3 Managing television, video & DVD use in OSHC

Children and Media in Out of School Hours Care

Management of television, video & DVD use in OSHC

Screen time

Despite the fact that television is now considered 'old media,' television provides the most important screen in OSHC. The television set is essential to the delivery of video & DVD games, video playback, and free-to-air broadcast programs. This does not mean that watching television constitutes a large part of OSHC programming.

Free-to-air television

The most common pattern of media scheduling is to offer broadcast television only in the late afternoon. While the television set is critical to media use in OSHC, viewing television programs is very limited. Among those who reported watching television at OSHC, many referred to watching video games and movie titles indicating even fewer children than the survey reported watch free-to-air television in OSHC.

Video/DVD

Most services have a video or DVD player. In OSHC, children are more inclined to engage in physical activity while watching, depending on the selection of titles available, space provided to enjoy the video or DVD, and the rules services maintain around use.

Enhanced use

When children have a large, open space to view the screen, they may perform with the screen entertainment. If they have a small, cosy, space, they are more inclined to recline and watch the screen. If the space is confined or cramped, they may not be comfortable enough to watch an entire movie or may bother one another.

An influence on children's pleasure in viewing movies is whether or not they can replay the sections they like. Allowing children autonomy in viewing is very important as it acknowledges and respects their tastes and preferences.

Appropriate content

The Office of Film & Literature Classification is the government body in Australia that sets the classification for each film and video game on the market. In Australia there is one set of classification markings for both media. The classification markings are abbreviations - G, PG, M etc. The most recent revision of the classification markings has resulted in PG being recommended for children over 15 years of age. Since this means that only G movies are approved for the whole range of the OSHC age group, become familiar with the Classification Guidelines http://www.classification.gov.au/Guidelines/Pages/Guidelines.aspx).

How to help children get the most out of their viewing

- Provide opportunities, time, space and materials, for children to extend on what they have watched through free, child directed play.
- Select programs and videos that complement support and extend upon their interests
- Keep a log of children's television and video use. What are they watching? When are they accessing these resources? Which children are watching? How are they using the media? What other activities are they doing while they watch?
- Allow children to bring materials from home, providing they fit the classification guidelines and 'taste culture' of your service.
- Provide a space that is large enough for physical movement.
- Encourage a public media culture to foster discussion and analysis.
- Maintain media collections and libraries in public view as public and social resources. This allows children and parents to see what is on offer and to be assured the selection is acceptable.

CHECKLIST for Managing Television, Video & DVD use in OSHC

Television

- ❏ For what period of time is free-to-air television available to children?
- ❏ Why is television available during this period?
- ❏ What programs are available?
- ❏ Who selects these programs?
- ❏ Why have these programs been selected?
- ❏ What other activities accompany television viewing?
- ❏ How is the television viewing space arranged (consider furnishings, space and rug)?
- ❏ What are the children doing while 'watching' television?

DVD & Video Playback

- ❏ Where is the video and DVD player situated? Describe the space.
- ❏ Is there any furniture and does it suit the way children are using playback?
- ❏ Is the space sufficient for children to move about and still view the screen?
- ❏ How many children can comfortably view a movie?
- ❏ Are the children allowed to turn the player off and on and replay scenes?
- ❏ What type of content does your service show on video or DVD?
- ❏ Who selects the content? What is the process for selection? What are the criteria?
- ❏ Does the service maintain a collection? Who keeps it up-to-date with new materials? How are new selections made?
- ❏ Where is the library or collection kept? Who has access to it?
- ❏ When are children allowed to use the video or DVD system?
- ❏ Do children have control of the remote control?
- ❏ Is the content previewed by staff?

When selecting videos, DVD's and computer games OSHC staff should refer to the Austrlian Classification Board's system as a guide (www.classification.gov.au). OSHC services on DECD sites should refer to the video viewing guidelines outlined in the DECD Administrative Instructions and Guidelines, Section 3 paragraph 94, Section 1, Paragraph 141 and DECD www.decd.sa.gov.au/department/policies/departmental-policies

The research that informs this resource is based on a three-year study funded in part by the South Australian Department of Education and Children's Services and Flinders University. The research was conducted by Dr Karen Orr Vered, Ph.D. A full copy of the research paper 'Children and Media in Out of School Hours Care' is available at www.decs.sa.gov.au/oshc/

Useful References

The following references may be useful when developing policy & procedures for selecting and reviewing television, video and DVD programs.

Australian Children's Television Foundation (ACTF)
http://www.actf.com.au
ACTF programs are generally highly recommended for use in OSHC. Many are made for use in schools and have supplementary materials that accompany the programs.

Australian Teachers of Media (ATOM)
http://www.metromagazine.com.au/atom/about.html
ATOM may be able to assist you in developing recreational media activities. Many states have media education associations with local contacts and these are listed on ATOM's website.

Australian Classification Board
http://www.classification.gov.au/
Download the Film and Computer Game Guidelines from the Classification Board website and have them on display publicly. The Classification Board also maintain an online database of their classification decisions.

Department of Education and Child Development Administrative Instructions and Guidelines (AIGs)
https://www.decd.sa.gov.au/sites/g/files/net1261/f/aigsschoolcouncilsandother.pdf

DECS Technology & Knowledge Management Services
The DECS ICT Security Policy requires that acceptable use policies are in place for all users of DECS ICT facilities, including staff and students. Such policies "must be in the form of a written agreement, signed by staff, students and/or their parents/guardians (as appropriate), outlining the terms and conditions of use of DECS ICT facilities, and of online behaviour and access privileges, and consequences of non-compliance."

Due to the differing needs of individual sites, DECS has not mandated a common acceptable use policy. However, as such a policy is required for all schools, preschools and children's services sites this standard assists in the preparation of site-specific acceptable use policies. It describes what should be included, how it should be distributed and the rationale for having such a policy in place. This standard must be read in conjunction with the DECS Policy – ICT Security. The acceptable use agreement for DECS corporate staff can be obtained from the DECS website.
http://www.decs.sa.gov.au/docs/files/communities/docman/1/Corporate_Acceptable_Use_a.pdf
This may be appropriate for staff in schools, preschools and children's services sites.

DECS Policy – ICT Security
http://www.decs.sa.gov.au/docs/files/communities/docman/1/DECS_Policy__ICT_Security.pdf

DECS Policy – Internet Access and Use
http://www.decs.sa.gov.au/docs/files/communities/docman/1/DECS_Policy__Internet_Acce.pdf

DECS Policy – Email Access and Use
http://www.decs.sa.gov.au/docs/files/communities/docman/1/DECS_Policy__Electronic_Ma.pdf

Office of the Privacy Commissioner: Guidelines on Workplace E-mail, Web Browsing and Privacy
http://www.privacy.gov.au/internet/email/index.html#Policy

Cyber bullying, e-crime and the protection of children
www.decs.sa.gov.au go to parents and Community>Health and wellbeing>Bullying and Harassment

NetAlert
www.netalert.net.au

Children and media in Out of School Hours Care