



ACCM MEDIA RELEASE

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Mmmmm ...! M MOVIE MERCHANDISING AND MARKETING TO KIDS IS RISKY BUSINESS

The highly profitable and rapidly expanding business of linking M rated movies with merchandise aimed at young children, is under fire from the Australian Council on Children and the Media (ACCM).

ACCM President and Professor of Law Elizabeth Handsley said today that selling such merchandise to children has the effect of encouraging young children to want to see movies that were patently unsuitable for them, and undermines parents' efforts to provide a healthy media environment for their children. She said "Many M movies are very violent or have disturbing adult themes, and child viewers are at risk of developing unnecessary fears and anxieties".

Prof Handsley commented that Wil Anderson's *Gruen* program on ABC TV last night clearly exposed the business of using merchandise to promote movies, and that such merchandise is often more profitable than the movie itself. She said "while this may be profitable, it is at odds with the [Children's Rights and Business Principles](#), and specifically the responsibility to empower parents and children to make informed decisions. The marketing of M movies through merchandise for children only serves to confuse parents and children about which movies are appropriate, and it should stop."

Prof Handsley is Australia's foremost expert in media law as it relates to children, and a passionate advocate for children's rights. She will be a key speaker at the *Rights of the Child Consumer* conference being held in Sydney on Nov 20. This conference aims to start a conversation with business about best practice for engaging with the child consumer, and is being presented by the Australian Human Rights Commission, the ACCM and Flinders Law School.

www.childrenandmedia.org.au/events/accm-conference

ACCM is a national community organisation which promotes healthy media use for children and advocates for children's interests in relation to the media. Its services to parents include the award-winning *Know Before You Go* movie reviews and *Know Before You Load* app reviews.

FOR INTERVIEW, PLEASE CONTACT

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