

Speaking Out in Support of Positive Media

“Let those who are responsible for any efforts to put suitable family entertainment on television know of your appreciation for that which is good and also of your displeasure with that which is bad. In large measure, we get what we ask for. The problem is that so many of us fail to ask and, more frequently, fail to express gratitude for that which is good...”

“Let our voices be heard. I hope they will not be shrill voices, but I hope we shall speak with such conviction that those to whom we speak shall know of the strength of our feeling and the sincerity of our effort. Remarkable consequences often flow from a well-written letter and a postage stamp. Remarkable results come of quiet conversation with those who carry heavy responsibilities.”

Gordon B. Hinckley, “In Opposition to Evil,” *Ensign*, Sept. 2004, 3

How to get involved without getting in over your head:

- ✉ **Write a letter** expressing your support of positive media. Media advocate Madeline Levine writes, “In the media industry, one letter is generally acknowledged to represent the opinion of many thousands of people. Network executives say that short, reasoned letters are the most likely to be taken seriously, and hastily written postcards or long ranting letters are typically ignored.”

(See Madeline LeVine, Ph.D. *Viewing Violence: How Media Violence Affects Your Child's and Adolescent's Development*. New York. Doubleday, 211-12).

- 🌟 **Become an “activist.”** Take notice when businesses eliminate merchandise that exploits children, and send written thanks. Compliment managers and buyers who make appropriate and positive media available, who cover inappropriate magazines at the checkout stands, or who refuse to run inappropriate movies or television programs. Have a “quiet conversation” with someone who carries responsibility and compliment efforts to provide positive media.

- 🏠 **Accept the responsibility of parenthood** and your obligation to make decisions about what is harmful or inappropriate for your children. Be willing to enforce your decisions in loving and appropriate ways.

- 📺 If you become aware of child pornography while online, or in any other form. Immediately report it to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children by calling (800) 843-5678.

- 📖 **Subscribe to publications** that will help you educate yourself about media issues.

FIVE TO TRY:

Five websites that will help you voice your opinion in positive, constructive ways

- ? http://www.common sense media.org/get_involved/take_action.php includes links to several “**speak out and be involved**” sites that promote everything from truthful advertising, to accurate movie ratings. You’ll find information about how to contact your Senator or Congressman regarding pending media legislation, and contact information for theater and network television executives. Sign up to receive Common Sense Media’s free e-mail newsletter that provides reviews of “recent releases” in books, videos, movies, music, etc. The newsletter also includes news and research about kids and the media, and provides links to excellent websites for children and teens.
- ? **The Coalition for Quality Children's Media** is a national, not-for-profit organization. The organization works to teach children critical viewing skills and to increase the visibility and availability of quality children’s programs. <http://www.kidsfirst.org/>
- ? <http://www.filterreview.com/links.asp> Links to several organizations with interest in protecting children and families from pornography and age-inappropriate material.
- ? <http://www.saferchild.org/linksmmedia.htm> More links to organizations that focus on media issues.
- ? Find resources from the American Association of Pediatricians (AAP) about media education at http://www.medem.com/MedLB/articleslb.cfm?sub_cat=17.

Other Suggestions:

Visit <http://www.childrensoftware.com/>. An annual subscription to the quarterly “*Children’s Technology Review*” (which costs less than any of the games your kids are using) gives you online access to reviews of all children’s interactive media (computer software and games, video games, educational electronic toys—the works). You will also receive a printed publication, which includes everything from a running list of award-winning software, to links to some fabulous children’s educational websites. See a sample of their guide, published quarterly at <http://www.childrensoftware.com/pdf/csrsample.pdf> .