

THE GAMING WORLD

Many Bhutanese youth also play games on facebook and other social networking sites. Games like “Mafia War” and “Zombie” are among some of the popular games that youth with access to the internet tend to play online. Any child or youth with access to the internet will be able to access a variety of online games.

Parents should discuss how to play such games and encourage children to choose games that are educational and stimulating.

Many online games offer some possibility of parental control. Learn what these controls are before letting your child play the game.

Be aware that many free games on the internet entice the young into buying products and services or even purchasing virtual goods.

Choose age-appropriate games. Teen games can be very absorbing, violent, and addictive. So make sure you agree on time limits and set some rules around which games are appropriate for your kids.



Media is fun and our children love it. In fact, many Bhutanese parents now acknowledge that the TV is a baby-sitter at home. But children can have too much of a good thing, so it is your job to monitor your child’s media consumption.

- Keep an eye on how long your child spends online, in front of the TV, watching movies, and playing video games.
- Before your child tunes into the variety of media they have to access to today be sure to promote healthy media use by setting and sticking to time limits for media use.
- Pick up appropriate game habits and limit the time your children spend on games.

Parents can request that children do not play games during meal times.

- Tell your child your opinions about the TV programmes and films that you watch and make sure you listen to the concerns your child has about these programmes in order to create a dialogue about safe media use.
- Talking to your child provides an opportunity to correct any misconceptions they have derived from films and television.

A PARENTS’ GUIDE TO

MEDIA SAFETY [MEDIA CLASSIFICATIONS AND RATINGS]



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BHUTAN CENTRE
FOR MEDIA AND DEMOCRACY

UNDEF
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KEEP AN EYE ON YOUR CHILD'S USE OF MEDIA

Well-supported research on the impact of media and youth suggests that unregulated and unsupervised consumption of media with sex, violence, substance abuse, profanity, impudence, or other types of mature content can lead to undesirable social consequences.

TV violence may make some kids think that the world is a scary and dangerous place, that violence is a normal part of life. They may also come to think that it is a good solution to many kinds of problems which will make them less sympathetic to victims of violence.

Video games, by allowing players to attack and kill each other (sometimes in very graphic ways), encourage aggressive behavior. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) says that “playing violent video games leads to adolescent violence and rebellion like smoking which leads to lung cancer.”

Sexuality in films can promote unhealthy attitudes about gender, relationships, and body image. In general, the younger the child, the less they'll be able to have a full understanding of the fictional contexts underlying some TV and film scenes.

Today, Bhutan enjoys access to every blockbuster—be it films, videogames, or TV shows—on the planet. In a society where bootlegging (illegal copying of games and films) is a norm, rather than the exception, anyone can pick up the hottest imports, from the most recent blood-soaked Japanese action flick (like *Crows Zero*) to the latest installment of *Mortal Kombat*, all at an affordable price. While films in Bhutan go through a review board, there is little to stop a 5 year old from seeing our own action heroes thrash a villain to a bloody pulp. We have come to accept this unregulated media landscape where our children can play and watch whatever they please, but should we?



HOW DO WE CHOOSE THE RIGHT FILMS TO WATCH? [KNOW THE VIDEO CLASSIFICATION SYSTEMS]

BHUTAN NATIONAL FILM BOARD RATINGS

- U** Unrestricted for Public Exhibition.
- PG** Parental Guidance Needed. Children 12 years of age and below need to be accompanied by an adult to watch the film.
- A** Adult rating. Restricted for adult viewing only.

NORTH AMERICAN FILM RATINGS

- G** General Audiences- suitable for all ages.
- PG** Parental Guidance Suggested- some material (mild language, smoking, crude/ suggestive humor, scary moments, nudity, or violence) may not be suitable for children.
- PG-13** Parental Guidance Under 13- material is slightly more mature, but excessive swearing, explicit sex scenes, and overt drug use should not be significant themes. Children under 13 can view these films at the discretion of a parent.
- R** Restricted- children under 17 years are not allowed to attend R-rated motion pictures unaccompanied by a parent or legal guardian, even if they have permission. These films may contain strong vulgarity, graphic sexuality, nudity, strong violence, horror, bloody scenes, and strong drug use.