



# Young Media Australia fact sheet

## How to choose the best television, movies, games and websites

This topic is an overview about choosing the best media for children. The general principles are to choose programs that:

- provide truth and diversity
- are age specific
- are suitable for their age group
- are appropriately classified.

### Provide truth and diversity

For optimal development children need access to a diverse range of media experiences that:

- expand their horizons, rather than limit them
- give them truthful insights into how other people live, relate, and solve problems
- allow them to laugh.

They need a story world that offers many variations and possibilities.

Themes of violence, and product linked TV programs, films and videos should be avoided.

### Are age specific

- Children have different perceptions and understanding of visual content at different ages and stages.
- Young children will focus on images, and won't follow plots; camera angles can hinder understanding.
- Many themes can be tackled in children's programs but they need to be dealt with from the point of view of the child and their likely understanding.

The Australian Broadcasting Authority's Children's Television Standards use five criteria to determine whether programs qualify for the ABA's special quotas for preschool children (P) or for primary school aged children (C). Programs must:

- be made specifically for children or groups of children within the preschool or primary school age range, and

- be entertaining
- be well produced using sufficient resources to ensure a high standard of script, cast, direction, editing, shooting, sound and other production elements
- enhances a child's understanding and experience, and
- be appropriate for Australian children.

### Are suitable for their age group

While some programs or products will be made specifically for children, others of more general interest can be quite suitable for children to watch. These are usually classified G.

### Are appropriately classified

A useful guide to whether a program or product is suitable for children of particular ages, is to check its classification. Most TV programs (excluding news and current affairs programs), all cinema films and home videos, and computer games must be classified. As a rough guide:

- G • suitable for all ages to watch and / or play
- G8 • only available for computer games
- PG • indicates that the game is suitable for those eight and over
- PG • parental supervision may be needed for children under 15 years
- M15+ • content is not recommended for those under 15 years
- MA15+ • has legal force
- MA15+ • access is available only to those 15 years and over except if accompanied by a parent or guardian
- R18+ • has legal force
- R18+ • access is only available to those 18 years and over

### Related topic

*Classifications*



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

**1800 700 357**

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