

Parental Advisory

Cool Tools to Help Parents
Monitor Their Children's Media



All Media

www.common sense media.org

One of the most complete parent resources on the planet, Common Sense Media ranks and reviews movies, web sites, TV shows, video games, and books from a parent's perspective. The site also publishes a large amount of timely, practical parenting advice.

Movies

<http://blog.beliefnet.com/moviemom/>

The Movie Mom (Nell Minow) watches and reviews each major film from a parent's perspective. Each movie is given a letter grade, ranking its appropriateness for children. Movies also can be searched by MPAA ratings.

www.kids-in-mind.com

Kids in Mind is a site dedicated to ranking movies on three obscenity scales: sex & nudity, violence & gore, and profanity. Each film is assigned three different number rankings (from 1-10), based on the aforementioned criteria.

TV

www.parentstv.org

Parentstv.org is the website of the Parents Television Council, an organization committed to making our airwaves safe for children. It publishes interesting reports and studies on child viewership habits, as well as a stoplight rating for each show (i.e. red light, yellow light, green light), based on three main criteria: sex, language, violence.

Music

www.lyrics.com

Lyrics.com is a comprehensive search engine for lyrics. Find lyrics to thousands of songs by searching for artist, song, or album. Also, you can locate albums by new releases and billboard charts, allowing you to preview the top albums and songs as they are released.

Helpful Tip: Open up a dialogue

Many films, video games, songs, and books provide a perfect entry point into important parent/child discussions. Find creative ways to engage your children in their own cultural development.

Example: If you allow your child to read a book in which violence is used to solve a problem, ask your child if the violence could have been avoided and, if so, how.

Video Games

www.whattheyplay.com

What They Play publishes kid-friendly reviews of the hottest video games for every gaming platform. The site also provides numerous recommendations for parents looking to use video games as educational tools.

www.esrb.org

The Entertainment Software Rating Board is the official software/video game rating agency. Esrb.org is a user-friendly search engine for this agency's ratings. Each game is assigned a rating, similar to the MPAA ratings, (e.g., "E" for everyone, "M" for mature).

Software

www.softwareforkids.com

Software for Kids is a website designed for parents looking to use software to help educate their children. The site recommends top-selling and top-rated educational software, categorized by grade level.

Books

www.factsonfiction.org

Facts on Fiction is an organization dedicated to developing strong, responsible children readers. It provides insightful reviews on popular children's books and offers resources for parents looking to improve their children's interest in reading.

Comic Books

www.kidsandcomics.com

Kids and Comics is a site promoting responsible use of comic books by children and parents. It suggests kid-friendly comics and offers detailed reviews of the most popular comic books.

Helpful Tip: Get ahead of the curve

It's difficult to monitor your children if the technologies they are using are foreign to you. Take the time to learn the technologies your children use the most. This will give you a framework for understanding your child's fascination and help you form a more sophisticated strategy for keeping your child's use within appropriate boundaries.

Example: If your child is an avid gamer, find a video game you enjoy and play it regularly.