



# Young Media Australia fact sheet

## Violence: true or false?

Violence in the media is OK for children ...

### If it makes them laugh

#### False

Research tells us that making violence funny, increases the risk that children will use it.

### So long as the goodies always beat the baddies

#### False

Research tells us that violence performed by heroes and which is seen as justified and is rewarded, increases the risk that children will use violence.

### If it is on the TV News

#### False

Research tells us that children react differently to depictions of real life violence in the news at different stages of their lives.

Children under seven or eight will be most upset by visual images of harm or cruelty to children or animals, or of disasters and destruction.

Children aged eight to twelve are most disturbed by violence in familiar settings, that could happen to them.

Older children fear that the events depicted could happen to them, especially war or terrorist attacks.

### If it is in a cartoon

#### False

Children under the age of seven lack the ability to differentiate between fantasy and reality. Because they pay attention to what makes heroes powerful, cartoon shows can be as powerful as real life dramas.

Many cartoons show children that violence works, violence wins, violence is funny and violence has no real consequences.

### Young Media Australia recommends ...

Avoid violent media as much as possible, no matter what the format, particularly for very young children. With older children, limit exposure to media violence and discuss it with them. Explain that, in real life, violence hurts, violence is unattractive and violence is not justified or rewarded. If they have been disturbed by violence, such as something they have seen on the TV News, reassure them according to their level of understanding.



### For more information about Children and the Media, call the Young Media Australia Helpline

Up to date and reliable information for parents and caregivers about the impact of the media on children.

**1800 700 357**

Freecall anywhere in Australia, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week  
Or go to the Young Media Australia website

**www.youngmedia.org.au**

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To get a list of available Young Media Australia fact sheets, or to order your copies call the

**Young Media Australia Helpline  
1800 700 357**

You may also download a fact sheet order form from our web site **www.youngmedia.org.au** or browse the fact sheets in topic format online.

Fact Sheet 02.05, August 2003

