



## Donations needed to keep vital film and mobile app reviewing service

GENEROUS supporters have begun donating money to save the Australian Council on Children and the Media's vital parental-aimed film and mobile app review service - but there is some way to go to meet the \$50,000 target.

For the past 17 years, the ACCM has sent its team of speciality-trained reviewers, who have child development expertise, to new release G, PG and M rated movies. The reviews provide a snapshot of the film's suitability for different age ranges, as well as examples of sexual references violence.

The organisation also reviews the



latest mobile phone apps and their suitability for children, including warning of any gambling themes.

The State Government axed \$115,000 worth of annual grant funding, ahead of this year's State Budget, to the ACCM to provide its film and app review services.

The ACCM's president, Elizabeth Handlesy, said the organisation was turning to its "hugely supportive community" to keep the services afloat.

"Our services have won awards and are popular because they give the information you need to decide whether a movie or app is suitable for a child of a particular age," Ms Handlesy said.

"Therefore we fill a significant gap in the Australian classification system, which only tells us whether content is appropriate for under-15s."

The funding cuts come into effect on July 1.

Martha Despasquale, who has been the co-ordinator of ACCM's movie and app review services, wrote last month that the loss of the country's

sole child-development-based movie review service would "leave us all a bit further in the dark".

The ACCM website features more than 1000 reviews of recent releases, as well as classics which are available to parents and children on streaming services and home video.

There are also about 800 mobile app reviews, which provides examples of of gambling, in-app purchases and advertising. The Know Before You Go and Know Before You Load reviews garner about 35,000 visits a month.

*Donations of more than \$2 are tax deductible within Australia, and can be made by visiting the ACCM website and following the prompts, or clicking the "gofundme" logo on the first column.*

## Complaint against Seven Network over "horrible looking reptile" cinema trailer fails on technicality

THE Australian Communications and Media Authority has found a complaint about a movie trailer screened during prime-time television featuring a "horrible looking reptile" lunging at viewers was valid, but the licensee was not in breach of the Free TV Code.

The advert for the cinema movie *Venom* was shown during the AFL Grand Final in late September last year.

ACMA released its findings early in May.

They said the content of the trailer, featuring a monster lunging at the screen with its teeth bared, did not meet the PG classification criteria.



The Seven Network responded saying material classified as C, P, G or PG could be shown at any time, and they were relying on advice from the Commercials Advice Division (CAD) of Free TV Australia that the content was PG.

In its ruling, ACMA said under Section 2.1.3 of the Free TV Code, the network would not be in breach of the code if a non-compliance act was due to "information supplied by another person".

In the letter to ACMA, the complainant said the trailer did not have "mild impact".

"The trailer featured a scary image of a horrible looking reptile lunging towards the screen with its mouth open and fangs bared," the complainant wrote.

"The presence of parents would not have mitigated the impact of this image, as it could not have been anticipated.

"The trailer itself was a poor and inappropriate fit with the content of such a widely watched sporting telecast." The Seven Network argued violence was "inexplicit" and "restrained".

*Continued Page 2*

## Conference postponed

CHILDREN are growing up in an environment in which digital devices are freely accessible, portable, and very attractive, but with content that may help or harm their development".

The Digital Environments and Developing Minds conference was to be held in June, but will be hosted at Sydney's Masonic Hall on Monday, October 28. The conference includes papers from Senior Australian of the Year Dr Suzanne Packer, developmental psychologist Dr Lisa Mundy and is hosted by Adelaide child psychologist Dr Kim Lee. Watch this space for more information.



no. 363 May 2019

**small screen**

**Editor:** Barbara Biggins OAM  
**Compiler:** Kurtis Eichler  
**Editorial Board:** Barbara Biggins, Judy Bundy, Elizabeth Handsley.

*small screen* is published at the beginning of each month and reports on the events of the previous month 11 issues per year (Dec/Jan double issue)

Published by  
**Australian Council on Children and the Media (ACCM)**

PO Box 1240  
 Glenelg South 5045  
 South Australia  
[info@childrenandmedia.org.au](mailto:info@childrenandmedia.org.au)  
[www.childrenandmedia.org.au](http://www.childrenandmedia.org.au)  
 Tel: +61 8 8376 2111  
 Fax: +61 8 8376 2122

ACCM is a national, non-profit community organisation. Its mission is to promote a quality media environment for Australian children.

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Contributions are welcome.

ACCM's movie and app review services have been supported by grants from the **South Australian Government**

ACCM's Website is designed and supported by



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ACCM acknowledges support from the **Romeo Family**

**EDITORIAL****Venom trailer: Reliance on the advice of a qualified third party**

So! The Australian Communications and Media Authority has found that Seven was not in breach by showing a trailer of the horror movie *Venom* during the footy Grand final last year.

Its reasons are that, even though the trailer was found not to be suitable to be shown in the PG rated footy match, Seven was excused because it had placed reliance on the J (=PG) classification assigned by the Commercials Advice Division (CAD) of FreeTV Australia.

Which brings us to the issue of the qualifications of the Commercials Advice Division to judge the impact of trailers on a child audience. Are there staff who have child development expertise?

What research is informing their decisions about how children will react to a rapid

succession of brief but scary or violent images, which have been chosen to attract viewers and create interest in the movie?

The CAD does not have a good record in this regard. ACMA has also found that the trailer for *Halloween* shown in October did not meet the PG classification. (2019 television investigations BI 443).

ACCM has engaged with the CAD in the past couple of years over trailers for the horror movie *It*. See *small screen* #346 October 2017.

The Advertising Standards Community Panel also receives complaints about cinema trailers on TV, at a rate of about 2/month.

The trailer for *Venom*, was on the list of top 10 most complained advertisements last year, with 43 complaints made about the commercial before the Marvel comic book adaptation hit cinemas in October.

Quite a number of complaints

are dismissed on the grounds that the violence or scary scenes are okay because they are advertising a scary or violent film! (Ad standards Community panel cases).



**Barbara Biggins**  
 OAM  
 Hon CEO

Children can be quite traumatised by even brief exposure to scary images.

There is little a parent can do to help them unsee the images.

No amount of Parental Guidance can anticipate the intrusion, or mitigate the impact of such trailers in family programming.

It's time to stop the pretence that PG classified trailers of M or MA15+ movies are OK, so long as parents are around to give guidance.

**Mobile app privacy for children top job for new Federal Minister**

**C**RACKING down on social media platforms and online predators will be the top priority of the federal government's new communications and cyber safety minister.

New South Wales MP Paul Fletcher, inset, was sworn in as the new Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and The Arts.

Mr Fletcher replaces Senator Mitch Fifield, who was appointed as the Permanent Representative to the United Nations.

Before the election, Prime Minister Scott Morrison flagged the party's intention to crack-down on keeping children safe online.

Mr Morrison said in a media release the government would ensure online apps, games and services targeted at children were set at "the most restrictive privacy and safety settings at initial use or set up".

"As a dad I know first-hand how anxious parents feel about what their kids see and do online and the dangers the internet can bring," Mr Morrison said.

<https://www.liberal.org.au/our-plan-keep-australians-safe-online>



*From Page 1*

"While some stunts and special effects are used, no character is seen to come to physical harm or be physically injured," the network said.

In a letter to the ACMA, ACCM chief executive Barbara Biggins wrote that the network "erred in its reliance on this classification".

"The licensee's response is inadequate in that it fails to respond to the major point of ACCM's complaint, that is, the impact of the image of the horrible reptile lunging towards the screen," Ms Biggins said.

"Seven claims that 'brief depictions of imagery help establish the dramatic tone' and that 'portrayals of violence are unrealistic as they involve an alien'.

"These statements show a lack of understanding of the way that children react to even the briefest of scary images, and to unrealistic but scary characters."

The Advertising Standards Bureau also reviewed the trailer for *Venom* after receiving 43 complaints and found the commercial "did portray violence that was unjustifiable in the context of the product".



## NEW PUBLICATIONS

## ADVERTISING

Naderer, B.; Matthes, J.; Spielvogel, I., 2019.  
**How brands appear in children's movies. A systematic content analysis of the past 25 years.**  
 International Journal of Advertising, 38(2), pp.237-257.

Meyer, M., et al, 2019.  
**Advertising in young children's apps: a content analysis.**  
 Journal of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics, 40(1), pp.32-39

De Jans, S., et al, 2019.  
**Advertising targeting young children: an overview of 10 years of research (2006-2016).**  
 International Journal of Advertising, 38(2), pp.173-206.

## CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Twenge, J.M.; Hisler, G.C.; Krizan, Z., 2019  
**Associations between screen time and sleep duration are primarily driven by portable electronic devices: evidence from a population-based study of US children ages 0-17.**  
 Sleep Medicine, 56, pp.211-218.

Turvey, S.E. et al, 2019.  
**Screen-time is associated with inattention problems in preschoolers: Results from the CHILD birth cohort study.**  
 PLOS ONE, 14(4).

Tamana, SK; et al, 2019.  
**Electronic media use and sleep among preschoolers: evidence for time-shifted and less consolidated sleep.**  
 Health Communication, 34(5), pp.537-544.

van der Schuur, W.;

Baumgartner, S.; Sumter, S., 2019  
**Social media use, social media stress, and sleep: examining cross-sectional and longitudinal relationships in adolescents.**  
 Health Communication, 34(5), pp.552-559

## MEDIA CONTENT

Kinsler, J.J., et al, 2019  
**A content analysis of how sexual behavior and reproductive health are being portrayed on primetime television shows being watched by teens and young adults.**  
 Health Communication, 34(6), pp.644-651.

## MOBILE DEVICES

Kushlev, K.; Dunn, E.W., 2019.  
**Smartphones distract parents from cultivating feelings of connection when spending time with their children.**  
 Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 36(6), pp.1619-1639.

van den Heuvel, M., et al, 2019.  
**Mobile media device use is associated with expressive language delay in 18-month-old children.**  
 Journal of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics, 40(2), pp.99-104.

Moon, J.H., et al, 2019.  
**Smart device usage in early childhood is differentially associated with fine motor and language development.**  
 Acta Paediatrica 108(5), pp903-910.

Nelson, J.J., 2019.  
**Pass the iPad: assessing the relationship between tech use during family meals and parental reports of closeness to their chil-**

**dren.**  
 Sociological Quarterly, April 2019.

## VIDEO GAMES

Altintas, E., et al, 2019.  
**Sleep quality and video game playing: Effect of intensity of video game playing and mental health.**  
 Psychiatry Research, 273, pp487-492

## EVENTS

*Digital environments  
& developing minds*

October 28, 2019  
 Sydney Masonic Centre,  
 Goulburn St, Sydney NSW

More information to come...

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**Early Childhood Australia  
(ECA) National Conference**  
*From vision to action*

Hotel Grand Chancellor,  
 Hobart, Tasmania  
 25-28 September, 2019

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

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*The Mental Health and  
Wellbeing of Young People  
2019*

Generation Next seminar series  
 in all mainland state capitals  
 and Canberra

[generationnext.com.au/  
seminars/generation-next-  
seminars/](http://generationnext.com.au/seminars/generation-next-seminars/)

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**eSafety conference**

September 11-12, 2019  
 Hilton Hotel,  
 Sydney NSW

[https://www.esafety.gov.au/  
about-the-office/newsroom/  
events/esafety19](https://www.esafety.gov.au/about-the-office/newsroom/events/esafety19)

## WORLD NEWS

### Video game addiction is a mental health disorder, WHO says

TOP global gaming organizations are asking the World Health Organization to reverse its inclusion of "gaming disorder" as a disease, according to a press release sent by the Entertainment Software Association.

The World Health Organization (WHO) officially recognized gaming disorder as a part of its 11th edition of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11).

This was a decision the industry was awaiting since the WHO detailed its intentions last summer. Now, in an effort which includes the Entertainment Software Association (ESA), several organizations have released a statement which states that "gaming disorder" needs more evidence before it can be included in such a classification.

Australian researchers in this field argue that the WHO classification is valid, saying it opens a pathway for treatment which many parents will welcome.

<https://www.nbcnews.com/tech/video-games/video-game-addiction-mental-health-disorder-world-health-organization-says-n1010441>

### Pre-schoolers lose almost 30 minutes of sleep a night watching TV

Preschoolers who watch television sleep "significantly less" than those who don't, according to new research by the University of Massachusetts Amherst,

which found that children ages three to five who tuned in to an hour or more of TV each day slept 22 minutes less than those who didn't. That adds up to nearly 2.5 hours of missed sleep per week.

The report published in the National Sleep Foundation's journal Sleep Health studied 470 preschoolers from Western Massachusetts who wore activity monitors on their wrists for up to 16 days, which tracked their sleep. Parents and caregivers were also questioned about the children's health and behavior, including their detailed TV use.

Those who watched an hour or more of television each day slept 22 minutes less than those who watched less than an hour of TV. But the one in three kids (36%) who had TVs in their bedrooms had even more disrupted rest, as they slept 30 minutes less than the those who didn't have a television in their rooms.

The study noted that a third of the kids with TVs in their rooms fell asleep with the devices still on, which often featured "stimulating or violent adult programming."

<https://www.marketwatch.com/story/preschoolers-lose-almost-30-minutes-of-sleep-a-night-using-this-device-2019-05-14>

### Campaign for a Commercial Free Childhood (CCFC) lodges appeal against Amazon

Amazon barreled into the children's smart-speaker market last year with a brightly colored device called Echo Dot

Kids Edition. The tech giant promoted the device as a simple way for youngsters to converse with Alexa, the company's voice-activated virtual assistant, and obtain age-appropriate apps.

But recent research commissioned by two prominent advocacy groups found that the device also enabled children to easily divulge their names, home addresses, Social Security numbers and other intimate information to Alexa.

In addition, the researchers reported that Amazon made it cumbersome for parents to delete their child's personal details from the system.

The Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood and the Center for Digital Democracy joined more than a dozen others in lodging a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission.

The groups say that Amazon's practices violated the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act, a federal law protecting the personal information of people under 13.

The complaint said Amazon had failed to obtain verified consent from parents before collecting their children's voice recordings and had kept such records unnecessarily after extracting the data.

[https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/09/technology/amazon-childrens-privacy-echo-dot-kids.html?utm\\_campaign=Newsletters&utm\\_source=send-grid&utm\\_medium=email&fbclid=IwAR11tkIRFiSDJavkkG9iljy1raQubBNn-HGT822TW6poAillR758N-xuH7xo](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/09/technology/amazon-childrens-privacy-echo-dot-kids.html?utm_campaign=Newsletters&utm_source=send-grid&utm_medium=email&fbclid=IwAR11tkIRFiSDJavkkG9iljy1raQubBNn-HGT822TW6poAillR758N-xuH7xo)

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| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL ON CHILDREN AND THE MEDIA</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Membership/Subscription Application</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Tax Invoice</b></p> <p>Name: _____</p> <p>Organisation: _____</p> <p>Address: _____</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Postcode: _____</p> <p>Fax: _____</p> <p>Email: _____</p> <p>Donations to ACCM of \$2 or more are tax deductible</p> <p>Tel: 61.8.8376.2111      Fax: 61.8.8376 2122</p> <p>info@childrenandmedia.org.au      www.childrenandmedia.org.au</p> | <p>Membership rates (renewable on July 1st each year)      \$Aus (inc GST)</p> <p>Organisational</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;"><b>National</b>      \$280.00</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;"><b>Local or State</b>      \$100.00</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;"><b>Individual</b>      \$65.00</p> <p><b>small screen subscription (for non-members)</b></p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">In Australia      \$66.00</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Outside Australia      \$66.00</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr> <td style="width: 80%;">New membership</td> <td style="width: 20%;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Renewal</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>small screen subscription</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Donation (tax deductible \$2 &amp; over)</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: right;">Total</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>Payment by:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> cheque</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> bank transfer - BSB: 06 5109 ACC: 10008669</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> credit card online - www.trybooking.com/BDMRO</p> | New membership |  | Renewal |  | small screen subscription |  | Donation (tax deductible \$2 & over) |  | Total |  |
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| small screen subscription  |  |                |  |         |  |                           |  |                                      |  |       |  |
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