



November 2016

## Selecting Appropriate Media For Your Children

Holidays are just around the corner! As we spend a wonderful night out with our families for food and movies, do watch out for the following rating symbols for Films, Videos and TV programmes.

Viewers can also easily differentiate the green advisory ratings from the orange age-restricted ratings. So, make an informed choice today and choose content suitable for you and your family.

### WATCH WHAT YOUR CHILD IS WATCHING, ONLINE OR OFFLINE



**GENERAL**  
Suitable for all ages.



**PARENTAL GUIDANCE**  
Suitable for all, but parents should guide their young.



**PARENTAL GUIDANCE 13**  
Suitable for persons aged 13 and above but parental guidance is advised for children below 13.



**NO CHILDREN UNDER 16**  
Suitable for persons aged 16 and above.



**MATURE 18**  
Suitable for persons aged 18 and above.



**RESTRICTED 21**  
Suitable for adults aged 21 and above.

#### CHECK MEDIA RATINGS

Know the type of content and language your child may encounter in a film. Check out the Media Development Authority's database on ratings and descriptions.

<https://app.mda.gov.sg/classification/>



#### READ MOVIE AND MEDIA REVIEWS

Various websites offer film and book reviews written with children in mind.

Kids in Mind

[www.kids-in-mind.com](http://www.kids-in-mind.com)

Common Sense Media

[www.commonsensemedia.org](http://www.commonsensemedia.org)

Plugged In

[www.pluggedin.com](http://www.pluggedin.com)



REVIEWS

#### SET PARENTAL CONTROLS

Use tools like Internet filters, safe settings, web restriction programmes for your devices.



#### SHARE RECOMMENDATIONS

Speak to other parents and share media recommendations suitable for children and the family.



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# Tips to Engage Children at Public Places

Parents may find it a challenge to get their children to stay at the dinner table to finish their food, sit still in the MRT or bus, or stop siblings from squabbling in the backseat of a car. Many parents resort to handing their children a smart phone or tablet to keep them quiet.

Rather than disconnecting with them and letting them connect to their digital playground, Dr Rebecca Chan, Director of Parenting Academy and an Early Childhood Education lecturer, suggests parents try the following simple but effective methods with young children:

## For young children:

### 1. SPOT THE DIFFERENCE



Commercially available or simple creations by the parent and child on a note pad. This activity is good for visual discrimination, developing concentration in spotting similarities and differences.

### 2. "I SPY"



With preschoolers, parents can say "I spy" a specific object, colour, lines, shapes, forms, etc. The child has to look around and search for those things mentioned by the parent. This helps develop environmental and aesthetic awareness.

### 3. SKETCH PAD & MARKERS



When going out with your child, bring along a small sketch pad and writing instrument (e.g. thin coloured markers or pencils). These can fit easily into a handbag or diaper bag. Drawing and doodling induce thinking and creativity.

### 4. "SHOOT!"



Parent and child take turns to choose a number. For example the child says "8", and then parent and child say together "One, two, three, SHOOT!" On "shoot", the parent and child hold up as many fingers on one hand as they desire. The goal is to add up the number "8" as the sum of all the fingers parent and child hold up. They play until they reach the goal of eight.



## WHAT YOUR CHILD NEEDS TO KNOW & DO

- Cultivate other interests and hobbies.
- Use technology in support of other hobbies and sports (e.g. use the Internet to research on a hobby/sport).
- He/she should be able to put away the gadget when told to.

## For 7 to 12-year-olds:

### 1. STORY BOOK READING OR E-BOOK



Encourage children to carry a story book whenever they go out. This can help cultivate a habit of reading. Using e-books (like Kindle) is also a good way of leveraging on technology and parents have better control compared to smart phones or tablets.

### 2. AUDIO BOOK/DEVICE



There are audio books and audio devices (e.g. reading pen) that parents can purchase from stores or borrow from the National Library Board. These audio stories are interesting and engaging and are good for children to pick up listening and expressive language skills as well as pronunciation.

### 3. ACTIVITY, PUZZLE, RIDDLE, JOKE BOOKS



Word puzzles or Sudoku are fun and can give children a mental workout. Children at this age also like riddles and jokes. There are joke and riddle apps that parents can download and take turns with their children to test each other's wits.



## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW & DO

- Spend time and bond with your child doing non-tech things, e.g. walks, reading, playing board games. Children with a more balanced lifestyle will minimise potential addictions in the future.
- Use technology as an aid (not entertainment) to spur and cultivate your child's aspirations, interests and learning.
- Set aside a regular tech-free day/week. You can also declare a tech-free hour each evening.
- Work with the school to find out more about the e-learning tools used and encourage and participate with your child to use those e-learning platforms.