



**THE V-CHIP  
EDUCATION  
PROJECT**

# A Parent's Guide to the TV Ratings and V-Chip

**THE CENTER FOR MEDIA EDUCATION  
THE HENRY J. KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION**

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# Why A Parent's Guide to the TV Ratings and V-Chip?

**M**any parents are more concerned than ever before about the impact of TV on their children. They want to do what they can to monitor the kinds of violence, sex or adult language their children are exposed to on TV.

The TV ratings and the V-Chip can help parents navigate their children's way through the vast world of television. The TV ratings can help parents figure out which programs are inappropriate for a certain child's age or unsuitable because of sex, violence or adult language. The V-Chip can help parents "screen out" the programs with TV ratings they don't want their children to watch. The V-Chip is already built into new TV sets—parents who want to use it just have to turn it on when they set up their new TV.

Not all parents will want to use the V-Chip, but many will. This booklet is designed to help parents understand how the TV ratings and the V-Chip work. It explains what each rating means, how to use the V-Chip, and who to contact if you have other questions. Once you know how the ratings and the V-Chip work, you can decide if these new tools can work for you and your family.





# Understanding the TV Ratings

## What the TV Parental Guidelines Mean

In 1997, the TV industry began using a TV ratings system designed to give parents more information about the content and age-appropriateness of TV shows. These ratings are called the TV Parental Guidelines.

Here are the official TV Parental Guidelines symbols and definitions. We've also provided some additional tips—in *italics*—to help you understand what each rating means, based on what we've learned from monitoring how the ratings are applied to programs.

**Audience:** Indicates the audience for which a television program is appropriate

**Content Label:** Indicates shows containing higher levels of violence, sex, adult language, or suggestive dialogue



### The Content Labels

TV Parental Guidelines may have one or more letters added to the basic rating to let parents know when a show contains higher levels of violence, sex, adult language or suggestive dialogue:

- V** - violence
- S** - sexual situations
- L** - coarse or crude indecent language
- D** - suggestive dialogue (usually means talk about sex)
- FV** - fantasy violence



### All Children

This program is designed to be appropriate for all children. Whether animated or live action, the themes and elements in this program are specifically designed for a very young audience, including children from ages 2-6. This program is not expected to frighten younger children.

**What you need to know:** *Not all TV-Y shows are violence-free. Some shows with cartoon violence are rated TV-Y, such as the "Road Runner" cartoons. There is no content rating to let you know if a TV-Y show contains violence.*



### Directed to Older Children

This program is designed for children age 7 and above. It may be more appropriate for children who have acquired the developmental skills needed to distinguish between make-believe and reality. Themes and elements in this program may include mild fantasy or comedic violence, or may frighten children under the age of 7. Therefore, parents may wish to consider the suitability of this program for their very young children.

**What you need to know:** *TV-Y7 shows that contain a lot of fantasy violence are supposed to be labeled with the "FV" rating. But even some TV-Y7 shows without the FV label may contain fantasy or comedic violence that could be of concern to some parents, although it is usually much milder than in those shows with the FV rating.*

**Directed to Older Children-Fantasy Violence**

For those programs where fantasy violence may be more intense or more combative than other programs in the TV-Y7 category, such programs will be designated TV-Y7-FV.

**What you need to know:** A TV-Y7-FV rating indicates a program that may contain some or all of the following characteristics: violence as a prevalent feature of the program; fighting presented in an exciting—even thrilling—way; villains and superheros valued for their combat abilities; violent acts glorified; and violence depicted as an acceptable and effective solution to a problem. Fantasy violence may be part of an animated cartoon, a live-action show, or a program that combines both animation and live-action.

**General Audience**

Most parents would find this program appropriate for all ages. Although this rating does not signify a program designed specifically for children, most parents may let younger children watch this program unattended. It contains little or no violence, no strong language and little or no sexual dialogue or situations.

**What you need to know:** Most TV-G shows don't contain any sex, violence or adult language at all. Those that do have such content are usually mild. There are no content ratings used on TV-G shows to let you know if they do contain such content.

**Parental Guidance Suggested**

This program contains material that parents may find unsuitable for younger children. Many parents may want to watch it with their younger children. The theme itself may call for parental guidance and/or the program contains one or more of the following: moderate violence (V), some sexual situations (S), infrequent coarse language (L), or some suggestive dialogue (D).

**What you need to know:** Many TV-PG shows do contain moderate levels of sexual dialogue or violence, and not all of them are labeled with the content ratings. TV-PG shows with higher levels of sex, violence or adult language are usually labeled with content labels.

**Parents Strongly Cautioned**

This program contains some material that parents would find unsuitable for children under 14 years of age. Parents are strongly urged to exercise greater care in monitoring this program and are cautioned against letting children under the age of 14 watch unattended. This program contains one or more of the following: intense violence (V), intense sexual situations (S), strong coarse language (L), or intensely suggestive dialogue (D).

**What you need to know:** Most TV-14 shows contain sex, violence or adult language. Not all of those shows are labeled with the content descriptors. TV-14 shows with the highest levels of sex, violence or adult language are usually labeled with the content ratings. A TV-14 rating without content labels may also indicate a program with a mature theme.

**Mature Audience Only**

This program is specifically designed to be viewed by adults and therefore may be unsuitable for children under 17. This program contains one or more of the following: graphic violence (V), explicit sexual activity (S), or crude indecent language (L).

**What you need to know:** Very few shows are labeled TV-MA.



## *More About the TV Ratings*

# Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

**T**he chart in the previous section explains what each TV rating means. Once you become familiar with the guidelines, it's up to you to decide how to use them in your family's best interests. Remember that the TV Parental Guidelines are a tool—not a substitute for parental responsibility. Here are some answers to frequently asked questions about the ratings.

### **What are the TV Parental Guidelines?**

The TV Parental Guidelines have two parts: an age-based rating that indicates the age group for which a particular program is designed, and a content-based rating that lets you know if the show contains higher levels of sex, violence or adult language. The age-based ratings are similar to those used to rate movies, except that the TV Parental Guidelines also include two ratings for shows specifically designed for children: TV-Y, for all children; and TV-Y7, for children 7 and older.

### **How do the ratings work with the V-Chip?**

The V-Chip is technology built into a TV set that “reads” the rating for a particular TV program. Once you decide which TV ratings are inappropriate for your children, you can use the V-Chip to block out programs with these ratings.

### **Can I use the ratings without a V-Chip?**

Even without a V-Chip, ratings offer useful information for parents who may be concerned about the age-appropriateness or content of a program. By understanding what the different ratings mean, and finding out how different shows are rated, you can use the ratings to guide your children's viewing habits.

### **How can you find out what a program is rated?**

To find out a program's rating, check your local TV program listings, *TV Guide*, or look for the on-screen display at the start of a show. Most newspapers print the rating next to the program name and scheduled time in the TV listings guide. If your local newspaper does not include the program rating, call the publisher and ask that it be included. If you have a V-Chip, you don't need to check the rating of each show, since you can simply program your TV to block any shows that receive particular ratings.

**How is the rating displayed on the TV screen?**

The rating symbol appears in the upper left-hand corner of the TV screen during the first 15 seconds of a program. If a program is longer than one hour, the symbol is repeated again at the beginning of each hour of the broadcast.

**Are all television programs rated?**

The TV Parental Guidelines are used to rate most types of programs—including talk shows, soap operas, sitcoms, dramas, and movies. Two types of shows are not rated by these guidelines: news and sports. Also, unedited movies shown on premium cable channels—such as HBO, Showtime or Cinemax—are not rated with this system. Unedited movies on cable TV will display a rating, but it is the original movie theater rating from the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA). For more information about the movie ratings, see page 6.

**Who decides how a program is rated?**

The TV industry is responsible for rating its own programming. This means that the producer who creates the program or the network that broadcasts it decides what the rating will be.

**Do all broadcast networks and cable programmers rate their TV programs?**

The ratings system is voluntary. The entire TV industry has been strongly encouraged to rate its programming, but not everyone is participating. This is why some programs you watch do not display a rating, and others display age ratings but not content labels. As of this writing, BET (Black Entertainment Television) does not rate its programs at all, and NBC does not use the content labels to indicate if a show contains sex, violence or adult language.

**Why are children's programs rated differently from other programs?**

Children are a special audience—they watch and understand television in different ways than teens and adults. Research has shown that many young children do not yet have the ability to distinguish between fantasy and reality and can be easily influenced and frightened by sights and sounds.

**What are the ratings for children's programs?**

Children's programming is divided into two age categories: TV-Y and TV-Y7. A TV-Y rating means that the producers consider the program to be appropriate for children of all ages, including those as young as 2 years old. The TV-Y7 rating means the producers designed the show for children ages 7 and older. The reason that the guidelines divide at age 7 is because experts have found that children younger than 7 often cannot tell the difference between what is real and what is make-believe.

**How can I tell whether or not a children's show contains violence?**

You can't always tell from the ratings whether or not a children's show contains violence. A special rating for "fantasy violence" (FV) is used to indicate more intense levels of violence than in other shows in the TV-Y7 category. Mild levels of fantasy or animated violence can appear in the TV-Y and TV-Y7 categories without receiving the "FV" label.

**What kinds of violent content may appear in a program with an "FV" rating?**

A TV-Y7-FV rating indicates a program that may contain some or all of the following characteristics: violence as a prevalent feature of the program; fighting presented in an exciting—even thrilling—way; villains and superheros valued for their combat abilities; violent acts glorified; violence depicted as an acceptable and effective solution to a problem.

Fantasy violence may be part of an animated cartoon, a live-action show, or a program that combines both animation and live-action.

**What about violence and sexual content in the news?**

News is exempt from the TV ratings, so it will not carry either the age-based or content labels.

**What can you do if you don't agree with a TV rating?**

Anyone who wants to question a rating given to a particular TV program can contact the TV Parental Guidelines Monitoring Board. The Monitoring Board makes sure the ratings are applied in a consistent and appropriate way. The Board is made up of 24 members: six each from the broadcast industry, the cable industry, and the creative community; and five non-industry members drawn from leading child advocacy, medical, religious and educational organizations. It is currently chaired by the president of the Motion Picture Association of America.

To contact the TV Parental Guidelines Monitoring Board, use the address and phone number on page 14 of this booklet.

**WHAT ARE THE MOVIE RATINGS?**

When you watch a movie on cable TV that has not been edited for television, the original movie rating by the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) is used instead of a TV rating. The V-Chip can be set to block MPAA-rated movies on premium cable channels, such as HBO, Showtime or Cinemax. Movie ratings are as follows:

- G** General Audiences. All ages admitted.
- PG** Parental Guidance Suggested. Some material may not be suitable for children.
- PG-13** Parents Strongly Cautioned. Some material may be inappropriate for children under 13.
- R** Restricted. Under 17 requires accompanying parent or guardian.
- NC-17** No One 17 and Under Admitted.





## *Using the V-Chip*

# What Parents Should Know About the V-Chip

### **How does the V-Chip work with the TV ratings?**

**T**he rating that flashes on the screen during the first 15 seconds of a program contains a special electronic identification signal that registers how the program has been rated. All TVs with the V-Chip can receive and understand the electronic rating signals. These signals are sent from TV broadcasters and cable networks in the same way that closed-captioning information is transmitted.

Parents can use the TV ratings to identify programs they want to block with the V-Chip. In fact, the V-Chip allows parents to identify the ratings they wish to block on two different rating systems: the TV Parental Guidelines, and the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) movie ratings (used on any unedited movies shown on premium cable channels). By following the screen directions offered for the two separate ratings systems, parents can ensure that TV programming rated on either system is included in their V-Chip programming “strategy.” For more information on movie ratings, see page 6.

### **Is it possible to block all shows that contain violence?**

It’s not quite that easy. No matter how you program your V-Chip, some shows with violence will get through. Some shows with violence, including those shown on BET and NBC, and even some children’s shows, will not be filtered out by simply selecting “V” or “FV.” In addition, news and sports are exempt, so they would not be blocked by selecting “V.” The best way to block out most violence is to use the age-based ratings to determine what programs are not appropriate for your children.

### **How do I program my V-Chip TV set?**

Once you understand what each of the ratings means, programming a V-Chip TV set is a matter of following step-by-step directions. All new sets will include V-Chip programming instructions in one or two places: (1) an on-screen menu that displays set-up options once the TV has been turned on, and (2) a written instruction guide that is included with the operator’s manual for the new TV.

### **Is the V-Chip activated as soon as I turn on my TV?**

The V-Chip will not operate unless you select the option to activate it. Then, a display of the ratings menu will show on the screen that allows you to pick the ratings you wish to block. It is important to remember that you must first activate the V-Chip (by choosing the appropriate option given through the on-screen or written instructions) and then program your settings (by choosing the ratings to block) before it will start to work.



**How do I prevent my children from undoing the V-Chip?**

All V-Chip TV sets will request that you enter a personal identification number just as you would do with an automatic banking card. This number—called a parental lock code—will act as your password in order to change settings, activate and de-activate the V-Chip. Most TV brands will request this number through a display on the screen. Check the written instructions for your TV set to find out how to enter the code.

**What if I forget my password number?**

You should look in your TV's operating manual to find out what to do if you forget your parental lock code number. Each TV brand may differ slightly, but most will offer one of two options: (1) a 1-800 customer service phone number, which you can call to find out how to re-set your password number, or (2) instructions in the new operating manual, which will explain how to void an old password number and set a new one. It's a good idea to write down your parental lock code number and keep it away from children.

**Can I override the V-Chip settings if I want to watch a program?**

You can turn off the V-Chip any time you want by entering your parental lock code number and following the directions for your TV set. You can re-activate the V-Chip the same way.

**What happens when I turn my V-Chip TV set off?**

Once you have entered your parental lock code number, selected the ratings to block and then activated the V-Chip, this information is stored in the TV's "memory." If you turn off your TV and then turn it on to view later, the V-Chip will continue to block programs with the ratings you have selected.

**How do I change the settings on my V-Chip TV?**

You can change the V-Chip settings at any time, whether you want to add new ratings to block or simply change your previous selections. First, enter your parental lock code number and then follow the same basic steps as before.



### **Can I program my V-Chip TV set to block either age-based or content-based ratings, or a combination of both?**

It is possible to program the V-Chip to block all shows in a particular age-based rating, or to block only those shows in that age group that have higher levels of sex, violence, adult language, or sexual dialogue. Some V-Chip TV sets have separate on-screen menu displays for age and content categories, while others may display both age-based and content-based ratings in the same screen. No matter how your TV set operates, the V-Chip will block programs the same way:

#### *Blocking Age Categories:*

To block all shows within a certain age category, set the V-Chip for that age rating. It automatically blocks out all programming at that age level as well as all higher age categories. For example, if you set the V-Chip to block programs with a TV-PG rating, all programs with TV-PG, TV-14, and TV-MA ratings will automatically be blocked.

#### *Blocking Content Categories:*

If you'd prefer to block only TV-PG shows that contain higher levels of violence, while letting through other TV-PG shows, you can select TV-PG-V instead of TV-PG. This will only block those shows with the "TV-PG-V" label, and not TV-PG shows with adult language (L), sexual situations (S) or suggestive dialogue (D).

### **Can I block individual programs?**

Many TV sets allow parents to block programs based on date, time or channel. For example, if you don't want your child to watch a particular show that airs at 10 p.m. on a particular channel, check your written instructions to see how to program this into your TV. Once you have set your TV to block programming that airs on the day, time and/or channel you've identified, this setting remains until you decide to change it. It is important to remember that not every TV set includes this feature, so check your operating manual to make sure.

### **Can I block individual channels?**

Check your TV's operating manual to see if you are able to block individual channels. If your TV set has this feature, you can program your TV to block a particular channel permanently until you decide to change this setting.

### **Which TV manufacturers offer the V-Chip TV sets?**

As of January 2000, all TV manufacturers in the United States are including V-Chips in TV sets 13 inches and larger.



## *TV Tips*

# Viewing With Your Family

**E**very family uses TV differently. If you are concerned about the amount of time your kids spend with TV, or the kind of content they're watching, there are steps you can take, in addition to using the TV ratings or the V-Chip:

### **Plan Your TV Time**

- ✎ Set TV time limits—experts recommend children watch no more than 1 to 2 hours each day, including videotapes.
- ✎ Help children make a TV plan for each day—how much, which programs and when to watch. If you don't approve of their TV choices, explain why and help them make a more appropriate selection.
- ✎ Make a “no TV” rule during dinner—use this time for family conversation.

### **Make Your Own TV Guidelines**

- ✎ Get into the habit of checking the TV rating before you watch a program.
- ✎ If you have not seen a program your child watches, prescreen an episode to make sure the TV rating is accurate and the content is appropriate.
- ✎ Whether or not you decide to use the ratings and the V-Chip, let your children know which shows are off-limits.
- ✎ For the youngest children (under the age of 2 years), the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends avoiding all TV viewing.

### **Watch TV With Your Child**

- ✎ Whenever possible, watch TV with your child and talk about the program while you watch.
- ✎ Keep TV sets out of kids' bedrooms.
- ✎ If TVs are in a room where you spend time as a family, that will increase your opportunities to watch together and talk about the program.
- ✎ If you can't watch together, try to know what your kids are watching and find a time to talk with them about it later.



### **Learn to Watch TV Carefully and Critically**

- ✘ Pay attention to how TV and other media might be affecting your children's behavior—what they talk about, how they dress, who they admire, and what items they own with product logos.
- ✘ Help your children interpret media messages for themselves—ask them how they feel about the way a character handled a situation and how they might handle it differently.
- ✘ Use the VCR as a tool to tape special programs that help kids deal with tough issues, and then watch these shows with your children.

### **Use TV to Talk With Kids About Tough Issues**

- ✘ Television can offer you a springboard to discuss tough issues with your kids. It's not always easy to talk to kids about violence, sex, alcohol or drugs, but once a TV character opens the door the time is right.
- ✘ Teach children to question and challenge messages that promote violent solutions to problems, encourage inappropriate and risky sexual behavior, or make it look cool to use alcohol and drugs—point out how these values compare to the ones you want them to learn.
- ✘ Discuss any alternative solutions TV characters could use to resolve real-life problems.

### **Set an Example When You Watch TV**

- ✘ Be selective when you use TV—pay attention to how much and what you watch when children are around.
- ✘ Watch programs that you believe are unsuitable for children when they're not around—videotape these shows to watch at another time.
- ✘ Make it a habit to use all media critically—choose movies, magazines, music, books, websites and other media for yourself that support your values.





## *Talk With Your Kids*

# Talking With Your Kids About Tough Issues

In today's world, kids are confronting issues about sex, relationships, violence, alcohol, drugs, and other tough issues at increasingly early ages. Parents want to protect their kids, educate them, and impart their values, but they often express uncertainty about how and when to do so. Having conversations with a child about sex and other tough issues can be difficult for parents, but it is essential. Here are some tips about talking with kids about tough issues:

### **1. Start Early**

As a parent, you have a wonderful opportunity to talk with your child about these issues first, before anyone else can confuse your child with incorrect information or explanations that lack the sense of values you want to instill. We need to take advantage of this “window of opportunity” with young children and talk to them earlier and more often, particularly about tough issues like sex, HIV/AIDS, violence, alcohol and drugs.

### **2. Initiate Conversations With Your Child**

While we want our children to feel comfortable enough to come to us with any questions and concerns—and thus give us the opportunity to begin conversations—this doesn't always occur. That's why it's perfectly okay—at times even necessary—to begin the discussions ourselves. TV and other media are great tools for this. Just one or two questions could help start a valuable discussion that comes from everyday circumstances and events.

### **3. Especially about Tough Topics Like Sex, Drugs, and Violence**

If you feel uncomfortable talking about such sensitive subjects with your young child, you're not alone. Many parents feel awkward and uneasy, especially if they are anxious about the subject. But, for your kid's sake, try to overcome your nervousness and bring up the issue with your child. After all, our children are hearing about it both through the media and other sources, and that information may not include the values that we want our kids to have.

### **4. Create an Open Environment**

Young children want their parents to discuss difficult subjects with them. However, our kids will look to us for answers only if they feel we will be open to their questions. It's up to us to create the kind of atmosphere in which our children can ask any questions—on any subject—freely and without fear of consequence. How do you create such an atmosphere? By being encouraging, supportive and positive.



### 5. Communicate Your Values

As a parent, you have a wonderful opportunity to explain important issues before anyone else can confuse your child with “just-the-facts” explanations that lack the sense of values and moral principles you want to instill. Don’t hesitate to make your beliefs clear. Remember, research shows that children want and need moral guidance from their moms and dads, so don’t hesitate to make your beliefs clear.

### 6. Listen to Your Child

Listening carefully to our children helps us to better understand what our children really want to know as well as what they already understand. And it helps keep us from talking above our youngsters’ heads and confusing them even further.

### 7. Try to Be Honest

Whatever your children’s age, they deserve honest answers and explanations. It’s what strengthens our children’s ability to trust. Also, when we don’t provide a straightforward answer, kids make up their own fantasy explanations, which can be more frightening than any real, honest response we can offer.

### 8. Be Patient

By listening patiently, we allow our children to think at their own pace and we are letting them know that they are worthy of our time.

### 9. Use Everyday Opportunities to Talk

It’s important to talk with your kids about tough issues often, but there isn’t always time in the day to sit down for a long talk. Also, kids tend to resist formal discussions about today’s toughest issues, often categorizing them as just another lecture from mom and dad. But if we use “talk opportunities,” moments that arise in everyday life, as occasions for discussion, our children will be a lot less likely to tune us out.

### 10. Talk About It Again. And Again

Since most young children can only take in small bits of information at any one time, they won’t learn all they need to know about a particular topic from a single discussion. That’s why it’s important to let a little time pass, then ask the child to tell you what she remembers about your conversation. This will help you correct any misconceptions and fill in missing facts.



*Talking With Kids About Tough Issues* is a public education campaign to support parents by the Kaiser Family Foundation and Children Now. For more information about the campaign, or for a free booklet on how to talk with kids, contact:

**1-800-CHILD-44** or [www.talkingwithkids.org](http://www.talkingwithkids.org)



## Getting Involved

# Where To Find Out More

**T**his is your chance to let the folks who rate TV shows know how you think they're doing: Is the rating system helpful to you as a parent? Do you disagree with how certain shows are rated? There are a number of places you can send your comments. Pick any one of those listed below, or let them all know how you feel! If you'd like, copy the form on page 16, and use it to send in your comments.

### **(1) The TV Parental Guidelines Monitoring Board.**

This is the group that handles public comments on the ratings system or how individual shows are rated.

You can call them at:  
202-879-9364

Or write them at:  
*TV Parental Guidelines Monitoring Board*  
*P.O. Box 14097*  
*Washington, DC 20004*

You can also look them up  
on the Web at:  
[www.tvguidelines.org](http://www.tvguidelines.org)

### **(2) Your local television station or cable operator.**

Look them up in the phone book, and let them know if you agree or disagree with how their shows are rated.

### **(3) The Federal Communications Commission's V-Chip Task Force.**

The FCC is the government agency working with TV manufacturers, program producers and parents to ensure the effective implementation of V-Chip technology.

You can call them toll-free at:  
1-888-225-5322

Or write them at:  
*Mass Media Bureau, or*  
*Cable Services Bureau*  
*Federal Communications Commission*  
*445 12th Street, SW*  
*Washington, D.C. 20554*

You can also look them up  
on the Web at:  
[www.fcc.gov/vchip](http://www.fcc.gov/vchip)



**(4) The major broadcast networks.**

If you have some comments directed toward one of the TV networks, you can contact them directly:

*ABC Television Network*  
77 West 66th Street  
New York, NY 10023  
212-456-7777  
[abc.go.com](http://abc.go.com)

*UPN Network*  
11800 Wilshire Boulevard  
Los Angeles, CA 90025  
310-575-7000  
[www.upn.com](http://www.upn.com)

*WB Network*  
4000 Warner Boulevard  
Burbank, CA 91522  
818-977-5000  
[www.thewb.com](http://www.thewb.com)

*Fox Broadcasting Company*  
10201 West Pico Boulevard  
Los Angeles, CA 90035  
310-369-1000  
[www.foxworld.com](http://www.foxworld.com)

*CBS Television Network*  
524 West 57th Street  
New York, NY 10019  
212-975-4321  
[www.cbs.com](http://www.cbs.com)

*Odyssey Network*  
12700 Ventura Blvd., Suite 200  
Studio City, CA 91604  
1-800-522-5131  
[www.odysseychannel.com](http://www.odysseychannel.com)

*Pax-TV*  
601 Clearwater Park Road  
West Palm Beach, FL 33401  
561-659-4122  
[www.pax.net](http://www.pax.net)

*NBC Television Network*  
30 Rockefeller Plaza  
New York, NY 10112  
212-664-4444  
[www.nbc.com](http://www.nbc.com)

**WHERE TO FIND OUT MORE**

There are many organizations and resources to help your family make quality TV choices and learn more about media's effects on children. Here are a few to get you started.

*American Academy of Pediatrics*  
601 13th Street, NW, Suite 400 North  
Washington, DC 20005  
202-347-8600  
[www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org)

*American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*  
3615 Wisconsin Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20016  
202-966-7300  
[www.aacap.org](http://www.aacap.org)

*American Psychological Association*  
750 1st Street, NE  
Washington, DC 20002  
202-336-5500  
[www.apa.org](http://www.apa.org)

*Center for Media Literacy*  
4727 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 403  
Los Angeles, CA 90010  
323-931-4177  
1-800-226-9494  
[www.medialit.org](http://www.medialit.org)

*National PTA*  
330 N. Wabash Avenue, Suite 2100  
Chicago, IL 60611  
312-670-6782  
[www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org)

*National Institute on Media and the Family*  
606 24th Avenue South, Suite 606  
Minneapolis, MN 55454  
612-672-5437  
[www.mediaandthefamily.org](http://www.mediaandthefamily.org)

*Center for Media Education*  
2120 L Street, NW, Suite 200  
Washington, DC 20037  
202-331-7833  
[www.cme.org](http://www.cme.org)

*Children Now*  
1212 Broadway, Fifth Floor  
Oakland, CA 94612  
510-763-2444  
[www.childrennow.org](http://www.childrennow.org)



## *How Do YOU Rate It?*

# Making Your Voice Heard

**You can copy this form and use it to send your comments to the TV Parental Guidelines Monitoring Board, or to any of the other groups listed on pages 14 and 15.**

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Your address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE CHECK**

- I disagree with how a particular show I watched was rated.

Name of show: \_\_\_\_\_

Date and time it was on: \_\_\_\_\_

Station call letters or cable network: \_\_\_\_\_

How the show was rated: \_\_\_\_\_

Why you disagreed with the rating: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- I often disagree with how certain shows are rated.

Why: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- Thank you for the TV ratings system—it's helpful.

- I usually agree with how most shows I watch are rated.

- Other comments:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

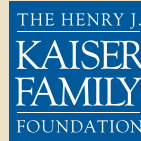
*Send to: TV Parental Guidelines Monitoring Board, P.O. Box 14097, Washington, DC 20004*

**The Center for Media Education (CME)** is a national non-profit, nonpartisan organization, founded in 1991, dedicated to creating a quality electronic media culture for children, their families, and the community. Through its research, public education, and outreach initiatives, CME has been the leading force behind expanding children's educational TV programs and fostering safeguards on the Internet and television.

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**Author Attributions**

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