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MEDIA RELEASE

School Holiday Movies: What's there that won't scare?

"Most movies on offer these school holidays contain violence and scary stuff", cautions the Australian Council on Children and the Media.

Council Vice President Prof Elizabeth Handsley says "It's becoming quite difficult for parents of young children (under 8 yrs) to find movies that offer a fun experience without the inclusion of really scary scenes and troubling violence."

She continued "Reviewers for our *Know Before You Go* movie review service have found that of five films (one classified G and the others PG) all have violent and scary scenes that make them unsuitable for young children."

These five films aimed at younger children, with Classification Board ratings and ACCM guidelines include:

- *Cats and Dogs: The Revenge of Kitty Galore*. Rated G by the Classification Board but found by the ACCM reviewer to be too violent and scary for under 5s with parental guidance recommended to 8.
- *The Last Airbender* (PG) Not recommended by ACCM under 10, PG 10-12 (Violence, Scary scenes)
- *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* (PG) Not recommended by ACCM under 10, PG to 13 (Violence; scary scenes)
- *Despicable Me* (PG) Not recommended by ACCM under 5, PG to 10 (Violence, Disturbing scenes)
- *Furry Vengeance* (PG) Not recommended by ACCM under 5, PG to 10 (Violence, Scary scenes)

She added "Parents should also be aware that the film *Tomorrow when the war began* which is based on a popular John Marsden book is likely to attract younger teens who are familiar with the book, but is rated M and not recommended by ACCM for children under 15 due to violence, disturbing scenes, drug use, and coarse language."

Prof Handsley urges parents to check out the content of movies with the Council's free service at www.childrenandmedia.org.au or via its helpline 1800 700 357.

Child psychologist and ACCM Board member Dr C Glenn Cupit said that for young children, movies were not just a bit of harmless entertainment. He said "Exposure, under the age of 8, to violent and scary content is associated with sleep disturbances, the creation of unnecessary and ongoing fears, and with an increase in the risk of aggression. Parents should consider carefully whether their child was ready for some highly publicised films, or would find them more enjoyable at a later age."

Parents can find out more about likely impacts of media at the ACCM website.

ACCM is a unique national community which strives for a media environment that supports the health, safety and wellbeing of Australian children. It is committed to promoting healthy choices and stronger voices in children's media. Parents, caregivers and the general community can access information and advice about the impact of the media on children by calling the Children and Media Helpline (1800 700 357, national, freecall, 24/7) or visiting the ACCM Website (www.youngmedia.org.au).

*For more information or to arrange an interview, please call
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or Glenn Cupit (SA) on (08) 8302 4580 (bus.) or (08) 8177 1990 (AH)*