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Media Release

Parents need better information about movies for children

The peak community organisation ACCM is calling for an improved National Classification Scheme that more effectively protects children and supports parents as they look for enjoyable and age appropriate media experiences for their children.

ACCM President Elizabeth Handsley says, 'It is time the National Classification Scheme supported Australian parents by providing more detailed, reliable and consistent information about the films and games on offer for their children. The existing scheme does not provide sufficient details about the influence of content on children at different developmental levels under the age of fifteen. Because of this deficit, ACCM has been publishing child development-based reviews of all G and PG movies, and some M-rated movies, since July 2002.'

She continued, 'We recently had an opportunity for improvements in this field, when the Australian Law Reform Commission reviewed the National Classification Scheme. Unfortunately this opportunity was missed, and under the proposed changes parents would still be left in the dark about a lot of the things they need to know to make an informed choice'.

This week, the Council celebrates its 10th year in providing the Know Before You Go movie review service for parents and to date has reviewed over 700 movies. The reviews inform parents about movie content and the likely impacts on children at different ages and stages. This enables parents to make more informed choices of media that will be enjoyed by their children.

Prof Handsley said 'Know before you go has proved its worth. Many parents have expressed their relief at finding such a service. Additionally, they have been provided with full information about the content of films with controversial classifications, such as *Prometheus* (downgraded from MA15+ to M), and can avoid adverse impacts on their children'.

'The value of the ACCM service has been acknowledged through 6 years of support from the South Australian Attorney General, and it is seen as complementing the present classification system'.

ACCM is a unique national community organisation, which strives for a media environment that supports the health, safety and wellbeing of Australian children. It is committed to promoting healthy choices and stronger voices in children's media.

For more information or to arrange an interview, please email admin@youngmedia.org.au or call on (08) 8376 2111, or contact Elizabeth Handsley on 08 8201 5256, 08 82721170 or mobile 0448 898 185.