



## *Windows of Opportunity:* The Rewards of Enlightened Movie & Video Choices

*“When there is a good movie in town, consider going to the theater as a family. Your very patronage will give encouragement to those who wish to produce this type of entertainment.”*

- Gordon B. Hinckley



### *The Thirty-Minute Solution*

In **thirty minutes** or less you can significantly improve your family’s **safety online**



*Help your children learn to distinguish the difference between film and cinematography that is truly superb, and films that are “award winning,” but inappropriate*

*In thirty minutes you can...*

- ⌚ **Hold a family council** to decide what the family’s media standards will be. Provide word strips with the words, *Righteousness, Honesty, Truth, Purity, and Beauty* as inspiration.
- ⌚ **Set aside a monthly family movie night.** Each month, assign a different family member to select a family-friendly movie or video (see one of the rating sites listed below). If you’re staying home, pop some popcorn and purchase some Junior Mints, Dots, or other “concession” treats. Provide blankets and pillows and enjoy the show together. Remember, this is an opportunity to help your children discover that there are movies out there with great special effects and cinematography **and** an appropriate message.
- ⌚ **Plan a party.** If you have access to an LCD projector, outdoor movies shown against a bed sheet, or “big screen” movies shown on a white wall in your home make a great group date or neighborhood party. For better sound, your projector owner’s manual will show you how to hook up speakers from your home stereo or a teenager’s boom box.
- ⌚ **Start a library of “truly superb” movies.** Make sure you don’t overlook the old classics. Keep a list of movies you loved and watch to find them in sale bins or at your public library. Watch for your favorites to be broadcast on television and tape or Ti-Vo them.

- ⌚ **Teach gospel principles** with movie clips. Have a Family Home Evening dedicated exclusively to showing “clips” from favorite movies that teach a gospel principle or a worthwhile moral. For example, show the beginning clip of *Fiddler On The Roof* and talk about how our gospel traditions help us know “who we are and what God expects of us.”
- ⌚ **Don’t forget your home videos.** Each year during the Christmas holidays, enlist the help your children to catalog and index your home movies for the year, then make a “highlights” video with some of the very best footage. Many cameras will allow you to dub in your own music.

## *FIVE TO TRY:*

### Five great websites that promote the best the film and video industry offers

- ☑ [www.common sense media.org](http://www.common sense media.org) has developed an easy-to-use rating system to determine the age-appropriateness of any movie, the overall quality, and the content. Each film is rated for sex, violence, language, and message. One of the delightful bonuses on this site is a list of “recommended movies,” based on theme. If you’re in the mood for a movie about baseball, this site will give you a list of great options to choose from.
- ☑ “Read the latest Dove reviews before you plunk down your mind at the box office” proclaims [www.dove.org](http://www.dove.org). The Dove Foundation provides an alternative for families who love to watch quality movies together, but who hate bringing inappropriate material into their homes. [www.dove.org](http://www.dove.org) is a “non-profit organization established to encourage and promote the creation, production and distribution of wholesome family entertainment.” Along with providing helpful reviews and ratings, one of the foundation’s goals is to select certain high-quality movies and recommend their release in Family-Edited versions, which are available for purchase.
- ☑ **KIDS FIRST!®** Before you purchase your next children’s video, visit [www.kidsfirst.org/](http://www.kidsfirst.org/). Kids First evaluates, rates, and endorses children’s feature films, videotapes, DVDs, software, audio recordings and television using a volunteer, community-based jury comprising child development professionals, teachers, parents and children.
- ☑ **Screenit** -One of the best “parent-wise” movie resources available on the Internet, this site gives detailed information on everything from the plot of a movie to exhaustive explanations about a movie’s content and MPAA rating. Visit <http://www.screenit.com/index1.html>. The site includes a “topics to talk about” section for movies that address issues that parents will want to discuss with their children. Access to most reviews is free. Subscribers get additional benefits.
- ☑ <http://www.kids-in-mind.com> Uses a rating system based on a scale of 0 to 10. Each film gets a category-specific, objective rating (0 means none, 10 means LOTS) for 1) sex and nudity, 2) violence and gore and 3) profanity. You get an at-a-glance idea of what you’re in for if you watch.

**Some Additional Suggestions:**

[www.gradingthemovies.com](http://www.gradingthemovies.com) is another resource that will help families choose appropriate movie and video entertainment.

<http://www.nytimes.com/learning/parents/moviesguide/archive/20030328b.html>  
Another great film-rating site.