

**Agreement on Modifications to the TV Parental Guidelines**  
**July 10, 1997**

1. **Content Information:** The following content information, where appropriate, will be added to all non-exempt programming to supplement the existing TV Parental Guidelines: in the TV-Y7 category -- FV for fantasy violence; in the TV-PG, TV-14 and TV-MA categories -- V for violence, S for sexual situations, L for language, and D for dialogue.
2. **Descriptions of the Guidelines:** Modifications will be made to the category descriptions as specified in Attachment 1.
3. **Monitoring Board:** Five non-industry members, drawn from the advocacy community and selected by the Chairman, will be appointed to the Monitoring Board as full voting members. Recommendations for appointment to the Board will be offered by advocacy groups and Monitoring Board members.
4. **V-chip:** The industry and advocacy groups will recommend to the FCC that the MPAA movie rating system and the universal television rating system be the only systems mandated for inclusion on the V-chip.
5. **Icons:** Larger icons will appear on-screen for 15 seconds at the beginning of all rated programming and through use of a display button thereafter.
6. **Assurances:** Attachment 2 reflects the agreement reached between the industry and advocacy groups on treatment of the relevant proceedings at the FCC and pending and future legislation.
7. **Research and Evaluation:** Independent, scientific research and evaluation will be undertaken once the V-chip has been in the marketplace.
8. **Effective Date:** Networks will begin to rate programming using the new universal television rating system by October 1, 1997. The industry agrees to encode and transmit the rating information in Line 21 of the vertical blanking interval within 180 days of the date of this agreement.

**The following categories apply to programs designed solely for children:**

**TV-Y**      **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.

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

**The following categories apply to programs designed for the entire audience:**

**TV-G**      **General Audience.**      *Most parents would find this program suitable 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.

**TV-PG**      **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).

**TV-14**      **Parents Strongly Cautioned.**      *This program contains some material that many 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).

**TV-MA**      **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).

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The attached modifications of the TV Parental Guideline System have been developed collaboratively by members of the industry and the advocacy community. We find this combined age and content based system to be acceptable and believe that it should be designated as the mandated system on the V-chip and used to rate all television programming, except for news and sports, which are exempt, and unedited movies with an MPAA rating aired on premium cable channels. We urge the FCC to so rule as expeditiously as possible.

We further believe that the system deserves a fair chance to work in the marketplace to allow parents an opportunity to understand and use the system. Accordingly, the undersigned organizations will work to: educate the public and parents about the V-chip and the TV Parental Guideline System; encourage publishers of TV periodicals, newspapers and journals to include the ratings with their program listings; and evaluate the system. Therefore, we urge governmental leaders to allow this process to proceed unimpeded by pending or new legislation that would undermine the intent of this agreement or disrupt the harmony and good faith of this process.

Motion Picture Association of America  
National Association of Broadcasters  
National Cable Television Association

American Medical Association  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
American Psychological Association  
Center for Media Education  
Children's Defense Fund  
Children Now  
National Association of Elementary  
School Principals  
National Education Association  
National PTA

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**JOINT STATEMENT OF  
MOTION PICTURE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA  
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BROADCASTERS  
NATIONAL CABLE TELEVISION ASSOCIATION**

WASHINGTON, D.C. --- The television industry has concluded a long negotiation with public advocacy groups and has come to closure on revisions to the TV PARENTAL GUIDELINES.

The following content information, where appropriate, will be added to all non-exempt programming to supplement the existing Guidelines: in the TV-Y7 category -- FV for fantasy violence; in the TV-PG, TV-14 and TV-MA categories -- V for violence, S for sexual situations, L for language, and D for dialogue.

Leaders in Congress have said no legislation regarding television ratings, content and program scheduling should be enacted for several years, so that parents will have time to understand and deal with V-chips in television sets, a mechanism which gives them the ability to block out programs they may find inappropriate for young children. Additionally, advocacy group leaders have said this process should proceed unimpeded by pending or new legislation that would undermine the intent of our joint agreement or disrupt the harmony and good faith of the process just concluded.

We are grateful to Vice President Gore, to Chairman John McCain, to Chairman Tom Bliley, Chairman Billy Tauzin, Congressman Ed Markey, among others, who were helpful throughout this process. We also wish to thank the parents of Peoria, Illinois who, in a May town hall meeting, shared with us their thoughts on the subject of television ratings.

As the industry declared on February 29, 1996, in announcing its plans to design parental guidelines for television, we repeat now: Parents will be the arbiters of these new TV PARENTAL GUIDELINES, which will be implemented no later than October 1, 1997. Obviously, until there is a sufficient number of television sets equipped with V-chips in American homes, no evaluation can be properly conducted.

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