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CLASSIFICATION REVIEW UNDERWAY

Federal government opens consultation on content classification review

THE federal government is calling for you to have your say about the present national classification regulation system.

So if you've ever wanted to say what you think about the G, PG, M, MA15+ and R18+ classification categories, and how useful, or not, they are to you as a parent in guiding your children's choices of age-appropriate films, games and apps,

now's the time. You have until February 19. The federal Communications Department is running the review, and they've set up a discussion paper, which can be accessed [here](#).

You don't have to answer all the questions - just those on which you have views that you want heard.

You are also not confined to this set of questions: if you have more detailed views on some aspects covered in

the terms of reference, you can send a separate submission by email to consultation@classification.gov.au

One of the main reasons why we have a classification system is to provide effective protections for children from harm from age-inappropriate content. If you don't think that is true of our present system, then do speak up.

Editorial: Page 2



... as government responds to digital platforms inquiry

THE federal government announced a proposed review of the national classification regulation system as one of its responses to the Digital Platforms Inquiry [conducted by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission during 2018-2019](#).

Prime Minister Scott Morrison and Ministers Josh Frydenberg, Christian Porter and Paul Fletcher (pictured) [announced](#) a four-point response in a joint media release. One response was to move towards a staged process of media regulation reform which they called "a platform-neutral regulatory framework covering both online and



offline delivery of media content to Australian consumers". They said the first stage would commence in 2020 and focus on three main issues.

The Review above (developing a uniform classification framework across all media platforms) is the first issue to be tackled. The two other issues in the first stage will be Australian content obligations of free-to-air broadcasters (this includes children's content), and whether streaming services should be included; plus identifying other relevant aspects of policy framework to support Australian film and TV content.

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editorial

Let's be bold with classification review

**BARBARA
BIGGINS**
CHIEF EXECUTIVE, ACCM



IF OUR classification system is to provide better protections for children, those of us with strong views about what needs to change must be bold in putting them forward in these next few weeks. But even more importantly, those managing the review need to be bold and willing to make the big changes that will actually make things better for parents and their children.

Over the past two years during which this review has been signalled, it has been suggested to ACCM by government officers, that the public will not tolerate a big change to the classification system: that it would only be possible to add perhaps one extra classification, such as PG-13. Leaving aside, for now, whether that would even help, ACCM knows that many parents would be strongly supportive of a radical change, with a move to an age-based classification system.

Over 80 per cent of them say they would prefer a system that used categories like G, 6+, 9+, 12+ and 16+, where these categories reflected what the research tells us about impacts of different types of images and portrayals on children at different ages.

The present, G, PG, M and MA15+ are seen as not all that useful.

ACCM knows an age-based system has worked successfully in the Netherlands since 2000, and has recently been adopted by Belgium.

A similar child development base underpins the widely adopted Pan European Game Information (PEGI) system for classifying computer games. Now (see below article), the Netherlands has acknowledged the public's call for even more age-based information, and has added in a 14+ and an 18+. So surely Australians could cope with wider classification changes? The Dutch Kijkwijzer classification system was introduced in 2000 because of the anticipated rapid increase in the volume of material requiring classification, and it is designed to run online.

Classifications are produced by industry assessors but they have to use a questionnaire (reflecting a child development approach) developed and reviewed by its scientific committee. The core objective is to provide a system that is effective in protecting children. Australia has persisted with a system based on offence and community standards for too many years. There is a strong need for an online system. There is a demand by parents for more useful age-based information. The critical need is for an assessment tool (questionnaire) that actually protects children. Our present system (or one with bits tacked on) will not meet these needs. The Government needs to **GO BOLDLY**.

Kijkwijzer adds more age-based classifications to its system

THE Netherlands has just added two new classification categories to its age-based classification system. The [Kijkwijzer](#) (Watch Wiser) system for classifying TV programs and films has been operating since 2000 using the categories All, 6+, 9+, 12+ and 16+, along with a set of six symbols indicating the main reasons for the classification (eg violence, fear drug or alcohol abuse). The decision has now been taken to add two extra categories 14+ and 18+. They say the current media landscape demands a more nuanced classification

for intense content and imagery than before. Consumers, parents and teenagers too require more refined age recommendations that are more in line with their experience of audiovisual media. After consulting scientists that advise Netherlands Institute for the Classification of Audiovisual Media (NICAM), it was decided to introduce two new ages: 14 and 18. The 14+ classification will make more room for productions - usually aimed specifically at young teens - that are too intense for a 12+ classification but not intense enough for a 16+ classification.

The 18+ classification is for productions that contain extreme violence and pornography. ACCM has long admired the Kijkwijzer system and its scientific base and also notes these changes are the result of extensive research done by NICAM about the use of media. The expectations that parents and children have of Kijkwijzer, and how they would like to be informed, were also researched. Together with the affiliated sectors as well as the government, this has resulted in the abovementioned changes that will make Kijkwijzer more future-proof.

ADVERTISING**Children and Unboxing Videos Online: Implications for Advertisers and Policy Makers**

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO
BOULDER (2019)

Khedekar, D; Gangadharbatla, H

[Abstract](#)

Healthy commercial ads don't change teens' desire to eat junk food

MEDICAL XPRESS (2019)

Wadley, J

[Abstract](#)

BODY IMAGE**Use of social networking sites and desire for slimness among 10-year-old girls and boys: A population-based birth cohort study**

Sugimoto, N Nishida, A Ando, S Usami, S Toriyama, R Morimoto, Y Koike, S Yamasaki, S Kanata, S Fujikawa, S Furukawa, TA Sasaki, T Hiraiwa-Hasegawa, M Kasai, K
INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF EATING DISORDERS NOV 2019

Television consumption drives perceptions of female body attractiveness in a population undergoing technological transition

APA PsycNet (2019)

Boothroyd, Lynda G., Jucker, Jean-Luc, Thornborrow, Tracey, Barton, Robert A., Burt, D. Michael, Evans, Elizabeth H., Jamieson, Mark A., Tovée, Martin J.

[Abstract](#)

CHILD DEVELOPMENT**Constancy (the New Media "C") and Future Generations**

Borzekowski, DLG

HEALTH EDUCATION & BEHAVIOR
DEC 2019 VL 46 (2) SUPPL 2_20-29

Association Between Screen Time and Children's Performance on a Developmental Screening Test

JAMA Network (2019)

Sheri Madigan, PhD1,2; Dillon Browne, PhD3; Nicole Racine, PhD

[Abstract](#)

Associations between home literacy environment, brain white matter integrity and cognitive abilities in preschool-age children

ACTA PAEDIATRICA (2019)

Hutton, J; Dudley, Jonathon; Horowitz-Kraus, Tzipi; DeWitt, T; Holland, S

[Abstract](#)

[News Story](#)

GAMING**Are Loot Boxes Addictive? Analyzing Participant's Physiological Arousal While Opening a Loot Box**

SAGE journals (2019)

Brady, A; Prentice, G

[Abstract](#)

Do computer games jeopardize educational outcomes? A prospective study on gaming times and academic achievement

APA PsycNet (2019)

Gnams, Timo Stasielowicz, Lukasz Wolter, Ilka Appel, Markus

[Abstract](#)

Gaming disorder - a new frontier - highlights from RCPsychIC 2019

psychscenhub (2019)

Bowden-Jones, H

[Abstract](#)

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

Halbrook, YJ O'Donnell, AT Msetfi, RM
PERSPECTIVES ON PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCE NOV 2019 VL 14 (6) 1091-1104

The Same or Different? Convergence of Skin Gambling and Other Gambling Among Children

Wardle, H

JOURNAL OF GAMBLING STUDIES
DEC 2019 VL 35 (4) 1109-1125

Gambling Character of Computergames How Monetization Changes Digital Games

Schaack, C Dreier, M Theis, C Krell, M Roth, N

SUCHT THERAPIE NOV 2019 VL 20 (4) 198 - 202

SCREEN USE**Development and Validation of the Problematic Media Use Measure: A Parent Report Measure of Screen Media "Addiction" in Children**

Domoff, SE Harrison, K Gearhardt, AN Gentile, DA Lumeng, JC Miller, AL
PSYCHOLOGY OF POPULAR MEDIA CULTURE JAN 2019 VL 8 (1) 2-11

Instagrowth: A Longitudinal Growth Mixture Model of Social Media Time Use Across Adolescence

Coyne, SM Padilla-Walker, LM

Holmgren, HG Stockdale, LA

JOURNAL OF RESEARCH ON

ADOLESCENCE DEC 2019 VL 29 (4)

889-907

Screen time and problem behaviors in children: exploring the Mediating role of sleep duration

Guerrero, MD Barnes, JD Chaput, JP

Tremblay, M

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF

BEHAVIORAL NUTRITION AND

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY research.

NOV 14 2019 VL 16 (1)

Digital media: Promoting healthy screen use in school-aged children and adolescents

Ponti, M Belanger, SA Grimes,

R Heard, J Johnson, M Moreau,

E Norris, M Shaw, A Stanwick, R

Vyver, E Yorke, L; Canadian Paediat

Soc Digital Hlth

PAEDIATRICS & CHILD HEALTH SEP

2019 VL 24 (6) 402-408

SOCIAL MEDIA USE**Digital Communication Media Use and Psychological Well-Being: A Meta-Analysis**

Liu, D Baumeister, RY Yang, CC Hu, BJ

JOURNAL OF COMPUTER-

MEDIATED COMMUNICATION

SEP 2019 VL 24 (5) 259-274



Movie trailer rule change needed as part of review

The promotion of up-coming movies is an issue for the present Review of Classification (*see front page*).

Trailers of movies can be shown in cinemas provided such trailers are not for a movie of higher classification than the feature to be screened at that session.

Where the trailer is for a movie that is yet to be classified, an assessment is made about the likely classification of that movie.

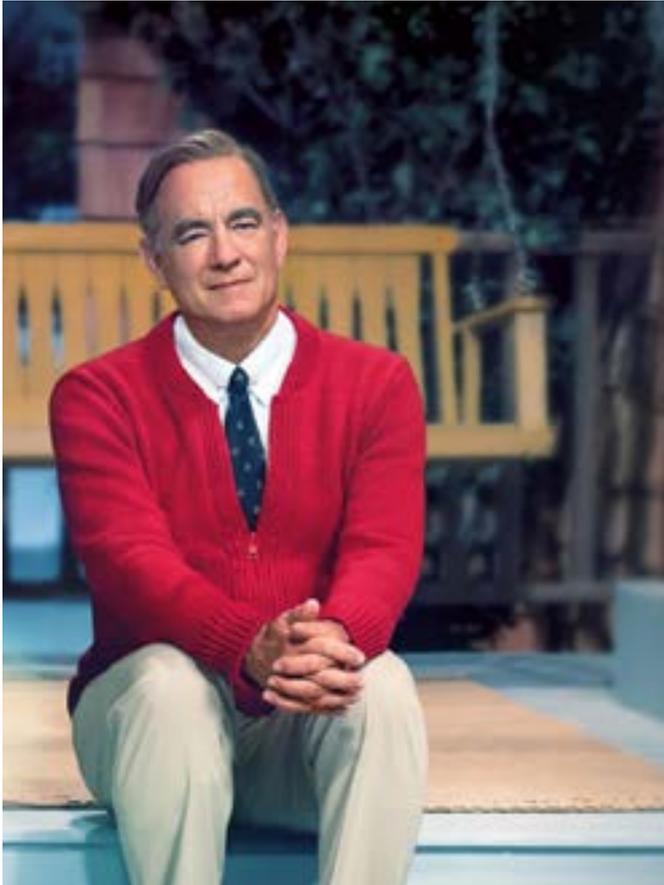
The rules are not working.

A survey of movies seen by ACCM's reviewers in 2019, shows that of 80 movies, 27 (or 33%) carried trailers of movies or promotions for games that either were, or later were shown to be, of a higher classification than the feature to be screened.

The vast majority of these were for yet-to-be-classified movies.

Time to stop this.

NICELY DONE, MISTER



At a time when so many mainstream movies are loud and brash and noisy, this subdued character study is a genuinely pleasurable experience, writes DAVID STRATTON.

Fred Rogers (1928-2003) was a beloved American television personality whose long-running program on public broadcaster PBS, *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood*, transcended its intended audience of small children and found popularity with American men and women of all ages, races and backgrounds.

This was because Rogers, a lifelong Republican who trained for the ministry as a youth, was such a genuinely decent fellow — and that decency came across strongly to TV viewers as he tackled difficult subjects such as death, divorce and homosexuality.

Rogers, who was given to wearing cardigans and using hand puppets and sets that looked as though children had created them, wanted “to make goodness attractive” and in this he succeeded beyond expectations, as the 2018 Morgan Neville documentary profile of him, *Won't You Be My Neighbor?*, vividly indicated. [READ MORE HERE](#)

Just 15 minutes to get your kids into a school sleep routine

AUS | SYDNEY MORNING HERALD

CHRISTOPHER SCANLON writes how parents can get their children back into a school sleep routine after many late nights and morning sleep-ins during the school holidays.

“Over the holidays we’ve probably been going to sleep a little bit later. It’s daylight savings, it’s Christmas, it’s beach time. And it’s really important we get the balance between being with family and socialising and learning all those wonderful skills that we have in the family,” says psychologist and director of the Australian Centre for Education in Sleep DR SARAH BLUNDEN says... and the cost of a growing sleep debt

[Read more](#)

NHS tells gambling giants to improve the odds for mental health

UK | NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE

The head of mental health care in England has written to the heads of top

gambling firms demanding urgent action to tackle betting-related ill health.

NHS mental health director CLAIRE MURDOCH has ramped up pressure on companies to take action, following reports that gambling giants continue to nudge losing punters into more betting.

“It is high time sporting bodies get back to their roots and start focussing on fans and families enjoying watching their heroes play, rather than allowing firms to hijack sport in pursuit of profit,” Ms Murdoch says.

[Read more](#)

Gaming is the top at-home activity for families

USA | kidscreen

Gamifying brands and integrating them with voice assistant tech is the way to reach Millennial parents and their kids, says *Fullscreen's* CRYSTAL SURRENCY.

The number one at-home activity for Millennial parents and their kids is video gaming, according to Fullscreen.

Data from the social media research company's 2019 Generational Report: Next

Gen Families found these parents spend an average of 8.5 hours a week gaming, and 50% of them say their child uses a video game system regularly.

[Read more](#)

Television watchdog blasts spike in 'toxic' content involving children

USA | THE WASHINGTON TIMES

A television watchdog is decrying an increase in violent content involving children, pointing to graphic depictions and coarse language in a slew of shows.

The short-lived NBC paranormal detective series “*InBetween*” opens with a boy staring at the mutilated body of his mother, her eyes removed.

“There are some really wonderful things to report over the last year,” said TIM WINTER, Parent Television Council president. “But over the last year or two Hollywood seems to have made a dangerous turn towards marketing explicit content to children.”

[Read more](#)