberties Project, the Campaign for a Commercial Free Childhood and The Real Facebook Oversight Board, have written an [open letter](#) calling for a ban on "surveillance advertising".

The coalition describe it as "the core profit-driver for gatekeepers like Facebook and Google, as well as adtech middlemen".

Surveillance advertising is the practice of extensively tracking and profiling individuals and groups, and then micro-targeting ads at them based on their behavioral history, relationships, and identity.

These dominant firms curate the content each person sees on their platforms using those dossiers – not just the ads, but newsfeeds,

recommendations, trends, and so forth – to keep each user hooked, so they can be served more ads and mined for more data.

"As leaders across a broad range of issues and industries, we are united in our concern for the safety of our communities and the health of democracy," the letter said. "Social media giants are eroding our consensus reality and threatening public safety in service of a toxic, extractive

business model. [That's why we're joining forces...](#)"

Further reading on the Coalition's actions and worldwide concerns on these issues is [here](#).



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editorial

Media violence
hurts our children

BARBARA BIGGINS
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ACCM's ongoing business is the collection, review and dissemination of research on children's relationships with screen media. We note that much research in recent years is usefully focussed on topics related to children's interactions with digital media such as cyberbullying, online safety, and problematic internet use and dependence. These are making the headlines, and attracting the attention of regulators and funding agencies. However, older well established findings such as the adverse risks to children of repeated exposure to media violence seem to have faded from corporate memory (if ever truly accepted by business or government). Of particular concern to ACCM is the ongoing exposure of the young, from an early age, to "glamorised" violence. Media violence is defined as actions intended to physically harm or kill other people or humanoids. "Glamorised" violence is performed by heroes who are portrayed as justified, and being

best at it, are applauded and rewarded. Many children's cartoons, most superhero movies and the majority of computer games feature violence in that category.

When such movies are given at least an M classification it should be respected. ACCM was amazed to read News Ltd's film writer, Leigh Paatsch's school holiday movie guide (*Herald Sun* 3/4, *Sunday Mail* 4/4/21), which claimed to "explain which films will suit your family". This included *Godzilla vs King Kong* (M). Paatsch said "young viewers aged nine and above – and boys in particular are hardwired to enjoy the mindless spectacle of two of moviedom's most famous monsters engaged in a planet-rattling smackdown. "The target audience [his was 9-12, 13+] will be most delighted by what they see". So are boys of that age "hardwired" to enjoy violence, or have they been desensitised by long exposure to violent super hero movies, inappropriately promoted to them by the industry? And have those boys absorbed the movies' inherent message that "violence works and violence wins"? The impact on children of the constant repetition of this message should concern us all. ACCM often asks itself why no one in Government, trying to prevent violence against women, seems to be asking whether screen portrayals of glamorised violence could be influencing the cultural attitudes of the young to accept the use of violence to solve conflict.

Reducing such exposure could be one remedy.



GLAMORISED: Many children's cartoons, most superhero movies and the majority of computer games feature "glamorised" violence.

US groups call for end to 'surveillance advertising'

From page one

A US Congressional joint hearing entitled "Disinformation Nation: Social Media's Role in Promoting Extremism and Misinformation" was held on March 25 and hosted by the Subcommittee on Communications and Technology and the Subcommittee on Consumer Protection and Commerce.

The hearing at which the CEOs of Facebook,



Google and Twitter testified, began at noon and lasted for more than five hours.

In a key exchange, [Rep. Kathy Castor](#) (pictured), D-Fla., asked Mark Zuckerberg how much revenue Facebook generates by targeting advertising at users under the age of 13. "It should be none of it," Zuckerberg replied.

"We don't allow children under the age of 13 on any services that run advertising."

[Read more here.](#)

ADVERTISING

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VIDEO GAMES

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VIOLENCE

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Transitions in aggression among children: Effects of gender and exposure to online violence
 AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR FEB 2021



US: Instagram plans a kids' version

Facebook says it is [exploring the development of an Instagram-like app](#) for children under 13 to enable them to keep up with family and friends “in a safe and ad-free environment”.

The new app seems likely to be a policy-driven move

to lure children under the age of 13 off their original Instagram platform where they technically aren't allowed.

But would you let your kids use it? Danica Lo of Hong Kong Tatler [looks at the risks](#) associated with the new app.

UK: Leading health organisations want an end to junk food ads

The UK's Obesity Health Alliance (OHA) [found ending online advertising for unhealthy products such as sweets, crisps and pizza](#) may benefit UK children by removing the equivalent of 88 skips of doughnuts or 183 wheelie bins full of chocolate biscuits from their diets every week.

But the industry is on the attack, with government ministers [threatening to kill off the 'half-baked' plan](#).

NOR: Study reveals staggering amount of unhealthy food and beverage marketing to children and adolescents

In Norway, [a new study](#) finds 80 per cent of food and drink ads aimed at children and adolescents violate World Health Organisation guidelines.

The Oslo Metropolitan University (OsloMet) study finds a staggering amount of ads promote unhealthy nutrition.

US: The Digital Wellness Lab has been launched

An evolution of the Center on Media and Child Health, [Boston Children's Hospital's Digital Wellness Lab](#) will “synergise global thought leaders from tech, content creation and health sciences” to build a digital environment that advances the well-being of families and children.

US: Increased time online in pandemic will have lasting effects

Psychology professor Douglas Gentile [says “children are exposed to various risks online](#), and COVID increases the odds because now they're online more than ever”.

“If children haven't had the training to know what to look out for, they're perhaps subject to more risks.”

CAN: Aiming to regulate streaming services to support local content

Australia might have found a way to remunerate news media for content appearing on digital platforms, but Canada is way ahead of Australia with [Bill C-10](#), which would enable the regulator, the CRTC, to require SVODs to ‘make financial contributions to Canadian content and creators’.

AUS: New rules for a new media landscape - modernising television regulation in Australia

The next round of media reforms is underway, and [the federal government is seeking consultation](#). Deadline for submissions is May 23.

US: Disney+ is huge and growing

Disney+, has surpassed 100 million subscribers, [the company has claimed, a symbolic win](#) that emphasises how the company has been the most successful of the new entrants trying to chip away at Netflix Inc.'s direct-to-consumer

dominance. The service is on track to meet the company's projection of 260 million subscribers by 2024.

US: Netflix is aiming for the kids and families market

Netflix is stepping up its output of kids and family movies and series to fend off competition from newer child-friendly streaming services such as Disney+. [Netflix says it will release more than 50 new original movies and TV shows](#) aimed at kids and families this year.

US: Author of *Phantom Tollbooth* dies aged 91

Norton Juster, one of those writers made world-famous by a single book (for children with curious minds) [has died aged 91](#). *The Phantom Tollbooth*, launched in 1961, has remained in print ever since, and was made into a movie in 1970.

NZ: Let's hear it for books and readers

After a year of digital learning and virtual teaching, [we need to appreciate the value of real books](#), says Kathryn [MacCallum](#), associate professor of digital education at the University of Canterbury.

UK: New gaming and gambling research published

GambleAware has [published a research report](#) which consolidates evidence for the structural and psychological similarities between gambling and gaming, and also established that links between loot box purchasing and ‘problem gambling’ have been robustly verified in around a dozen studies.