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Star Wars stories- getting progressively more violent!

Professor Elizabeth Handsley, President of the *Australian Council on Children and the Media*, today suggested to parents that they think twice about taking young children to see *Rogue One: the Star Wars story*. She said that ACCM's movie reviewers had described the latest in the *Star Wars* series as unsuitable for those under 13. They found that the movie contained

“intense extended sequences of battle violence including the depiction of multiple deaths, executions and assassination, mass destruction and the endangerment of young children. The leading characters die.”

She said “Parents’ memories of the early, much less violent, *Star Wars* films might mislead them into thinking the later ones were OK for young children”.

Professor Handsley continued “The movie’s Australian classification of M, for mature audiences, is being undermined by its promotion to young children. The film has ratings of 12+ in the UK and the Netherlands, and PG13 in the US.

ACCM Executive Committee member and child psychologist, Dr C Glenn Cupit, said that parents need to understand that there are significant risks to young children (such as ongoing sleep disturbance, and the development of unnecessary fears and anxieties) from being exposed to intensely violent movies. He cautioned “Children may disguise their reactions, which may only emerge in dreams or generalised anxiety apparently unrelated to the movie. Such outcomes may not be evident in the short term.”

Prof Handsley said that there are many films being screened these holidays that children and parents can enjoy without risks to children’s wellbeing. “The Council’s *Know Before You Go* movie review service is freely available to provide overviews of content and age suitability for most holiday films.

<http://childrenandmedia.org.au/movie-reviews/>

The *Australian Council on Children and the Media* is a not-for profit national community organisation which promotes healthy and age-appropriate viewing for children.

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