



## Classification changes overdue

Australia's National Classification Scheme (NCS), used to assign ratings for films, games and publications, is long overdue for review.

ACCM has for years now been arguing that if the NCS is to do a more effective job of protecting children from harm, it needs to be based on age-appropriateness. And on a more detailed assessment than merely OK for under or over 15 or 18 years.

Along with such changes, ACCM advocates for the introduction of a legally enforceable age for "mature" movies. Presently only the MA15+ and R18+ classifications have such restrictions. Even though films classified M are "not recommended for persons under the age of 15 years" they may be seen by children of any age. A restriction at age 12 would be a much more effective protection.

One good reason to do this is that it might remove the incentive for distributors and exhibitors of M films to use all sorts of means to promote them to children of any age. For many years we've seen merchandise linked to M films (think most superhero movies) aimed at young children (sets of toys, pencil cases, costumes, bedding, and more). If young children were no longer able to see films of that level of impact, we should be spared this misleading practice.

A recent example of such marketing is a national cinema chain promoting 'family fun mornings' and the offer of a mini dinosaur toy for all child tickets sold ("while stocks last") to see *Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom*, classified M for violence and themes. What responsibility will the cinema chain take if young children attend and become distressed by the content of the M movie?

It's not as though the Australian classifiers have been heavy handed. The film warrants an M. The UK has given it 12A for threat, violence and bloody moments; the Netherlands Kijkwijzer system assessed it as 12 for violence and fear; and the US rated it PG-13 for intense sequences of science-fiction violence and peril.

## Tots and Tech: challenges for early childhood in a digital age



**Friday, 13 July 2018, 9am-4:30pm**  
**QUT, Victoria Park Rd,**  
**Kelvin Grove, Brisbane, QLD 4059**

### Confirmed Speakers:

- Professor Sarah Blunden  
Appleton Institute  
Topic: *Screen time or dream time?*
- Assoc. Professor Michael Nagel  
University of the Sunshine Coast  
Topic: *Tots and Technology – A toxic combination?*
- Rita Princi - Psychologist  
Topic: *Children and Technology! The effect on social and emotional well-being*
- Professor Sheena Reilly  
Griffith University  
Topic: *Promoting child language development via healthy screen time*
- Professor Leon Straker  
Curtin University  
Topic: *The potential impact of increasing media use on young children's physical health and development*

### MORE INFORMATION

[childrenandmedia.org.au/events/accm-seminars](http://childrenandmedia.org.au/events/accm-seminars)

ACCM has written to Event Entertainment asking for this promotion to cease. We'll keep you posted on the outcome.

## Michael Rich, "the mediatrician" visiting in August

Dr Michael Rich, the Founder and Director of the US Center for Media and Child Health will be visiting Australia in early August. He is being brought to Australia by the Australian Council for Educational Leadership (ACEL) as one of the keynote speakers at their Early Childhood conference in Sydney on August 9-10.

[www.ancel.org.au/ACEL/ACELWEB/Events/2018/Early\\_Childhood/About.aspx](http://www.ancel.org.au/ACEL/ACELWEB/Events/2018/Early_Childhood/About.aspx)



Dr Rich, who is Associate Professor at Harvard Medical School and Harvard School of Public Health, came to medicine after a twelve-year career as a film maker. At CMCH he combines his creative experience with rigorous scientific evidence about the powerful positive and negative effects of media to advise pediatricians and parents how to use media in ways that optimize child development see [www.askthemediatrician.org](http://www.askthemediatrician.org)

ACCM has been fortunate to engage Dr Rich to participate in *Let's talk about kids and screens*, an evening event for parents and carers at the Presbyterian Ladies College, Sydney on August 9.

More details soon



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## EDITORIAL

### Don't hold your breath!

ACCM recently reviewed the film of the Tim Winton novel *Breath*, classified M, and considered that it contained some themes and depictions that warranted a higher classification. We also received some comments along similar lines from ACCM members.

ACCM asked for, and received, a copy of the Classification Board's report on the film, and consequently wrote to the Board.

Here is the text of the letter written on May 18 by ACCM's CEO.

*I write to express the concern of this Council that the film *Breath*, presently screening across Australia, has been classified M. In our view this film contains depictions and themes that warrant a higher classification.*

*We note from the Board report that your classifiers considered that the scenes of the seduction of the young teenager Pikelet by the older woman Eva, and the subsequent scenes of the use of sexual asphyxiation techniques, have only moderate impact.*

*We disagree for the following reasons:*

- 1) *The scenes of the seduction of Pikelet (who we are told is 14) by the older adult Eva, and their subsequent sexual relations, would appear to be a depiction of child sexual abuse. We would like to know why this element was apparently not given any consideration in your assessment?*
- 2) *The depiction of the use of a sexual asphyxiation technique is, in our view, one of high impact (for young teens for whom such procedures would be*

### Vale Tony Morphet

ACCM notes with sadness, the recent death of Australian scriptwriter Tony Morphet.

Tony was a man of great talent, writing so well and for so long for both adults and children. He served on the Board of the Australian Children's TV Foundation for nine years from September 1985 to September 1994 and wrote *Quest beyond time* in the ACTF's original winners for a children's drama series, soon after the introduction of the original C Drama quotas in the early 80s.

At one of the several conferences about children's television held in the 70s and 80s, Tony argued strongly for the importance of children having access to Australian-made drama that reflected their own culture. He said:

*Australian children have the right to dream  
Australian dreams*

We all need to keep striving to make that dream a reality.

[actf.com.au](http://actf.com.au)

*novel and risky) and warrants an MA15+ classification.*

3) *Further the use of sexual asphyxiation techniques is very hazardous. The M classification allows this film to be seen by all ages, and its presentation as a surfing movie makes it appealing to many young boys. An MA 15+ classification would have provided parents with a strong signal that there was problematic content, and given them the opportunity to decide about and discuss the film's contentious elements.*

*You may be interested to read the extensive discussion of, and considerable parental concern about the film's content, which is proceeding on facebook presently.*

[www.facebook.com/stevebidulphraisingboys/](http://www.facebook.com/stevebidulphraisingboys/)

*We wish to discuss this matter further with you.*

The Board replied (in part) that

*"the film contains themes, sex and nudity that are inextricable linked through the narrative context of the film at the moderate impact level" !*

and that:

*The M classification affords notice to adults and caregivers that they need to exercise judgement in determining whether or not a film may be suitable for a younger person to view, with guidance from an adult.*

### Won't you be my neighbour?

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the first episode of the very long running US preschool series Mr Rogers Neighbourhood.

To honour the memory of the much loved host Fred Rogers (who died 15 years ago) the documentary "Won't you be my neighbour" screened in March and another "You are my friend" is expected in 2019.

Rogers' care for his audience is reflected in the amount of thought he invested in the ways he spoke to his audience (see link below).

And he took great pains to encourage children to value themselves, singing "I like you as you are/ exactly and precisely/ I think you turned out nicely .."

[www.theatlantic.com/family/archive/2018/06/mr-rogers-neighborhood-talking-to-kids/562352/](http://www.theatlantic.com/family/archive/2018/06/mr-rogers-neighborhood-talking-to-kids/562352/)



Barbara Biggins  
OAM  
Hon CEO

## NEW PUBLICATIONS

## ADVERTISING

Esmailpour, F., et al. 2018.

**Children's food choice: Advertised food type, health knowledge and entertainment.**

*Journal of Food Products Marketing*, 24(4), pp.476-494.

Hudders, L.; Cauberghe, V., 2018.

**The mediating role of advertising literacy and the moderating influence of parental mediation on how children of different ages react to brand placements.**

*Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 17(2), pp.197-210

Kovic, Y., et al. 2018.

**The impact of junk food marketing regulations on food sales: an ecological study.**

*Obesity Reviews*, 19(6), pp.761-769

Norman, J., et al. 2018.

**Children's self-regulation of eating provides no defense against television and online food marketing.**

*Appetite*, 125, pp.438-444.

Spielvogel, I., et al. 2018.

**A treat for the eyes. An eye-tracking study on children's attention to unhealthy and healthy food cues in media content.**

*Appetite*, 125, pp.63-71

Tarabashkina, L., et al. 2018.

**When persuasive intent and product's healthiness make a difference for young consumers.**

*Young Consumers*, 19(1), pp.38-54

## CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Cadoret, G., et al. 2018.

**Relationship between screen-time and motor proficiency in children: a longitudinal study.**

*Early Child Development and Care*, 188(2), pp.231-239.

Dunn, J., et al. 2018.

**'It's more funner than doing work': children's perspectives on using tablet computers in the early years of school.**

*Early Child Development and Care*, 188(6), pp.819-831

Horowitz-Kraus, T. ; Hutton, J.S., 2018.

**Brain connectivity in children is increased by the time they spend reading books and decreased by the length of exposure to screen-based media.**

*Acta Paediatrica*, 107(4), pp.685-693.

Ogelman, G., 2018.

**Examination of the relationship between technology use of 5-6 year-old children and their social skills and social status.**

*Early Child Development and Care*, 188(2), pp.168-182.

## HEALTH

Garmy, P. ; Ward, T.M., 2018.

**Sleep habits and nighttime texting among adolescents.**

*The Journal of School Nursing*, 34(2), pp.121-127.

Lissak, G., 2018.

**Adverse physiological and psychological effects of screen time on children and adolescents: Literature review and case study.**

*Environmental Research*, 164, pp.149-157.

Mazur, A., et al. 2018.

**Reviewing and addressing the link between mass media and the increase in obesity among European children: The European Academy of Paediatrics (EAP) and The European Childhood Obesity Group (ECOG) consensus statement.**

*Acta Paediatrica*, 107(4), pp.568-576

Sainsbury, E., et al. 2018.

**Public support for government regulatory interventions for overweight and obesity in Australia.**

*BMC Public Health*, 18(1), p.513

Sampasa-Kanyinga, H., et al. 2018. Use of social media is associated with short sleep duration in a dose-response manner in students aged 11 to 20 years.

*Acta Paediatrica*, 107(4), pp.694-700

Turel, O., et al. 2017.

**A model linking video gaming, sleep quality, sweet drinks consumption and obesity among children and youth.**

*Clin Obes* 7, 191-198.

## MEDIATION

Jago, R.; et al 2018

**Parents' perspectives of change in child physical activity & screen-viewing between Y1 (5-6) & Y4 (8-9) of primary school: implications for behaviour change**

*BMC PUBLIC HEALTH* Volume: 18

Mroz, A. and Solecki, R., 2017.

**How teenagers perceive parental attitudes towards their activity on the web.**

*E-MENTOR*, (4), pp.19-24.

Nelissen, S.; Van den Bulck, J., 2018.

**Expanding the unidirectional view on parental television mediation: Children's guidance of their parent's television use.**

*Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 62(2), pp.232-250

Nikken, P. ; Oprea, S.J., 2018.

**Guiding young children's digital media use: SES-differences in mediation concerns and competence.**

*Journal of Child and Family Studies*, pp.1-14

Skaug, S., et al. 2018.

**Parent-child interactions during traditional and interactive media settings: A pilot randomized control study.**

*Scandinavian Journal of Psychology*, 59(2), pp.135-145

## VIDEO GAMES

Jabr, M.M., et al. 2018.

**The roles of selective attention and desensitization in the association between video gameplay and aggression: An ERP investigation.**

*Neuropsychologia*, 112, pp.50-57.

## VIOLENCE

Jamnik, M.R. ; DiLalla, L.F., 2018.

**A multimethodological study of preschoolers' preferences for aggressive television and video games.**

*The Journal of Genetic Psychology*, pp.1-1

## EVENTS

## The Children's Media Conference

3-5 July 2018  
Sheffield UK

thechildrensmediaconference.com

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**ACEL Early Childhood Conference**  
*Encourage teach support: from child to citizen*

9 – 10 August 2018  
Hilton, Sydney

acel.org.au

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**ECA National Conference 2018**  
*Be the difference for children and families*

19–22 September 2018  
Sydney ICC

ecaconference.com.au

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**Digital Media & Developing Minds**

October 15-18 2018  
Long Island, New York USA

meetings.cshl.edu

