DEFENDING OUR CONTENT

Safeguarding Australian content in a world of changing viewership

In his September 30 media release, **Paul Fletcher**, the Minister for Communications, Cybersafety and the Arts outlined the government's intentions in relation to support for Australian and children's screen content. He said: "we need Australian stories on our screens. It's important to Australia's cultural identity …. for decades, there have been rules requiring commercial television networks to show specified amounts of Australian drama, documentaries and children's content."

The Minister then outlined the outcomes from the recent review of these rules in the context of the changing media environment.

In relation to the longstanding quotas for Preschool programs and school age children's content he said "children's content is as vital as ever, but all of the most-watched, and most-loved shows are on the ABC. The rules force commercial broadcasters to make many

Ebonnie Masini and Rian McLean in Round the Twist (1989), one of Australia's most fondly remembered children's TV dramas. Source: Australian Children's Television Foundation

hardly any child watches."
(Ed: no one has forced the networks to make programs that are unattractive to children, nor to schedule quality children's dramas for example, at times when few children are watching nor to fail to promote them).
Consequently, the Minister has concluded that "Rather than a requirement for each of

and documentaries, there will be a global requirement across the three types of content.
It could be met entirely by drama, entirely by children's content or with a mix of documentaries and other content."
(Ed: So! Goodbye children's content on commercial networks.

Their long term tactics to get rid of children's quotas have finally been rewarded).
The Minister also announced $20 million over two years would go to the Australian Children's Television Foundation.
CEO Jenny Buckland is [quoted as saying](#) "scrapping the fixed local content quotas for the commercial broadcasters will be devastating for children's producers.
"I've been expecting it to happen for at least the last 10 to 15 years, but it doesn't make it any easier."

For a range of other views on the Minister's announcement see:

[**Screenhub story**](#)

[**Free TV responds**](#)

[**Mumbrella story**](#)

[**Screen Producers Australia**](#)

Country's top advertisers' association updates code of ethics

On September 23, the Australian Association of National Advertisers (AANA) launched its [updated Code of Ethics and Practice](#). which is effective from 1 February 2021. In its most recent Bulletin, Ad Standards (which manages the AANA's complaints resolution process) reports: "the updates give clearer guidance to advertisers, ensuring more explicit obligations are in place including restrictions on undue focus on body parts (unless relevant to the product or service being advertised),

the use of overtly sexualised imagery, graphic violence or horror where children are likely to see it, and gender stereotyping. The rules about social media influencers' paid posts will also be more explicit."
Further, on the vexed issue of ads that are scary for children, Ad Standards cautions advertisers, urging them to "ensure that your ad is a treat and not a trick. *Creepin' your advertising real this Halloween is one thing, but creative that doesn't meet community standards on*

violence will land you in a cauldron of hot water. Violent or menacing themes, images or audio with elements of horror or gore must be justifiable and in the context of the product or service being advertised.
For further information about how Ad Stds has been viewing violence in ads for entertainment products (eg trailers for cinema films) [click here](#).

Does the updated Code fix the problems with scary ads? see editorial on PAGE 2

small screen

Contributions are welcome.

CONTENTS

CONTACT US

ACCM acknowledges support from

ROMEO'S

FOODLAND
THE MIGHTY SOUTH AUSSIES

ACCM's website is designed by

go CREATE

Click to donate

SUPPORT US

editorial

The AANA's new Code of Ethics: a treat or a trick?

ELIZABETH HANDSLEY PRESIDENT, ACCM

The newly released AANA Code of Ethics for advertising has been criticised by ACCM for failing to change its Code so it would be effective in preventing the exposure of children to scary and harmful ads.

ACCM has long been concerned about horror movies being promoted in public spaces such as main road billboards, bus shelters, on the sides of public transport, boundary screens at sporting events, and via trailers on free-to air TV.

This is because the research tells us that scary images cause children much distress, and can cause ongoing harm. This distress is real, and so are the consequences. Ongoing issues from exposure to alarming images can include continuous nightmares, bed-wetting and fatigue due to disturbed sleep, which can interrupt children's education and daily life. When children are exposed to an image that does not fit within their schemes of what they know, they tend to attend more closely to try to make sense of the image. Children who have been distressed by a frightening image will continue picturing the image in their head and at bed time when they are not distracted by other things. This can lead to a fear of going to bed, a fear of being alone and nightmares.

Parents are rightly complaining that they cannot protect their children from such images.

So will the AANA's new Code and associated Practice Note fix the problems?

The first thing to note is that very few changes were made to the Code itself. The introduction of the concept of avoiding 'harm to the consumer' as an objective may have an impact on the way the Code is interpreted, but it remains to be seen. **In the substantive provisions of the Code, there is nothing that would indicate a shift in the way that scary images are dealt with. In particular, there is no change to the wording of the provision on violence.**

The Practice Note, by contrast, does contain discussion of the role of 'menace' in interpreting that provision, at least where the audience includes children. It gives examples of images suggesting a character is about to commit violence, or has just done so, and makes it clear that these 'should not be included'. Therefore it extends the concept of violence further than the words 'present or portray' alone would necessarily indicate. This development is welcome.

However, fear is not necessarily rationally connected to threatened or actual violence or harm. For example, one of the horror movies promoted in recent years used the image of an old-fashioned doll that did not imply violence in any way, but was still disturbing for children (and some adults). **The new Practice Note still does not directly confront the issue of scary images per se. Therefore we can be sure that advertisers will continue to use them, finding their way around the current provision on violence.** Another major fault line in the Code is the idea of the 'relevant audience', for example in the provision on sex, sexuality and nudity, which says these matters should be treated 'with sensitivity to the relevant audience'. It is not clear whether this means the (objective) likely actual audience or the audience that the advertiser (subjectively) intended to target. The objective interpretation has a greatly enhanced capacity to protect children, and ACCM's submission supported the adoption of such wording.

The Practice Note implies that the subjective meaning applies, stating that the concept of relevant audience 'is informed by the content of the advertising … as well as other material that may be provided by the advertiser … to determine the audience that the advertiser intends to see the advertising'. On the other hand, it refers to advertising 'in a public space' as having a 'relevant broad audience', suggesting that the objective meaning is the correct interpretation. None of this explains why clearer language could not be used in the Code itself.

ACCM submitted that there should be less reliance on the Practice Note – that 'the Code should be drafted in a sufficiently clear way that the need for Practice Notes is minimal'. This is particularly the case where complete reliance is placed on members of the public to notice breaches and take the trouble to complain: we argued that potential complainants 'should not have to cross-reference between different documents to determine whether a provision has been breached'. However, as noted, nearly all the changes were to the Practice Note, and the Code was left largely untouched.

So, new code, trick or treat?

ADVERTISING

Coates, AE; Hardman, CA; Halford, JCG; Christiansen, P; Boyland, EJ
The effect of influencer marketing of food and a "protective" advertising disclosure on children's food intake
PEDIATRIC OBESITY OCT 2019 VL 14 (10)

van Reijmersdal, EA; Rozendaal, E
Transparency of digital native and embedded advertising: Opportunities and challenges for regulation and education
COMMUNICATIONS-EUROPEAN JOURNAL OF COMMUNICATION RESEARCH SEP 2020 VL 45 (3) 378-388

Zarouali, B; Verdoodt, V; Walrave, M; Poels, K; Ponnet, K; Lievens, E
Adolescents' advertising literacy and privacy protection strategies in the context of targeted advertising on social networking sites: implications for regulation
YOUNG CONSUMERS AUG 2020

Radesky, J; Chassiakos, YR; Ameenuddin, N; Navsaria, D
Digital advertising to children
PEDIATRICS JUL 1 2020 VL 146 (1)

Critchlow, N; Bauld, L; Thomas, C; Hooper, L; Vohra, J
Awareness of marketing for high fat, salt or sugar foods, and the association with higher weekly consumption among adolescents: a rejoinder to the UK government's consultations on marketing regulation
PUBLIC HEALTH NUTRITION OCT 2020 VL 23 (14) 2637-2646

BODY IMAGE

Ryding, F. C., & Kuss, D. J. (2020).
The use of social networking sites, body image dissatisfaction, and body dysmorphic disorder: A systematic review of psychological research. Psychology of Popular Media, 9(4), 412–435.

SCREEN USE

Radesky, JS; Weeks, HM; Ball, R; Schaller, A; Yeo, S; Durnez, J; Tamayo-Rios, M; Epstein, M; Kirkorian, H; Coyne, S; Barr, R
Young children's use of smartphones and tablets
PEDIATRICS JUL 1 2020 VL 146 (1)

Michaelson, V; King, N; Janssen, I; Lawal, S; Pickett, W
Electronic screen technology use and connection to nature in Canadian adolescents: a mixed methods study
CANADIAN JOURNAL OF PUBLIC HEALTH-REVUE CANADIENNE DE SANTE PUBLIQUE AUG 2020 VL

111 (4) 502-514

Qaiser, Z
Early childhood education and care and the use of digital media in informal environments
BERKELEY REVIEW OF EDUCATION SPR-SUM 2020 VL 9 (2)

Mougharbel, F; Goldfield, GS
Psychological correlates of sedentary screen time behaviour among children and adolescents: a narrative review
CURRENT OBESITY REPORTS SEP 2020

Srisinghasongkram, P; Trairatvorakul, P; Maes, M; Chonchaiya, W
Effect of early screen media multitasking on behavioural problems in school-age children
EUROPEAN CHILD & ADOLESCENT PSYCHIATRY AUG 2020

SCREEN USE

Dajches, L; Aubrey, JS
Defining the relationship: An examination of sexual behaviors and relational contexts across tween, teen, and young adult US television
COMMUNICATION REPORTS AUG 2020

Tahir, R; Ahmed, F; Saeed, H; Ali, S; Zaffar, F; Wilson, C
Bringing the kid back into YouTube kids: detecting inappropriate content on video streaming platforms
PROCEEDINGS OF THE 2019 IEEE / ACM INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ADVANCES IN SOCIAL NETWORKS ANALYSIS AND MINING AUG 27-30, 2019 VANCOUVER, CANADA 2019 464-469

CONTENT FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD

Giuffre, L
Bluey, Requestival, Play School and ME@Home: the ABC (Kids) of communication cultures during lockdown
MEDIA INTERNATIONAL AUSTRALIA SEP 2020

Nikolayev, M; Reich, SM; Muskat, T; Tadjbakhsh, N; Callaghan, MN
Review of feedback in edutainment games for preschoolers in the USA
JOURNAL OF CHILDREN AND MEDIA AUG 2020

Canelhas, G
Educational videos for pre-school children: how to ensure quality in an appealing digital world?

14TH INTERNATIONAL TECHNOLOGY, EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE MAR 02-04, 2020 VALENCIA, SPAIN PROCEEDCINGS 2020 4152-4159

PARENTAL MEDIATION

Elias, N; Lemish, D; Dalyot, S; Floegel, D
"Where are you?" An observational exploration of parental technoference in public places in the US and Israel
JOURNAL OF CHILDREN AND MEDIA AUG 2020

Gallego, FA; Malamud, O; Pop-Eleches, C
Parental monitoring and children's internet use: The role of information, control, and cues
JOURNAL OF PUBLIC ECONOMICS AUG 2020 VL 188

Liu, YL
Maternal mediation as an act of privacy invasion: The association with internet addiction
COMPUTERS IN HUMAN BEHAVIOR NOV 2020 VL 112

GAMBLING AND GAMING

Kristiansen, S; Severin, MC
Loot box engagement and problem gambling among adolescent gamers: Findings from a national survey
ADDICTIVE BEHAVIORS APR 2020 VL 103

David, JL; Thomas, SL; Randle, M; Pitt, H; Daube, M
Parent and child perceptions of gambling promotions in Australian sport
HEALTH PROMOTION INTERNATIONAL APR 2020 VL 35 (2) 362-372

Smith, M; Chambers, T; Abbott, M; Signal, L
High stakes: children's exposure to gambling and gambling marketing using wearable cameras
INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION AUG 2020 VL 18 (4) 1025-1047

VIDEO GAMES

Potard, C., Henry, A., Boudoukha, A.-H., Courtois, R., Laurent, A., & Lignier, B. (2020).
Video game players' personality traits: An exploratory cluster approach to identifying gaming preferences. Psychology of Popular Media, 9(4), 499–512

UNITED STATES

Federal Trade Commissioner: Most commissioners support investigation of ad tech

The ad-tech industry could soon find itself under scrutiny by the government, Federal Trade Commissioner Rebecca Slaughter has suggested this week.

"I think there's an enormously opaque black box into which our data goes that is turned around and used to target content towards us -- whether it's political, or commercial," Slaughter said in an interview for C-SPAN's "The Communicators" series.

Read more

UNITED KINGDOM

Why not all screen time is the same for children

Screens are a fixture in children's lives from a young age, but giving them access to television, tablets or phones doesn't always mean it will have a negative impact on their development.

Read more

UNITED STATES

Tips from the Center for Humane Technology on how to take control of your phone

The CTH says: "If we all make choices that reflect the technology we want to see in the world, we can regain control and together change the way technology is built. Grab a friend or family member today and join the movement by starting with your own devices.

Read more
Watch *The Social Dilemma*

AUSTRALIA

Social media: Why parents were right to be suspicious all along

Senior writer for the *Sydney Morning Herald*, Wendy Tuohy, writes that of all the experts I've interviewed, paediatrician professor Frank Oberklaid of the Royal Children's Hospital has had the greatest impact on how I do my life.

I spoke with him for an article when I was a young mother of two little boys and a baby girl and he passed me a pearl that has perhaps been the biggest boon to my parenting.

Parents' instincts about there being something going on with their child were rarely wrong, he said.

If they felt something to do with the child's wellbeing needed attention, it probably did. It was empowering to be told to trust myself and that my opinion about my kids' health mattered.

Read more

AUSTRALIA

Data collection practices of mobile applications played by preschool-aged children

This cohort study uses data from the first wave (August 2018 to May 2019) of the Preschooler Tablet Study to assess the data collection and sharing practices of mobile applications played by preschool-aged children and whether transmissions to third-party domains violate digital privacy laws.

Read more

UNITED STATES

Study finds association between screen time use, diet and other health factors

This study found that heavy users of screens—defined as those who use screens an average of 17.5 hours per day—reported the least healthful dietary patterns and the poorest health-related characteristics compared with moderate and light users, who averaged roughly 11.3 and 7 hours of screen use per day, respectively.

Read more

More information: Maricarmen Vizcaino et al. From TVs to tablets: the relation between device-specific screen time and health-related behaviors and characteristics, BMC Public Health (2020). Link here

AUSTRALIA

13 pieces of kids content to watch now

Stuck on what to watch these school holidays? Check out this collection of Aussie family-friendly children's TV and film.
The school holidays are upon us and with limited interstate travel options and overseas a no go, there's a good chance many families will be opting for a stay-cation.

Read more

AUSTRALIA

My experience presenting for SBS on Demand documentary film '*Are you Addicted to Technology*?'

Dr Huu Kim Le from CGI Clinic talks about presenting a new documentary being released next year.

Read more

AUSTRALIA

Australian games industry: one step closer to rebates and sustainablity

A sustainable Australian video game industry? Production rebates are a small, important step.

Read more

AUSTRALIA

Grandparents missing internet nasties because of digitial literacy

Low levels of digital awareness among older Australians could be exposing kids to risks of net nasties as families increasingly turn to grandparents for child supervision, the eSafety Commissioner has warned.
Read more

AUSTRALIA

Playing IT safe: developing young children's understanding of digital networks

Teaching tech through play-based learning can help children to start exploring the digital environment and develop their skills and competence from a very young age.

Read more