



28 March 2007

MEDIA RELEASE **Children's media: round the twist?**

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In a controversial speech today to a gathering of the Who's Who of children's television over the last five decades, Dr Patricia Edgar, founding Director of the Australian Children's Television Foundation, and author of *Bloodbath: A memoir of Australian television* (2006) will call for urgent action by the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) in the forthcoming review of Children's Television Standards (CTS). "Brands are ubiquitous and the fight to resist is overwhelming for parents... We have squandered television's capability to teach, inform and inspire. We are systematically destroying children's bodies along with their minds. The life affirming stories that could help them develop into socially integrated human beings have gone..."

Dr Edgar is delivering the keynote address at the 50th birthday celebration of national community group Young Media Australia (YMA) formerly the Australian Council for Children's Film and Television. She will conclude her address with a challenge to government: "We know the media operators are champions at getting around regulations and ACMA and Government need to be determined. That is their job, to work for the interests of children."

Jane Roberts, YMA President, supported Dr Edgar's comments, and expressed her concern in particular about the sexualised images of children in the media, which she says "...are teaching children to associate physical appearance and buying the right products not only with being sexy but with being successful as a person. YMA urges the revision of advertising codes in all media to protect young children against exploitative practices."

Elizabeth Handsley, YMA's Vice President, added her concerns about the impact of television food advertising. "More and more research from within Australia and overseas is confirming that food advertising is a contributing factor to the issue of childhood obesity and overweight in Australia. It is time for action to be taken on these very valid community concerns."

Young Media Australia (the registered trading name of the Australian Council on Children and the Media) is a unique national community organisation with a strong interest and expertise in the role that media experiences play in the development of Australian children. YMA is recognised as a peak source of information on the impact of media on children and young people.

YOUNG MEDIA AUSTRALIA
Promoting Healthy Choices and Stronger Voices in Children's Media since 1957

*For more information or to arrange an interview,
please call Dr Patricia Edgar (triciaedgar@optusnet.com.au)
Jane Roberts on 0410 509 685, or
Elizabeth Handsley on 0403 005 736.*