



Talking more, or less, about massacres?

In a recent media release, the Australian Council on Children and the Media suggests that the time is right for a public debate about the relentless mass media coverage of horrific massacres and murders.

ACCM President Elizabeth Handsley said today:

The mass media provide mass coverage of these horrific events: we all want to know how and why they happened. But do we need the relentless focus on such acts of madness? Do we want to be giving publicity to these crimes and the criminals who committed them?

She asked whether such practices were counterproductive, and whether it played into the fantasies of other disturbed individuals.

Child psychologist and Council spokesman Dr Wayne Warburton said,

Research shows that when children see repeated images of violence, death and destruction in the mass media it can change the way they view the world, including the 'mean world' syndrome' whereby the world is seen as more scary and dangerous than it really is. In an ideal world, children should feel secure and able to trust others.

When asked about media coverage of massacres Dr Warburton noted,

It is important to remember that there are always many factors that come together to cause a person to be violent. However, research shows that for a small number of individuals, mass coverage of murders and massacres may be one factor that can increase the risk of copycat crimes. For example, in 1999, a group of Australian and NZ researchers (Cantor and colleagues) examined the role of media coverage in 7 mass homicides in Australia, NZ and Scotland and concluded that some may have 'occurred through a modelling process' and a 'ripple effect'.

Apart from providing a script that can be modelled, it is possible that media coverage of mass killings maybe itself be an important motivator for some killers. Only last week, the perpetrator of the Orlando massacre took time out during his 3 hour killing spree to search Facebook for news about it.

In the wake of the Orlando shootings, the US Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI) released an Open Letter about the psychological factors that prompt otherwise unremarkable individuals to carry out unspeakable atrocities. It said:

in this, as in other cases of violent extremism, the perpetrator radically deviates from widely accepted norms of conduct and that the quest for personal significance, in one's own eyes, and in the eyes of relevant others is an important driving force... The quest for significance may be spurred by a threat [real or perceived], such as personal failure and humiliation ...violence is the most primordial means to dominance and a sense of power. By causing others to suffer, someone might feel consequential and capable of making others recognise their significance.

Dr. Douglas Gentile, a US expert on the effects of media on children, noted,

The current style of reporting provides a 'high score' for the next perpetrator to try to beat. How we report on atrocities can make a difference in whether it encourages or discourages more atrocities.

Prof. Handsley and Dr. Warburton agree that the time is right to seriously examine whether current levels of media attention and publicity for such perpetrators and their atrocities are helping or hindering in the face of a growing number of mass homicides. They are asking whether such images act as a catalyst to other alienated and disturbed individuals to choose extreme violence as a route to personal significance.

They note that this and other issues related to the depiction of violence on our screens will be discussed at the *Violence in the media: the stories and the science* in Sydney on July 18.

This conference program offers a unique opportunity to hear highly respected international researchers into media violence and its social impacts, such as Craig Anderson, Douglas Gentile, L Rowell Huesmann and Barbara Krahé, as well as Professor Handsley and Dr Warburton.

<http://childrenandmedia.org.au/events/accm-conference>

SA Parliament supports sexualisation inquiry

The South Australian Parliament has supported a Liberal motion calling for a Parliamentary Inquiry into the sexualisation of children and young people.

Shadow Minister for Communities and Social Inclusion, Duncan McFetridge, who introduced the Private Member's motion, said that the interests of families and protection of children was at the heart of calling for this Inquiry. He said

I am looking forward to the Parliament's findings and its report on the prevalence of sexualised material in all forms of media and marketing in South Australia so we can start working on solutions to address this problem which has affected all aspects of our society"

"Sexual violence in the media and on the internet is having a social, developmental, cognitive and physical impact on our children and teenagers and I am pleased that these important issues will now be identified and addressed by the Parliament.

<http://www.saliberal.org.au/MembersCandidates/StateHouseofAssembly/DuncanMcFetridgeMP.aspx>

Adelaide parent seminars with Steve Biddulph



Coming in November - 2 seminars with this renowned psychologist and parent educator based on his best-selling books.

Raising girls - Tuesday 1 November

Raising boys - Wednesday 2 November

Concordia College Chapel
24 Winchester St
Highgate, SA 5063

childrenandmedia.org.au/events/accm-seminars



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Australian Council on Children and the Media (ACCM)

PO Box 447

Glenelg 5045

South Australia

info@childrenandmedia.org.au

www.childrenandmedia.org.au

Tel: +61 8 8376 2111

Fax: +61 8 8376 2122

Helpline: 1800 700 357

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EDITORIAL**Early learning: everyone benefits**

In the context of the present federal election campaign, *Early Childhood Australia* (ECA) has been stressing the importance of smarter early learning policies.

Their view is that quality early learning affects our country's future prosperity, both social and economic, and that by investing in the health and development of our children, the whole country will benefit.

ACCM certainly supports that view, from a slightly different perspective. ACCM believes that children's very early experiences with media are part (and can be a significant part) of their early learning. It's important that when young children experience media, the content is enjoyable, quality and age-appropriate: when it is it can benefit their development, in many ways.

Today's complex media environment can make parents' task of finding such age-appropriate media experiences for their children, very difficult.

Mass marketing of Mature content movies and films to young children via their toys is one gross example. False claims for the benefits of 'educational' apps and games can mislead and be costly in more ways than one. There are too

few sources of independent advice to help choose healthy content. (in Australia, ACCM's *Know Before You Go* movie reviews, and *Know Before You Load* app reviews can help).



Barbara Biggins
OAM
Hon CEO

A further issue is that many apps and games on mobile devices, have features which keep children coming back for more. We need to be asking how many young children can manage the addictive pull of many well-made computer games?

Governments have been very good at putting big dollars into internet safety programs- most of which are aimed at children of school age. By school age, many children have already developed a dependence on screens for entertainment that is very difficult to shift. In ACCM's view, it's a vital part of early learning policies that funds are also put into supporting parents of very young children with information and strategies that help them manage media for children's healthy development.

And further, that an incoming government in Australia would see the need to support the development of an evidence-based statement about the use of digital technology in early childhood that could be of great value to parents and early childhood educators : a vision jointly shared by ECA and ACCM.



Don't miss this film festival if it comes to your area. Perfect for families and kids aged 2 to 15, *Little Big Shots* is Australia's major annual and travelling children's film festival.

The festival features the best in local and international children's shorts, animations, documentaries and child-produced films.

The films screening in Little Big Shots inspire discussion of world cultures, different languages, cultural diversity, emotional intelligence and human values.

The organisers guarantee that the films will "make kids laugh, whoop, think and create."

Coming venues and dates:

- ACMI Melbourne 1-10 July
- Opera House Sydney 5-7 August
- Palace/Nova Adelaide 7-8 October
- Fremantle Arts Centre 1-31 October

littlebigshots.com.au

Little Lunch App Competition

The Australian Children's Television Foundation (ACTF) is running a competition for school students across Australia to make their own Little Lunch inspired episode (based on the popular TV series) and share it with others. Schools can download the free Little Lunch App that helps students to make their episodes.

Entries will be posted on the Little Lunch App Competition Vimeo page and there are prizes for finalists and winners. The judges include the ACTF's education staff and the original creators of the Little Lunch App. The overall winners will be selected by the one and only Mrs Gonsha (Heidi Arena) from the Little Lunch television series!

The closing date for the submission of entries is 22 July 2016.

Full details, including tips and tricks for teachers can be found on the ACTF website:

actf.com.au/education/little-lunch-app-competition

NEW PUBLICATIONS

ADVERTISING

Bragg, M.A., et al 2016
Popular music celebrity endorsements in food and nonalcoholic beverage marketing.
Pediatrics e20153977.

Gordon, C.S., et al 2016
Empowering students to respond to alcohol advertisements: results from a pilot study of an Australian media literacy intervention.
Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health 40, 231–232.

Siegel, M., et al 2016.
Potential youth exposure to alcohol advertising on the internet: a study of internet versions of popular television programs.
Journal of Substance Use 21, 361–367.

COMPUTERS AND INTERNET

McDonald-Brown, C., Laxman, K., Hope, J., 2016.
An exploration of the contexts, challenges and competencies of pre-teenage children on the internet.
International Journal of Technology Enhanced Learning 8, 1–25

Rikkens, W., et al 2016.
Internet use and electronic gaming by children and adolescents with emotional and behavioural problems in Australia – results from the second Child and Adolescent Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing.
BMC Public Health 16, 399.

EDUCATION

Checa-Romero, M., 2016.
Developing skills in digital contexts video games and films as learning tools at primary school.
Games and Culture 11, 463–488.

HEALTH

Leiner, M., et al 2016.
Mental and emotional health of children exposed to news media of threats and acts of terrorism: the cumulative and pervasive effects.
Front Pediatr 4.

Mishna, F., et al 2016.
Prevalence, motivations, and social, mental health and health consequences of cyberbullying among school-aged children and youth: Protocol of a longitudinal and multi-perspective mixed method study.
JMIR Research Protocols 5, e83.

Parent, J., Sanders, W., Forehand, R., 2016.
Youth screen time and behavioral health problems: the role of sleep duration and

disturbances.
Journal of Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics 37, 277–284.

Séguin, D., Klimek, V., 2016.
Just five more minutes please: electronic media use, sleep and behaviour in young children.
Early Child Development and Care 186, 981–1000.

MEDIA LITERACY

Brunick, K.L., et al 2016
Children's future parasocial relationships with media characters: the age of intelligent characters.
Journal of Children and Media 10, 181–190.

Pfaff-Rüdiger, S., Riesmeyer, C., 2016.
Moved into action. Media literacy as social process.
Journal of Children and Media 10, 164–172.

MEDIA RESEARCH

Paudel, S., Leavy, J., Jancey, J., 2016.
Correlates of mobile screen media use among children aged 0–8: protocol for a systematic review.
Systematic Reviews 5, 91.

Strasburger, V.C., 2016.
Children, adolescents, and the media ten mistakes we've made and how to fix them.
CLIN PEDIATR 55, 509–512.

Ward, L.M., 2016.
Media and sexualization: State of empirical research, 1995–2015.
The Journal of Sex Research 53, 560–577.

Mancilla-Caceres, J.F., et al 2015.
A computer game-based method for studying bullying and cyberbullying.
Journal of School Violence 14, 66–86.

SOCIAL

Catherine, B., Michael, F., 2015.
Digital uses, victimization and online aggression: A comparative study between primary school and lower secondary school students in France.
Eur J Crim Policy Res 22, 285–300.

Coyne, S et al 2016
Pretty as a princess: Longitudinal effects of engagement with disney princesses on gender stereotypes, body esteem, and prosocial behavior in children.
Child Development, DOI: 10.1111/cdev.12569

Fine, C., Rush, E., 2016.
"Why does all the girls have to buy pink stuff?" The ethics and science of the gendered toy marketing debate.
Journal of Business Ethics 1–16.

Leeuw, R.N.H. de, Buijzen, M., 2016.
Introducing positive media psychology to the field of children, adolescents, and

media.
Journal of Children and Media 10, 39–46.

Lim, S.S., 2016.
Through the tablet glass: transcendent parenting in an era of mobile media and cloud computing.
Journal of Children and Media 10, 21–29.

Mullen, C., Fox Hamilton, N., 2016.
Adolescents' response to parental Facebook friend requests: The comparative influence of privacy management, parent-child relational quality, attitude and peer influence.
Computers in Human Behavior 60, 165–172.

Sherman, L.E., et al 2016.
The power of the like in adolescence effects of peer influence on neural and behavioral responses to social media.
Psychological Science 956797616645673.

Özgür, H., 2016.
The relationship between Internet parenting styles and Internet usage of children and adolescents.
Computers in Human Behavior 60, 411–424.

Seo, K.K.-J., et al 2016.
An insight into student perceptions of cyberbullying.
American Journal of Distance Education 30, 39–47

VIDEO GAMES

Fikkens, K.M., et al 2016.
Beyond the lab: Investigating early adolescents' cognitive, emotional, and arousal responses to violent games
Computers in Human Behavior 60, 542–549.

EVENTS

THE HEALTHY DIGITAL DIET

How to tackle excessive gaming, social media use and internet addiction in your child, and get back a more balanced family life.

Speakers:

Dr Philip Tam

Dr Justin Coulson

Wednesday 27 July 2016
 6.45 pm for a 7.00 pm start

The Dome Room
 Club Burwood RSL
 96 Shaftesbury Road
 Burwood, NSW 2134

internetaddictionseminars.com.au

