

EX PARTE / LATE FILED

Campaign for Kids' TV

ACTION ALERT

Date: January 2, 1996
 To: Members of the Coalition for America's Children
 From: Emily Littleton, Project Coordinator
 Center for Media Education
 Re: The Children's Television Act of 1990

The battle over children's television is heating up. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC), the federal regulatory body that oversees the television industry, will be deciding in the next two months whether television broadcasters should air more educational programming for children, and how and whether that programming should be redefined. Their decision will focus on the Children's Television Act of 1990.

The Children's Television Act requires commercial TV stations to air educational programs specifically designed for children. Unfortunately, in 1991 the FCC adopted weak rules to implement this law. As a consequence, broadcasters have tried to claim shows like *The Jetsons*, *The Flintstones*, and even *The Mighty Morphin Power Rangers* as being shows "specifically designed to educate" young people.

Our coalition (which includes the American Library Association, the National Education Association, and the National PTA) has proposed that the rules implementing the Children's Television Act be strengthened: every TV station should be required to air at least an hour a day of educational children's television. While two of the five FCC Commissioners have expressed some support for our proposal, we are still short the third - and deciding - vote.

As a prominent child advocate, your voice carries weight at the national level. PLEASE write to the FCC before the end of February and ask that rules implementing the Children's Television Act be strengthened so that TV stations will truly serve the needs of children. We've included a sample letter to make it easy. If you can, modify the letter to put it in your own words, or reproduce it and distribute it to your membership or other local advocates. The more letters of support we generate, the better our chances.

Thank you for your support on this initiative. Please call me with any questions or suggestions. My phone number is (202) 628-2620. I'll be following up with you in the next few weeks.



Date: 2/28/96

The Honorable Reed Hundt
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, NW, Room 814
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Hundt:

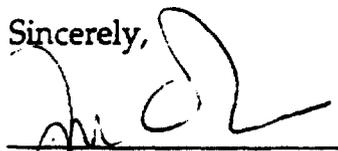
On behalf of my child advocacy organization, I am writing to encourage you to strengthen the guidelines for the Children's Television Act of 1990 (MM No. 93-48).

Broadcast television can play an unprecedented role in nourishing the minds of our nation's children. In the Commission's own words: "There are many imaginative and exciting ways in which the medium can be used to further a child's understanding of a wide range of areas: history, science, literature, the environment, drama, music, fine arts, human relations, other cultures and languages, and basic skills such as reading and mathematics which are crucial to a child's development." (1974 FCC Policy Statement)

Broadcasters have the talent to create children's programs which are as educational as they are entertaining. Yet, today's children have greater access to sensationalistic talk shows, violent cartoons, and adult sitcoms that they do to programming designed to enrich their minds.

The FCC needs to strengthen the guidelines for the Children's Television Act by establishing real policies designed to safeguard the interests of our children. These should include a clearer definition of "educational" programming and a requirement that television stations air at least one hour a day of 30-minute educational shows between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m. in regularly scheduled time slots.

No other regulatory body is in a position to make this happen. Please...America's children are counting on you.

Sincerely,


(Signature)

Jane O'Loughlin
Name (Printed)

CFNP - NP II
Title

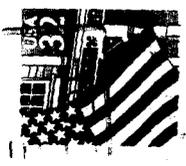
Sharp Kids Steady Medical Group
Organization

16870 W. Bernardo Dr.
My organization's street address

San Diego, CA 92127
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Jane O'Laughlin
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San Diego, CA 92127



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MAR 14 1996
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Honorable Reed Hunt
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M. St., N.W. Room 814
Washington, DC 20554

MM93-48

Seattle Academy for Family Television:
Promoting smart TV viewing

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Dear Mr. Hundt,

I am writing as the Chairperson for the Seattle Academy For Family Television, a citizen's group which promotes smart TV viewing. But we can only promote watching programs that are 'smart' if such programming is available. That is why we feel it is imperative that the FCC strengthens the rules of the Children's Television Act of 1990. Indeed, six years with the Act has taught us that the definition of "educational and informational" must really be clarified so that present day cartoons cannot pass for 'educational'.

I am also concerned that only standard length, regularly scheduled educational programs can qualify to meet a station's 'core' programming obligations under the Act, and that that programming air between the hours of 7AM and 10 PM.

I am feeling somewhat hopeful that at last people are waking up to the reality that television functions as a teacher to a myriad of children, and the lessons that they are learning do not contribute much to their functioning as contributing citizens in our society. I am certainly not in favor of censorship, but I feel strongly that we need to open discussion in this country to what are realistic guidelines for this very powerful industry. What are its responsibilities, not only to our children, but to our society. It pains me to realize that we loan these airwaves to the networks, and I don't feel we get in return very much of what we deserve.

Thank you for your efforts to enable the networks to fulfill a role in our culture that they can be proud of.

Sincerely,



Vicki H. Schoettle
Director
Seattle Academy for Family Television

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