

***Families and Media** is a project of the English Sector Episcopal Commission for Social Communications of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCCB). The project's purpose is to help families navigate through the various forms of media found in the home, and to provide parents, teens and younger children with references to obtain valuable background information.*

### Suggested bulletin insert #3

## **Families and Movies**

Movie watching has become an important part of family life. There are thousands of movie titles available in video stores, or through cable and satellite broadcasters. The dilemma for parents is to make sure their children are watching age appropriate films that are good entertainment and promote positive values. At the same time, parents can help children understand the difference between a good story on the screen and reality in everyday life.

### **Ten Tools for Movie-Watching Families**

- Discuss ahead of time what kinds of movies your children can watch and set boundaries about what they cannot watch.
- Watch movies with your children, taking breaks for snacks in order to provide guidance about certain scenes or to discuss scenes children may not understand.
- When renting videos, check reviews ahead of time written by family-centred reviewers.
- Point out that movies are, for the most part, stories that have been made up and are not real.
- Explain how movies try to evoke deep emotions within you to make you feel happy, scared or curious, or maybe make you laugh or cry.
- Help your children understand that movies help to distract you from everyday life by creating fantasies that entertain you.
- Encourage your children to talk about movies after they have seen them, or encourage them to write their own reviews. Ask them to say what they liked and disliked about each movie.
- Ensure that movies are age appropriate. Find alternative activities for younger children if older ones are watching a more sophisticated movie.
- If your children watch a questionable movie at a friend's house, discuss the movie with them and explain why it might be inappropriate.
- When watching a movie that is based on a book or novel, encourage your children to read the original text and help them realize movies only tell a part of the story.

## **Additional Resources on Movies for Families**

### **American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry – Children and Movies**

<http://www.aacap.org/page/ww?name=Children+And+Movies&section=Facts+for+Families>

### **Media Awareness Network (Canada) – Movies**

<http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/parents/movies/index.cfm>

### **Parent Previews**

<http://movies.go.com/parentpreviews/index>

### **US Bishops Movie Reviews**

<http://www.usccb.org/movies/>

### **Preteenagerstoday.com – A Parent's Guide to Movie Ratings**

<http://preteenagerstoday.com/resources/articles/ratings.htm>

### **Preteenagerstoday.com – How the Silver Screen Affects your Teen**

<http://preteenagerstoday.com/resources/articles/movies.htm>

### **C.S. Mott's Children's Hospital – Michigan – Violent Movies: Protecting Your Child**

[http://www.med.umich.edu/1libr/pa/pa\\_rrmov\\_hhg.htm](http://www.med.umich.edu/1libr/pa/pa_rrmov_hhg.htm)

### **Catholic Organization for Life and Family**

*The Media: A Fascinating Challenge for the Family*

<http://www.colf.ca>

For more information, contact the English Sector Episcopal Commission for Social Communications at [cecc@cccb.ca](mailto:cecc@cccb.ca). This document is available online at [www.cccb.ca](http://www.cccb.ca).

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