Stop ambushing parents

For as many years as ACCM can remember, the unwelcome intrusion of trailers for forthcoming programs and movies into programs chosen for family or children’s viewing has been a major cause of concern to parents. (In a recent ACCM survey 78% of respondents named program trailers as a concern). Successive reviews of the FreeTV Code of Practice have not improved the situation.

The proposed Code will make matters worse. The loss of the protections men tioned above will be exacerbated by the proposed changes to trailer restrictions. The complex and onerous platform-specific rules regarding placement of program promotions have been removed and replaced with a simple rule that requires all material to comply with the applicable classification zone in which it is shown. This upholds the principle of classification higher than the feature, yet undermines parents who do this.

The proposed provisions defeat parents’ choices of programs suitably classified for their families. Free TV emphasises the importance of choice based on classification in its Parental Lock document. Under the proposed changes, these protections will be lost and the only limitations on program trailers will refer to the classification zone, and not to the classification of the program. Trailers for M and MA15+ programs will be allowed in any program (except C and P but including any G program), so long as their content matches the time zone classification requirements. Therefore, for example, if a G program is scheduled during a PG time zone and runs into an M time zone, it can then carry M-rated trailers for MA15+ programs.

The objections to trailers for higher-classified material are three-fold: some are disturbing or scary to a child audience and therefore may be harmful to children, many (modified to fit the time zone) mislead as to the suitability of the promoted program for a young audience; and overall, the practice undermines parents’ choices of suitably classified programming.

The proposed Code will make matters worse. The loss of the protections mentioned above will be exacerbated by the proposal to remove G time zones, and to move M and MA15+ time zones forward, because these changes will mean that there will be no time when parents can avoid trailers above G.

In its April 2015 submission to FreeTV Australia, ACCM opposed the changes to time zones and to program promotions. ACCM has raised this matter with the ACMA now, because it believes that the community (including parents) has not had sufficient information about the implications of the FreeTV proposals, and therefore has not been given an adequate opportunity to comment on them.

In the explanatory notes that accompanied the Draft Code, Free TV (p4) explained the changes thus: The complex and onerous platform-specific rules regarding placement of program promotions have been removed and replaced with a simple rule that requires all material to comply with the applicable classification zone in which it is shown. What parents were not told was that their choices of G or PG programming (even if in late afternoon or early evening) could include promotions for programs of any classification, whose content would be governed only by the time zone, and not by the classification of the program they have chosen. The current limited protections will be much reduced.

The existing and proposed Code provisions defeat parents’ choices of programs suitably classified for their families. Free TV emphasises the importance of choice based on classification in its Parental Lock document. Under the proposed changes, these protections will be much reduced. The community (including parents) has not had sufficient information about the implications of the FreeTV proposals, and therefore has not been given an adequate opportunity to comment on them.

The proposed provisions stand in stark contrast to the existing policy for the display of trailers in cinemas. This upholds parents’ choices by not permitting the screening of trailers for movies of a classification higher than the feature.

The Australian Law Reform Commission in its review of the National Classification Scheme endorsed (at 8.93) the principle of a rule based on ‘the classification of the advertised content’ rather than the

cont. p 2

Quality Play and Media in Childhood Education and Care: New from ACCM

Dr Kate Highfield, Professor Margaret Sims, Dr C. Glenn Cupit

Other contributors:
Dr Lesley-Anne Ey
Dr Victoria Whittington
David Badenoch
Karl Brettig

$14.99

What impact is using digital technology having on how children are developing? Is it harming them or is it helping them? What role do parents and caregivers have in all this? These are some of the questions this e-book sets out to answer. Some of our best minds contribute important ideas on what parents, educators and caregivers need to know about the impact of electronic media on our children’s development. More importantly they offer us guidance on what we can do to avoid the pitfalls and make use of the ways it can enhance children’s learning.

content of the advertisement itself. The ALRC commented further:  
This is consistent with the principle that adult content should not be advertised to minors, and content that may be suitable for a person in their late teens should not be advertised to young children.  


Recent examples of trailers for M-rated programs in a G classified programs that parents found troubling include “Catching Milat” promotion in Better Homes and Gardens (7pm on SevenTwo on May 15), and the trailers for Transformers: Dark Side of the Moon (M) in the movie Rio (G) on Ten on May 30.

Given feedback from concerned parents, ACCM has determined that what is needed is a prohibition on trailers for programs and movies of a higher classification than that of the program during which they are screened.

ACCM has asked the ACMA to use its powers under s123 of the Broadcasting Services Act in relation to the current review of the Commercial Television Industry Code of Practice, to influence the content of the Code so that it supports careful choices by parents.

Parents can support the ACCM Stop ambushing parents campaign in several ways:
• Send us examples of programs that bother you
• Donate to our campaign
• Write to ACMA


The National Children’s Commissioner, Flinders University and the Australian Council on Children and the Media present

The Rights of the Child Consumer: Sydney Nov 20

The Convention on the Rights of the Child contains many articles relevant to children’s rights as consumers. This one day conference aims to start a national conversation on issues relating to children as consumers and reflect on questions such as:
• Do existing consumer laws and codes of practice adequately protect children?
• How can we help to ensure children are informed and empowered as consumers?

More information soon at www.childrenandmedia.org.au

New teen drama for ABC3

Australian broadcaster ABC3 is working with with Sydney-based Ambience Entertainment on Tomorrow, When The War Began, a new miniseries adapted from the bestselling novels by Aussie writer John Marsden.

The series of six one-hour episodes will tell the story of a group of teenagers who are separated from their families following an invasion of their country.

The book, one of seven in John Marsden’s The Tomorrow Series, was first published in 1993 and more than three million copies have been sold to date. A feature film based on the book was released in 2010.

http://kidscreen.com/2015/05/13/abc3-and-ambience-to-produce-teen-mini-series/
Click bait: kids at risk as sexualised behaviour becomes 'new normal'

EXCLUSIVE

NATASHA BITA
NATIONAL EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

Unsupervised internet access is spawning a generation of hyper-sexualised children who are requiring medical treatment for injuries and anxiety as they mimic adult pornography online.

Psychiatrists, police and child-welfare experts warned yesterday that the 21st-century scourge of "sexting," selfies and social media was endangering children's physical and mental health.

For digital natives, provocative sexts and Instagram accounts are the modern manifestation of peer-group pressure.

A shocking selfie of a 13-year-old Australian girl with the words "Honeymoon" scrolled on her bare stomach — with an arrow pointing down — was posted on Instagram this week.

The crude slogan, copied from a scene from the MA-rated 2013 Jennifer Aniston movie "We're the Millers," even has its own hashtag on Instagram, which is popular with teenage girls.

National Children's Commissioner Megan Mitchell describes the trend as "scary." "Younger and younger kids are being exposed to very adult themes on music videos, film clips and YouTube," she told The Weekend Australian. "It's all too much for little brains."

Melbourne child psychologist Michael Carr-Gregg, the managing director of the federally funded Young and Well Co-operative Research Centre, recently dealt with a Year 6 boy who coerced an 11-year-old girl in his class to text him a full-frontal naked photo. "He sent it to 21 mates," Mr Carr-Gregg said. "The mum of the girl found out and rang the boy's parents and said: 'What the hell?'"

He has prosecuted eight children between the ages of 10 and 17 over child-pornography offences since 2008. Australia's "cyber cop", federal government cyber-safety adviser Susan McLean, said kids as young as eight were taking sexually provocative selfies and sending them to friends or posting them online. "There is overt and covert pressure on children to behave in a sexualised way," Ms McLean said yesterday.

"This shouldn't be the new normal. The No 1 issue I deal with in high schools is the enormous pressure from boys for girls to put out sexually through images.

"But you also find that sexually overt girls are often targeting the nice, respectful boy you want your daughter to marry — they're bombarding them with images."

Ms McLean said teenage girls continued from Page 9

and young women were seeking treatment from family doctors and gynaecologists for physical injuries from rough sex.

"I've had GPs tell me about the injuries they are seeing in young girls when they have been forced or coerced to do what is in porn videos," she said. "They're not watching anything within a circle of normality — they're looking at rape, bondage, torture and bestiality. The girls in the videos all appear to like it, so girls think that's just how sex is."

The Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatry has expressed alarm over the impact of pornography and cyber-bullying on children's mental health. Gold Coast psychiatrist Michelle Fryer, who chairs the Queensland chapter of the college's child and adolescent division, predicted that the normalisation of online pornography would cause relationship problems for the cyber generation as it grew up.

"Kids and teenagers' brain development gave them little or no concept of the long-term consequences of their actions, she warned, so parents needed to guard the gate. "It used to be a kid could get their hands on a magazine but that's where it stopped," Dr Fryer said yesterday.

"Now you might click on something innocuous and it's not many more clicks before there's something really nasty and not appropriate for children."

"A lot of it depicts men as very dominant, often aggressive, and females as submissive, and that's not the state of mind we want children to grow up with."

Dr Fryer urged parents to control kids' use of the internet and social media, and explain that it was "not OK" to photograph their bodies. "It is very hard for parents to protect children because (the pornography) is so pervasive and easy to access from devices," she said.

Mr Carr-Gregg agreed that online pornography was skewing the way teenagers viewed sex, love and intimacy. "Boys see girls as sexual service stations for their pleasure," he said. "It's shocking; I'm seeing it virtually every single time I have a clinic. Their idea of sex is porn sex — it's a terrible distortion of one of the most precious and important parts of their lives, which is love and intimacy."

Mr Carr-Gregg explained to his distressed young patients that what they saw online wasn't "real sex" and had "nothing to do with love and intimacy."

The AFP's national manager of hi-tech crime operations, David McLean, said young people might be committing a crime when "taking, receiving or forwarding images of themselves of their friends who are minors."

"Once an image is sent it can end up anywhere on the internet and can never be deleted," he said. "These images can be traded by online child-sex offenders and are known to end up in child-pornography collections." Ms McLean said selfies need not be nacked to be a problem: pedophiles were collecting photos innocently posted by young girls posing in skimpy gym gear with their legs spread. "Over 90 per cent of kids who use Instagram don't have a private account, because they want to be seen as popular or have a following of followers," Ms McLean said.

"That's basically saying: 'Hello predator, here I am!'"

Even more alarming is the location services on smartphones that automatically tag where a photo was taken, so "predators can see the GPS co-ordinates of where the kid took a photo."

Mr Carr-Gregg regards kids' access to online pornography as "a lapse in parenting". Parents must install internet filters, track their kids' internet use, stop them accessing the internet in their rooms, and talk to them about online safety, he said, adding: "Teaching kids to stay safe, smart and responsible on Instagram is as important as teaching them how to swim or cross the road."

Weekend Australian, 30-31 May 2015
Small screen winners might surprise you

BRIAN MONTGOMERY

Entrepreneurs are naturally optimists. And so, despite the "pit of despair" talk of our economists and politicians, all I can see is opportunity when I look at the companies that have done well and expanded beyond our shores and are now taking advantage of global growth themes that transcend a market of 23 million people who call Australia home.

Taking the next step — investing in global businesses themselves — is a logical progression.

And globally, there are businesses so large and businesses so enamoured in our daily habits that you are paying for their services and products even though you've probably never heard of them.

If you are older than 44, there is a 70 per cent chance you have impaired vision. The company I am about to mention, you've probably never heard of and yet you've probably contributed something to the cash in its bank account.

Globally there are more than 4.3 billion people who require corrective eyewear but 60 per cent are still waiting for access. That means there are 2.7 billion people who have corrected their eyesight either by wearing glasses, contact lenses or through surgery. That's a lot of customers for a company called Essilor, whose 40 per cent market share is in the manufacturing, research and development of lenses for eyeglasses, sunglasses and protective eyewear makes it a global leader. And consider more than half of the world's population remains a potential customer for Essilor.

Now consider a US-listed company called Qualcomm with $US29 billion of cash in the bank. What do they do? They've paid them too. They own the patents for the 3G and 4G wireless communication network. And when you sip coffee at a cafe offering free WiFi? They own WiFi. Every time a mobile device is manufactured that offers access to 3G or 4G and WiFi, Qualcomm receives a royalty.

Think about that — it's like owning the rights to the English language and receiving a fee every time someone learns to speak English. Qualcomm generates enormous returns on its patents. Still, no debt and the internet consumption highlighted below should ensure a long period of prosperity.

Of course, keep in mind the Montgomery Global Fund may, now or in the future, own these securities, so be sure to seek out and take personal professional advice before undertaking any securities transaction.

Way back in 2012, video consumed 57 per cent of internet traffic in 2014, it amounted to 64 per cent.

In the US, 5.6 hours is spent on the internet, person per a day. What is really interesting is that those 5.6 hours are split between 2.8 hours on mobile, 2.4 hours on desktop/laptop and 0.4 hours on another connected device.

All I can see is opportunity when I look at the companies that have expanded beyond our shores.

other words, almost 3 hours a day for every US resident is taken up on their internet on their mobile device.

Despite 24 per cent of all time spent on a mobile device, just 8 per cent of total advertising spending is allocated to mobile. This is in contrast to the 18 per cent of ad spending allocated to print, where only 4 per cent of the day is spent.

Just three years ago in 2012, people spent 1.6 hours a day on screens, with 4.4 hours on TV, 2.4 hours in front of the desktop or laptop computer and just 24 minutes on mobile screens.

Today, the real growth has all been in mobile screen time. Now 9.9 hours are spent in front of a screen on TV virtually unchanged at 4.3 hours, desktop/laptop unchanged at 2.4 hours but mobile now 48 hours.

Many millennials won’t own a TV and as more and more screen time is spent watching videos on smaller mobile devices, both Qualcomm and Essilor must be winners.

Roger Montgomery is founder and CEO of the Montgomery Fund.

Weekend Australian, 30-31 May 2015

SA GREAT: THE SOUTH AUSSIE FILMS ALL CHILDREN SHOULD SEE

ADELAIDE Film festival director AMANDA DUTHIE — who is currently in Cannes attending this week’s International Film Festival — gives her lists of the South Australian films all children should see before they leave school.

JUNIOR SCHOOL (Years 1-5)

STORM BOY — A beautiful adaptation of Colin Thiele’s story of a boy on the Coorong who rescues pelican chicks Mr Prout, Mr Prout and Mr Percival. One of David Gulpilil’s first roles.

RED DOG — Irresistible story of the bush dog whose owner, based on the story by Louis de Bernieres. Prepare to cry.

NAPOLEON — Mario Andreacchio’s animated story of the city dog who longs to be wild.

WASTELANDER PANDA — (for older juniors only) — Beautifully drawn online post-apocalyptic sci-fi drama about the last remaining panda in a cinematic wasteland.

MIDDLE SCHOOL (Years 6-9)

SHINE — Scott Hixson’s inspirational biography of pianist David Helfgott, who suffered a mental breakdown and was institutionalised. The role won Geoffrey Rush (pictured above, right, with Hixson) the Oscar for Best Actor.

GALLIPOLI — Peter Weir’s masterpiece about two young men who enlist in the army and are sent to Gallipoli. Without question one of the greatest Australian films of all time. Screenplay by David Williamson.

PUBLIC AT HANGING ROCK — Peter Weir’s 1975 languid and beautiful mystery about the disappearance of schoolgirls and their teacher on an outing in 1900 top.

LAST RIDE — A young boy travels through the Flinders Ranges with his father (Hugh Weaving), who is wanted for committing a violent crime.

ANTONELLA’S guide to motherhood

Antonella Gambotto-Burke

The Australian, 25 May 2015

Antonella's guide to motherhood

Always always always hold your child's hand. Even if it means wearing Birkenstocks.Walk slowly. Forget the rest of the world. You're fat as you need to be when your child is young. Do not listen to anyone who makes you feel bad about your weight. You can not live with them if they're at school. Eat cake. Dance with your partner. Especially if you're pregnant. The very best kind of dancing is when there's no music playing. Avoid stress please. This includes family and old friends. And if tempted to feel guilty, remember the impact of maternal stress on children. Very, very bad.

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ANTONELLA’S guide to motherhood

Antonella Gambotto-Burke

The Australian, 25 May 2015
Families using spy app need to balance trust and web safety

The Teensafe app gives parents the ability to monitor their kids' online activities, but be careful how you use it, experts warn. KATIE CINCOOTTA reports.

To spy or not to spy on our children, that is the question posed by new monitoring app Teensafe. The $14.95-a-month snoop service, which lets a parent monitor their children's online activity, was developed in 2011 by a group of Californian parents who were concerned that the number of children using smartphones in the US had grown from 10 per cent to 80 per cent in just five years. "Devices are becoming more prevalent in kids' lives - often they're with them the whole time," says Teensafe chief executive Rawdon Messenger. "A 10-year-old with a phone, in some ways they're not ready for it."

With more than a million sign-ups in three years, Teensafe has doubled its number of subscribers in the past six months. "The growth is coming from parents who are saying, 'I really used to check out what's going on,'" says Messenger, who has a seven-year-old daughter.

"Privacy and respecting boundaries is very important," he says, "but in certain cases safety and protection trumps privacy, especially when it comes to sexting, bullying and depression."

Teensafe users can log into an account and see a child's messages, including deleted texts, and view their social media feeds, but the service doesn't allow you to listen to phone conversations. "We also won't store or download any of the child's images from the device," Messenger says. "That's a feature that could make our service more attractive, but we don't feel that's necessary."

Not everyone agrees with the Teensafe approach. Dr Joe Tucci, head of the Australian Childhood Foundation, believes there are inherent problems with such monitoring apps. "I think it undermines the trust that parents and kids need to have in order to have a positive relationship," Tucci says. "As kids get older, parents need to be like a lighthouse for their children. When things are going rough, parents are the people you need to be able to go to and talk to. That trust is critical as a foundation for that open, honest communication. These sorts of apps undermine that. They basically say we can't trust our young people... we have to intrude into their world."

Primary school teacher Nikki Howard says she would not use Teensafe to see what her 12-year-old daughter Abby is doing on Instagram. She feels their relationship is open enough and not worth jeopardising with a spy app.

"I can see why people would use it but it's not for us," Howard says. "You don't want to be too involved in their lives and too controlling. You wonder if people who are doing it let their kids know more because they know exactly where they are. But what would stop a child from leaving their phone somewhere and nicking off and doing something else?"

In her first year of high school, Abby says she wouldn't be happy for her parents to be able to read all her text messages and social media posts. "They'd be invading my privacy. I don't go reading Mum's messages so why does she have to read mine? I don't think it's necessary because I tell Mum everything anyway."

One Melbourne family with a tech-obsessed 11-year-old discovered she had downloaded a free messaging app Kik without their permission and was corresponding with a "boy from California".

Her mother worries about perverts and paedophiles using these platforms as stalking grounds. "It would enter my mind to use [Teensafe] but I'd have to really think about it. I do think it's important to tell your child. My daughter is already hiding things from me, and snaking into her room with the phone. If I want the open conversation, I'm going to play the honesty card first."

The 30-year-old mother of two tween girls admits this is new ground for parents of digital natives and is difficult to negotiate, given the pace of emerging technologies.

"We're new to this. We weren't part of this culture when we were kids. She's connecting with somebody she doesn't know, she's using her own name and her own picture, and there are all the no-no's that they've learnt in cyber safety at school but they're not making the connection."

Messenger says Teensafe advises its users to divulge the use of the app, rather than using it covertly, but admits in some cases going behind your child's back may be the only way to get to the truth.

"If you're concerned about your child and you have no other way of finding out what's going on, as a parent it's a no-brainer. People have found out their children are dealing drugs or are drunk from school, and if that's going on, what's more important to you - growing trust with your child or checking that everything is OK?"

Tucci warns getting access to a child's digital life can open up a Pandora's box. "It can be insidious. It's tempting for parents to use it not only for safety but potentially for other reasons, and inadvertently you get access to information about friends that you shouldn't have. And that's going to be disastrous."

The child psychologist suggests ongoing communication is the best way to navigate the turbulent teenage years. "If you're worried about your child, the best thing you can do is talk to them. But this shouldn't be the only time you're trying to talk to them. This kind of app gives the impression that you don't need to be there."

Katina Michael, associate professor in the School of Information Systems and Technology at the University of Wollongong, worries that spy apps encourage disengagement.

"My fear is that technology becomes a replacement for good parenting or a replacement for a teen thinking freely about what they should or shouldn't do."

She says research suggests this type of surveillance could be dangerous in the wrong hands. "Police have already cautioned against the use of spy apps because they are well aware of how more covert software is being used to track someone's whereabouts. In the most heinous crimes, third parties have gained access to handsets, downloaded spy apps, and then recovered co-ordinates and location information and committed terrible things."

Messenger acknowledges the safety debate is heated, but that all Teensafe does is allow parents to do what they're already doing in a more comprehensive way. "You can spy on your child's email, have the passwords to their social media, grab their phone and go through it - there are lots of different ways of doing this, we just facilitate it and make it easier to do remotely."
Tree Change Dolls put a cute face on viral marketing

Katie Cincotta

S
ocial media has given the word “viral” its new meaning. Like a pathogen replicating in a host, social media networks pick up stories and spread from person to person, the most bizarre and interesting content exposed to thousands in a matter of hours.

Social media expert Sam Mattimer says viral success in a social media context doesn’t have the same rules as in the past but there are common threads.

“It has a universal hook that everyone can connect with,” he says. “It is topical and has high talkability at the time, or the publisher leaks and distributes it to influential digital resources.”

Artist Sonia Singh was shocked by the global interest in her Tree Change Dolls after her husband encouraged her to create a Tumblr blog for her unique toys.

After the former CSIRO science communicator was made redundant, she began a project to transform high-fashion cout... but it seems to be an issue many parents are concerned about,” Singh says.

Social media continues to buzz about the dolls being rescued from op-shops and tips around Tasmania. Along with selling the dolls on her Stay site, Singh is providing DIY resources such as knitting patterns and tutorials on YouTube to encourage others to style their own dolls. Social media analyst Paul Kaan says factors such as passion, relevance and unique content often define viral social media, which explains why the Tree Change Dolls have become so popular.

In a similar fashion, Geelong-born truckie Trevor Vale garnered attention by posting a frank video encouraging people to attend dawn services on Anzac Day. The Brisbane-based driver often records himself while on long-haul trips and posts them to Facebook, “normally to take the piss out of somebody to try and get a laugh,” he says.

This time however, his speech was a
dolls such as Barbies and Bratz into less stylised toys. She removes their make-up and glitzy accessories and restyles them with soft, natural faces, dressed in clothing hand-knitted by her mother.

“I started my Tree Change Dolls to upcycle old dolls and stop them ending up in landfill,” the Hobart resident says. “As children, my sisters and I spent endless days playing with second-hand toys, and these are some of my fondest memories.”

As soon as Singh launched the blog and shared it on social media, her story started spreading, and within days she was getting global media requests. After SBS2 ran a feature on her and she posted it to Facebook, the Tree Change Dolls experienced their second wave of viral success, receiving 56 million views.

Singh admits it wasn’t her intention, but her dolls have tapped into an unease that parents have about the sexualisation of girls, and the unrealistic beauty standards often expected of them.

“Actually never set out to make a public point about body image or beauty standards, serious call to action for Australians to remember the Anzac legacy – an impassioned message that attracted 1.3 million views and 60,278 shares in a week. Likewise, Kilcunda dairy farmer Leesa Willmott stumbled across social media success when a photograph shot on her iPhone 5s went viral. She stopped her car by the roadside in Wonthaggi on November 8 to snap a rare punch-hole rainbow cloud, a phenomenon that occurs when super-cooled water droplets freeze, creating a stunning visual that looks like a rainbow sitting inside a fluffy white cloud.

After Willmott posted her photo to her Facebook profile, the image was picked on Facebook’s news wire and it quickly earned 45,000 likes. “It’s one of those things, you’ve just got to be in the right place at the right time,” Willmott says. “My photo probably wasn’t one of the best but it might have been the first.”

EXCESSIVE screen time and inactivity puts kids as young as 15 at greater risk of obesity and chronic disease, a study shows.

And researchers are demanding a long-term national policy to get children moving to avert the health consequences. The effects of poor exercise habits can be seen as early as age 15 a Sydney University study published in Pediatrics has found.

The long-term study of 4,600 children found those who were more active in their childhood had lower body fat and reduced risk factors for cardiovascular disease. The good news was an increase of 60 minutes of daily activity in childhood was linked to 2 per cent less body fat.

Motion sensors were used to measure children’s physical activity levels at age 11, which was compared to their health outcomes at 15 years of age.

Lead researcher Associate Professor Emmanuel Stamatakis from the University’s Charles Perkins Centre said one in five Australian children move enough to meet national guidelines of 60 minutes moderate to vigorous activity a day.

Classroom mobile bans help low achievers to catch up

ELEANOR HARDING

BANNING mobile phones in schools can significantly boost children’s academic performance, a study suggests.

Stopping pupils from bringing mobiles into the classroom can have the same effect on their results as adding an extra week of lessons to the aademic year, said researchers.

The study, published by the London School of Economics, found the test scores of students aged 16 improved by 6.4 per cent in schools that had banned phones.

Low-achieving and poorer pupils had the most to gain.

Low achievers’ test scores improved twice as much as those of average students, there were vast improvements for those eligible for free school meals – the government’s measure of deprivation.

However the ban had no discernable effect on the high-achievers, said authors Louis-Philippe Beland and Richard Murphy, of LSE’s Centre for Economic Performance.

A mobile phone ban is therefore an effective way to reduce inequality among students, the study found.

It concluded: “We found not only did student achievement improve, but also that low-achieving and low-income students gained the most.”

The impact of banning phones for these students was equivalent to increasing the school year by five days. Allowing phones into schools will harm the lowest achieving and low-income students the most.”

The authors added: “The results suggest that low-achieving students are more likely to be distracted by the presence of mobile phones while high achievers can focus in the classroom regardless.”

The research was carried out at schools in Birmingham, London, Leicester and Manchester before and after bans were introduced.

Gender, eligibility for free school meals, special educational needs status and prior educational attainment were factored in.

The Advertiser, 16 May 2015

The Advertiser, 19 May 2015

The Advertiser, 16 May 2015

The Advertiser, 19 May 2015

The Advertiser, 16 May 2015

The Advertiser, 19 May 2015

The Advertiser, 16 May 2015

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The Advertiser, 16 May 2015

The Advertiser, 19 May 2015
ADVERTISING


COMPUTER & INTERNET


MEDIA EFFECTS - HEALTH


Engelen, L; Bundy, AC; et al (2015) Young children’s after-school activities—there’s more to it than screen time: A cross-sectional study of young primary school children. Jnl. of Physical Activity & Health, Vol. 12, No. 1, Pp8-12


MEDIA EFFECTS - SOCIAL


VIDEO & COMPUTER GAMES

VIOLENCE


NEW PUBLICATIONS

CONFERENCES

Coming together for Australia’s children
24-26th June 2015
Hobart, Tasmania
www.togetherforchildren.net.au

Children’s Media Conference
1-3rd July 2015
Sheffield, UK
www.thechildrensmediaconference.com/events/cmc2015/
Endangered Indigenous traditions preserved with digital storytelling tools

Learning traditional songlines and stories is an important part of initiation into an Aboriginal clan, but the education process is very different from western-style schooling. In a new project using digital technology, the Sharing Stories Foundation is trying to bridge that gap and preserve tales from endangered Indigenous languages. The foundation was set up by Dr Liz Thompson, a documentary maker, author and passionate activist for the preservation of Indigenous culture.

Dr Thompson, Mark Nakarrma Guyula, a Yolnu man from north-east Arnhem Land, and elders from a number of Indigenous communities, are recording stories and songlines from languages that have almost disappeared so that they can be passed on through generations.


Young children missing communication time

A new survey of US parents commissioned by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association shows that 68% of 2-year-olds use tablets, 59% use smartphones and 44% use video game consoles. The report warns that this usage is occurring at the developmental stage when human interaction is the key to developing strong communication skills.

The survey found that:

- 24% of 2-year olds use technology at the dinner table — an important time for interaction that fosters strong communication development. By the time children are 8, that percentage has increased to 45%
- By the age of six, 44% of children would rather play a game on a technology device than read a book or be read to.
- A majority of 8 year olds would prefer that technology is present when spending time with a family member or friend.
- More than half of parents surveyed used technology to keep children aged 0 - 3 entertained.
- Almost half of parents of 8 year olds reported that they often rely on technology to prevent behavior problems and tantrums.

Despite (or perhaps because of) these figures, many parents reported that they are concerned that misuse of technology could harm their child’s ability to communicate.

http://www.trybooking.com/CXI

Teenage boys more vulnerable to junk food ads

New research released by Cancer Council Australia and the National Heart Foundation shows that Australian teenage boys consume more fast food and snacks high in salt compared with their female peers and are more susceptible to junk food marketing.

The 2012-13 data from the National Secondary Students’ Diet and Activity Survey, being presented at the Behavioural Research in Cancer Control Conference, showed that teenage boys were more likely to be regular consumers of fast food (46% compared with 34%) and sugary drinks (28% compared with 14%) than girls.

The survey shows boys also consumed salty snacks, fried potato products and ice blocks more often and were more likely to be influenced by multimedia marketing techniques that involved giveaways, competitions or links with movies or sports personalities.

Kathy Chapman, Chair of Cancer Council Australia’s Nutrition and Physical Activity Committee, said teenage boys were more likely to be obese or overweight compared with girls, despite being more physically active.


Children’s film events in Belgium

Two events involving children’s film are occurring in Belgium this year.

The Children’s Film First Conference is a European’s Children Film Association project. It will cover: ways to engage children in film; uses of digital technology in film literacy; practical sessions focussing on good practice in film literacy; as well as case studies, looking at using new techniques. The conference will take place on 23-24 September 2015, at the Brussels City Theatre.

http://www.childrensfilmfirst.com

The International Children’s Film Festival will take place on 1-8 November 2015 and is organised by the not-for-profit Belgian organization Filem’On.

Filem’On is actively involved in training related to the different types of films that children see. For more information: