



SCREEN WARS

What you and your child can watch across the screens this holidays

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First published 1986

Issue No.369

NOVEMBER 2019

CLASSIFICATION SCHEME FAILS CHILDREN: NEW STUDY

AUSTRALIA'S classification system does not give parents enough information on content to judge whether it is acceptable for their children, a new survey says. The Australian Council on Children and the Media (ACCM) survey, released in November, shows 75 per cent of the 600 respondents thought the PG-rating for movies, games and apps was "too broad".

The results further showed 88 per cent of respondents thought an age-based system would be more useful to them than the present classification scheme. ACCM president, Professor Elizabeth Handsley, told *5aa's* breakfast show that the NCS does not give them sufficient information to judge whether cinema films and computer games and apps are suitable, especially for their young children. "Parents need better information to help them choose the right content for their children and we know children develop in different stages and they are affected in different ways by different type of content at times of their development. Therefore the recommendations that go out to parents should be based on how we know children develop and not based on some disembodied concept like it currently is," Ms Handsley said. "The research has been coming out over those years on the impact of



violent content, and it's becoming clearer and clearer the way it can lead children to becoming desensitised to see violence as a solution to a problems, especially if it is committed by an attractive and charismatic character.

"Those are the things that would be addressed if we had a proper, age-based system."

ACCM has long advocated for the introduction of an evidence-and age-based system using classification categories such as G, 5+, 9+, 12+, 16+ and 18+, and in which categories from 12+ up would have legal force. ACCM intends to present the survey outcomes to a federal government review expected soon, as evidence of strong support and need for change. ACCM cites The Netherlands' well-established Kijkwijzer system as a

successful example of such a scheme which is much appreciated by parents. Ms Handsley said it was tough to keep up with the increase in straight-to-streaming movies, which were not subject to the same classification rigour.

"We'd like to be doing more, and parents need more, and yet the State Government has decided to fund the SA industry to create more content rather than fund us a smaller amount to review the content and help parents find their way through the morass of information that is out there," Ms Handsley told the radio programme.

The survey questionnaire was available online, and participation promoted via prominent parenting, and children and young people's health and welfare, sites including HealthEd and Gen Next, Steve Biddulph's Raising Boys and Girls, Justin Coulson, ACCM, and education newsletters and facebook pages. The survey results were gathered between July and October. Results were analysed in early November. Six hundred and twenty three responses were received. *The Advertiser*, *The Guardian*, ABC Radio and 5aa have covered the results.

To check out an in-depth look at the results, [click here](#)

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small screen

issue 369 - November 2019

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)**

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

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ACCM acknowledges support from



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editorial

When is a guide, not a guide?

**PROF ELIZABETH
HANDSLEY**
PRESIDENT, ACCM



IMAGINE you decided the take up horseriding, and rang up riding schools for advice about how to get started.

One says, 'Find a horse, do some research and purchase appropriate equipment for riding. Then put the equipment on the horse and make sure it doesn't bite or kick you.' Another school says, 'Our qualified staff will help you choose the right horse to learn on, and show you how to put the bridle and saddle on that horse safely.'

Which school will you be willing to pay for lessons?

The difference between the two schools is a bit like the difference between what the government and ACCM provide for parents who want to manage their children's media use.

The Office of the eSafety Commissioner recently put out a guide to electronic gifts for children and young people, that informs would-be buyers about some of the risks, but then repeatedly tells them to do their own research.

For example when it comes to robotic toys, the guide acknowledges the risk of stored personal information being hacked, and notes that the device might record audio or video of the child.

But then, under 'How to stay safe', the guide gives tips like 'Do some background research to get across any obvious safety or security

issues' and 'Be aware of any third-party apps that can access your data'.

Such advice can be of only limited help to parents who do not already have a sound understanding of matters technological; and one would think that parents with such an understanding would already know the value of

things like research and awareness.

The guide gives some more specific advice, like updating passwords and software, and provides some useful links, but this level of support is patchy.

ACCM thinks parents deserve better than this. In the bewildering world of modern technology, they can't be expected to go off and research everything themselves, much less to work out what to do once they become 'aware' of something.

This is why ACCM has spent the last 17 years systematically preparing age-based recommendations on individual movies, because parents need this level of help and support.

We would love to be able to do the same with every game and every electronic toy on the market too, if only resources would allow.

The SA government has cut off funding for our movie reviews, and so far the Commonwealth has declined to step into the breach.

Probably it is telling itself that parents are getting all the information they need from its agencies.

But if the OEC's gift guide is anything to go by, they're not getting anywhere near that. ■

Give some Christmas cheer to ACCM this year

SINCE receiving the news from the SA Government that it had decided not to continue to fund ACCM's award-winning Movie and App review services, Know Before You Go and Know Before You Load, after June 30, ACCM has been working very hard to find a sustainable future for those services.

Click below to donate



We're still working on that, but in the meantime we've been heartened to receive donations from many, that have enabled us to continue till Christmas. The future is still unclear. Most of you were probably not going to give us a Christmas present this year, but if you could consider a tax deductible donation, we would think that all our Christmases had come at once.!

'Fresh' website needs age recommendations

AT LONG last, the Classification Board website has had a makeover.

This [website](#), which is the go-to place to search for the classifications assigned to cinema films, games, and publications in Australia, had been difficult to search, and didn't provide much detail about why films and games got their classifications.

It now looks fresh and does provide brief reasons for each classification decision. While this is all good and long overdue,

the information provided still only relates to the categories included in the National Classification Scheme, ie G, PG, M, MA15+, R18+.

In other words, it still doesn't provide the level of age-related information that parents, especially of young children, want and deserve.

The categories revolve around the ages of 15 years and 18 years, which is of little help if your child is 5.

It also only looks at the elements of themes,

violence, sex, language, drug use and nudity. There need to be age categories which reflect child development milestones and understanding.

Scariness, which can have a longlasting impact on young children, should be an element which is looked at in its own right, as should stereotyping and discrimination. Again, ACCM calls for the introduction of an age-based classification system that provides proper and evidence-based support to parents.

new publications

ADVERTISING

PWC Kids Digital Media Report 2019 estimates global kids digital advertising marketing will be worth \$1.7bn by 2021

Price Waterhouse Coopers (2019)

[Abstract](#)

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Associations Between Screen-Based Media Use and Brain White Matter Integrity in Preschool-Aged Children

John S. Hutton, Jonathan Dudley, Tzipi Horowitz-Kraus, Tom DeWitt, Scott K. Holland,

JAMA Pediatrics, 2019; e193869

[Abstract](#)

Digital Media Use in Children: Clinical vs Scientific Responsibilities

Dillon Browne, PhD1; Darcy A. Thompson, MD, MPH2; Sheri Madigan, PhD3,4,

JAMA Pediatrics, December 2, 2019;

[Abstract](#)

Screen time and the development of emotion understanding from age 4 to 8: A community study

Vera Skalicka, British Journal of Developmental Psychology, 2019;

[Abstract](#)

The relationships between Adolescents' Perceptions of Others and Their Social Interactions on Social Media

Sriplo, T (Sriplo, Thitirat); Humphries, ML (Humphries, Marisha L.)

PROCEEDINGS OF THE TECHNOLOGY, MIND, AND SOCIETY CONFERENCE

(TECHMINDSOCIETY'18);

[Abstract](#)

Children's internet addiction, family-to-work conflict, and job outcomes: a study of parent-child dyads

Venkatesh, V (Venkatesh, Viswanath); Sykes, TA (Sykes, Tracy Ann);

Chan, FKY (Chan, Frank K. Y.);

Thong, JYL (Thong, James Y. L.)

MIS Quarterly, Vol 43, Issue 3, Pages 903+, September 2019;

[Abstract](#)

VIDEO GAMES

When and How Video Games Can Be Good: A Review of the Positive Effects of Video Games on Well-Being

Halbrook, YJ (Halbrook, Yemaya J.); O'Donnell, AT (O'Donnell, Aisling T.); Msetfi, RM (Msetfi, Rachel M), Perspectives on Psychological Science, Vol 14, Issue 6, Pages: 1096-1104

[Abstract](#)

PRIVACY

HEALTH

Electronic device use and beverage related sugar and caffeine intake in US adolescents

Kelly M. Bradbury, Ofir Turel, Katherine M. Morrison, PLOS ONE, 2019

[Abstract](#)

Social media is not real: The effect of Instagram vs Reality images on women's social comparison and body image

Tiggemann, M; Anderberg, I; SAGE Journals, November 16, 2019

[Abstract](#)

An Osteopathic physician's approach to the Sports Athlete

Hallie Zwibel, DO, MPH; Joanne DiFrancisco-Donoghue, PhD; Amanda DeFeo, OMS II; Sheldon Yao, DO, The Journal of the American Osteopathic Association, November 1, 2019

[Abstract](#)

SCREEN TIME

MEDIATION

Associations between child mobile use and digital parenting style in Hungarian families

Konok, V (Konok, Veronika); Bunford, N (Bunford, Nora); Miklosi, A (Miklosi, Adam); The Journal of Children and Media

[Abstract](#)

Children and adolescents in front of screens: a paradigm shift in the relationship and mediation model

Sobrinho, MAO (Ortiz Sobrinho, Miguel Angel); Lazo, CM (Marta Lazo, Carmen); Barroso, JAG (Gabelas Barroso, Jose Antonio); Historia Y Comunicacion Social; Vol 24; Issue 1; Pages 353-365; DOI: 10.5209/HICS.64499 : 2019

[Abstract](#)

Creating developmentally-appropriate measures of media literacy for adolescents

Powers, KL (Powers, Kasey L.); Brodsky, JE (Brodsky, Jessica E.); Blumberg, FC (Blumberg, Fran C.); Brooks, PJ (Brooks, Patricia J), Proceedings of the Technology, Mind and Society Conference (Tech Mind Society) 2018

[Abstract](#)

Video game violence essay ‘ignores the research’: ACCM psychologist

US | Jack Denham, Matthew Spokes and Steven Hirschler have [written an essay](#) for *The Conversation* about whether the real world inspires violent gamers, or the manufactured one. The article discusses that while there is no “solid evidence” linking the two, it has been brought to the fore of discussion by US president Donald Trump (inset) after a shooting in August, which he blamed on “gruesome and grisly” video games. Trump suggests the games have the power to “shape young people’s thoughts. The authors discuss research in which participants played Grand Theft Auto V, which allows players to maim people, blow up property and



rob banks as well as perform everyday chores like get a haircut and drive a taxi. The authors go on to say the young players were “well aware that bloody violence wasn’t very realistic”. “Slaughtering people with a machine gun was received, rightfully, as make believe,” the essay says. “Whereas the competitive, capitalistic and unjust system that mass shootings take place in was accepted as pretty much realistic. “Participants undertook this system as an inevitable reality, played it competitively and were unconcerned with any

negative implications it could have.” Thus, the essay ends by saying if we are critical of games, we should “move beyond simplistic casual arguments”. The Australian Council on Children and the Media discussed the findings of this research with its consultant researchers. One researcher said: “(This is) entirely anecdotal and ignores the operation of a feedback loop between real world violence and video violence where both feed off and reinforce the other.” Another researcher said the essay “ignores the research”. “Knowing how advertising works doesn’t stop it impacting buying behaviour,” the researcher said. “Knowing a educational

“Knowing an educational game isn’t real doesn’t stop you learning from it”

- ACCM consultant researcher

game isn’t real doesn’t stop you learning from it. And just because a player’s preferences shape the way they play the game doesn’t mean the game isn’t shaping the way they think.”

Toy brands are reportedly paying Amazon millions of dollars for the chance to be featured in its annual gift guide

USA | Mary Meisenzahl writes in *Business Insider* that Amazon is charging brands to be featured in its holiday toy list, with some paying as much as \$2 million. The more they pay, the more they can nominate.

[Read more](#)

Three hours daily social media use linked to poor sleep patterns in UK teens

UK | Emma Johnson of *BMJ Open* writes about the new research suggesting social media is being associated with poor sleep patterns, such as not going to sleep until after 11pm on a school night.

[Read more](#)

The Magical Adventure Returns with The Bureau of Magical Things Season Two

AUS | *Screen Australia* has issued a media release announcing the second

season of hit live-action children series, *The Bureau of Magical Things*. The first season screened in more than 170 territories and received the AACTA Award for Best Children’s Program last year.

[Read more](#)

How they make Bluey

AUS | Dan Colasimone of *ABC* writes about how he and his daughter visited the “creative, beautiful sausage factory” Ludo Studio where the internationally-acclaimed animation series *Bluey* is made.

“From my own academic studies of the show,” Dan writes, “which involve sitting there watching Mae watch the same episodes over and over again, including Verandah Santa three times in a row, this seems to be the key.

“She doesn’t laugh at the same jokes I do, but will sit there giggling, for example, at the kids pretending to be asleep — because that’s a game she plays too.

“And she took home from our visit to Ludo a realisation that there’s a room in Brisbane full of people working away at

creating *Bluey* so it can appear on our screens at home.

“More importantly from her perspective, she also took home a *Bluey* sticker book.”

[Read more](#)

After Sesame Street, what’s next for children’s TV?

USA | Angelo Santomero of *NewsWeek Magazine* writes about a revolutionary approach to children’s television born when Joan Ganz Cooney, the creator of *Sesame Street*, dared to think that television could be used for educational purposes, and that by doing so, she could move the needle for all children.

For the first time, educational researchers, writers and producers gathered together to develop the series — which mixed fantasy and reality along with a racially diverse cast and an endearing array of puppets.

From its first episode in November 1969, *Sesame Street* — and its iconic theme song — became an instant sensation.

[Read more](#)