

Media in the Home

The Fourth Annual Survey of Parents and Children

1999

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The Annenberg Public Policy Center was established by publisher and philanthropist Walter Annenberg in 1994 to create a community of scholars within the University of Pennsylvania that would address public policy issues at the local, state, and federal levels. Consistent with the mission of the Annenberg School for Communication, the Center has four ongoing foci: Information and Society, Media and the Developing Mind, Media and the Dialogue of Democracy, and Health Communication. Each year, as well, a special area of scholarly interest is addressed. The Center supports research and sponsors lectures and conferences in these areas. This series of publications disseminates the work of the Center.

INTRODUCTION

The Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania drew a baseline of public opinion on the issue of children's television in 1996 as the Federal Communications Commission was considering the "Three-Hour Rule" for children's programming. That year, the Center reported that most parents were pessimistic about the quality of television for their children – few reported a "positive" opinion of television, and most identified TV as the media influence of greatest concern. Despite efforts at the policy level to improve the quality of children's television over our four yearly surveys, parents still offer a very negative assessment of what is on television for their kids, in fact the lowest opinion since we inaugurated the survey (13.6% positive).

This year's survey also shows the continuing transformation of the media environment in homes with children. Computers are now almost as common as cable subscriptions. An online subscription is also as prevalent as a newspaper subscription, nearly tripling since 1996. The penetration of video game equipment rose this year to nearly seven in ten homes with children.

Rather than displacing television as the dominant medium, new technologies have supplemented it, resulting in an aggregate increase in electronic media penetration and use by America's youth. Television viewing has not declined among children 2-17; the percentage of households with more than one television set has reached an all-time high (87%); and children are more likely to have a television set in their room today than ever before (48.2%). Nearly half of all homes with children have access to at least one television, a VCR, home video game equipment *and* a personal computer (46.3%). Nine in ten have either home video game equipment, a personal computer or both (88.7%).

Children are spending more time with electronic media than ever before. The average total time kids 2-17 spend in front of a television screen or computer monitor is 4.35 hours per day in Spring 1999.

The transition brought on by new media is so profound that we have chosen to rename our annual survey "Media in the Home," rather than simply "Television in the Home."

With the introduction of new media, and particularly the Internet, into American homes, the focus of parents' concern over media influences is beginning to change. This year, one-fifth of parents named the Internet as their biggest concern (19.8%), up significantly from last year. Parents also express a low opinion of Internet content for their children (only 11.9% positive). This survey entered the field the week of the shootings at Columbine, which may have affected these results.

This year's survey shows that awareness, knowledge and use of the television rating system and the "E/I" label for educational children's programs are on the decline. Significantly fewer parents and children this year report knowing that such information exists than did two years ago. Again this year, few parents are using the "E/I" label to guide their child's viewing (2.5%).

As the V-Chip is set to begin appearing in all new televisions, parents expressed a high degree of approval for the technology for the fourth straight year. Over eight in ten (84.1%) "strongly" or "somewhat" favor the V-Chip, and over half (51.4%) said they would use it "often" if it were available.

For the second year, the survey measured parents' and children's knowledge of public and popular culture figures. This year's survey told a similar story to last year's – that children know far more about television and advertising icons than about who is running the country. More 10-17 year-olds recognized the Budweiser frogs and lizards (67.0%), Joe Camel (69.4%), the Simpsons (91.3%), and Dennis Rodman (69.3%) than knew the name of the Vice President of the United States (63.1%).

METHODOLOGY

Our survey has followed the same methodology for four years. Telephone interviews were conducted with a national random sample of parents of 2-17 year-olds and a random sample of their 10-17 year-old children in homes with televisions. The sample was drawn using random digit dialing. In 1999, interviews were conducted with 1,269 parents and 303 of their children. The margins of error are $\pm 2.9\%$ for the sample of parents and $\pm 5.7\%$ for the sample of 10-17 year-olds. Interviews were conducted by Roper Starch Worldwide between April 20 and May 18, 1999.

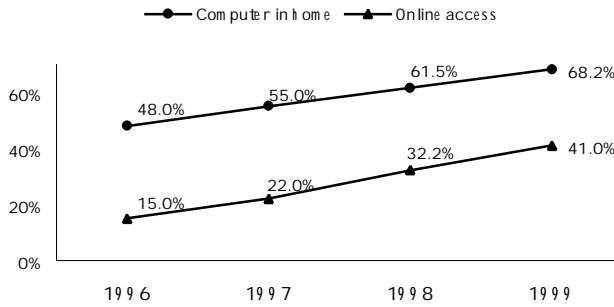
Parent respondents are asked to focus on one particular child when answering the questions. In cases in which there was more than one child between the ages of two and seventeen in the household, the parent was asked to focus on the child with the most recent birthday. In households in which there was a child aged ten to seventeen, the parent's permission was asked to interview that child. This child may or may not have been the focus of the parent interview.

The samples were weighted to the U.S. Census by race, education, and geographic region for the sample of parents; and sex, age and geographic region for the sample of 10-17 year-olds.

1. MEDIA IN THE HOME

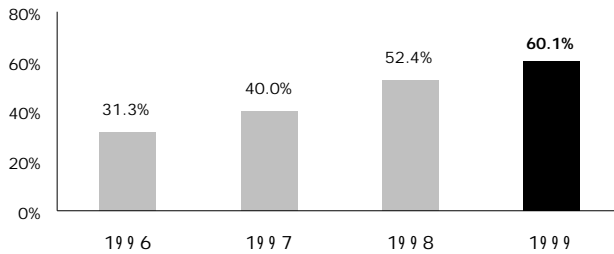
The introduction of new media continues to transform the environment in American homes with children. Computers are now almost as common as a cable television subscription, and Internet subscriptions are nearly as prevalent as newspaper ones. Nearly seven in ten homes with children now have a personal computer (68.2%) and over two in five have access to the Internet (41.0%).

Figure 1.1: Computer and Online Access Penetration 1996-1999 (percentage of homes with children 2-17)



Since most new computers come equipped with modems and easy Internet sign-up software, the proportion of unconnected computers has decreased sharply. The proportion of computer homes with online access has doubled since 1996. In 1996, fewer than one-third of computer households had online access (31.3%), while today that figure is six in ten (60.1%). Now, only four in ten home computers remain offline.

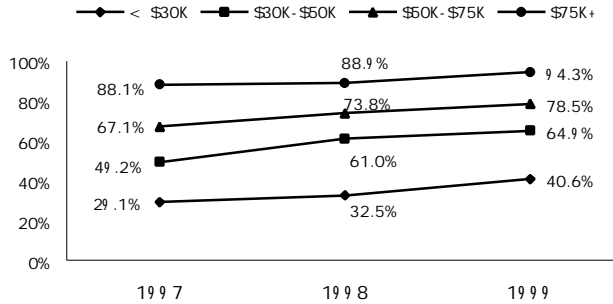
Figure 1.2: Proportion of Computers with Online Access



Last year's survey reported that home access to computer technologies lagged noticeably among lower income families. In fact, between 1997 and 1998, there had been no significant increase in computer ownership at all among those with annual household incomes below \$30,000. Although these lower income families are still noticeably less likely to have computers in the home in 1999, they account for the largest percentage point increase in computer ownership of any income category. Two in five families with incomes below \$30,000 per year now have a computer in the home (40.6%).

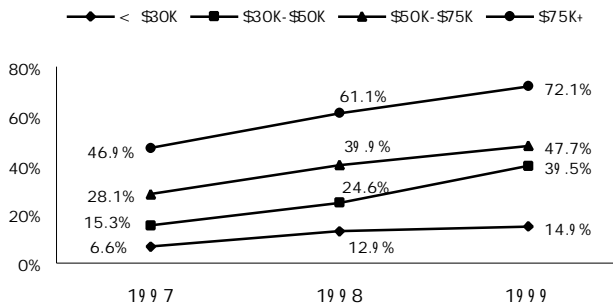
Computer ownership in homes with annual incomes of \$75,000 or more is nearly universal. In this income category, computers are as common as a VCR (94.3%).

Figure 1.3: Computer Penetration by Annual Household Income 1997-1999 (percent of homes with children 2-17)



While a substantial part of the increase in computer ownership this year can be attributed to lower income families acquiring the technology, the same is not true of online access. Home Internet access in low income households continues to trail badly. Internet access was up in all income categories in 1999 except households with incomes under \$30,000 per year. Nearly three in four homes with annual incomes over \$75,000 have Internet access (72.1%). Online access in middle income households is also up significantly – 39.5% (from 24.6% in 1998) in the \$30,000-\$50,000 category and 47.7% (from 39.9% in 1998) in the \$50,000-\$75,000 category. Meanwhile, only 14.9% of the less than \$30,000/year category has home Internet access, not significantly different from 12.9% last year.

Figure 1.4: Households with Online Access by Annual Income 1997-1999 (percent of homes with children 2-17)



Overall among households with children, Internet subscriptions are becoming just as common as a newspaper subscription (41.0% online versus 48.5% with a newspaper subscription). For the first time in 1999, Internet subscriptions surpassed newspaper subscriptions in the highest income category – 72.1% of homes with annual incomes over \$75,000 have an Internet subscription, but only 67.0% subscribe to a newspaper.

Figure 1.5: 1999 Internet Subscription versus Newspaper Subscription

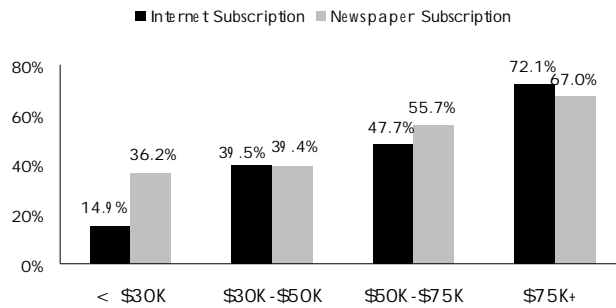
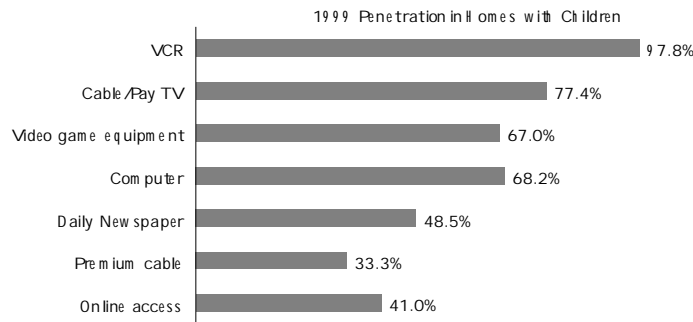


Figure 1.6: Penetration of Other Media 1999 (percent of homes with children 2-17)



Ownership of video game equipment in homes with children increased to two-thirds. After holding steady between 1997 (61.6%) and 1998 (61.8%), video game ownership is now 67.0%.

Nearly half (46.3%) of homes with children have access to all four electronic media measured (TV, VCR, video game equipment and a personal computer). Less than one percent (0.6%) of the sample report having no electronic media other than a television in the home.

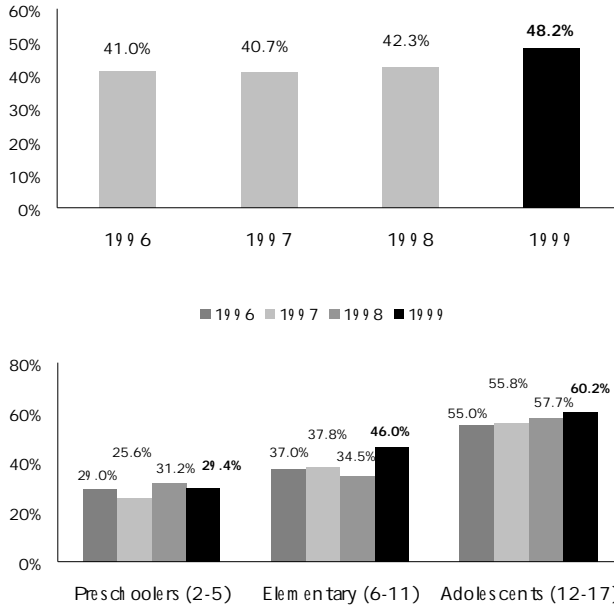
Nine in ten homes with children have either a personal computer or video game equipment (88.7%).

Figure 1.7: Home Technology Ownership

All Four Electronic Media (TV, VCR, video games and computer)	46.3%
TV, VCR, computer	21.4
TV, VCR, video game, no computer	19.5
TV and VCR only	10.7
TV and video games only	1.0
TV only	0.6
TV and computer only	0.3
TV, video games, computer, but no VCR	0.3

Despite the presence of new technologies, the proportion of children with television sets in their rooms reached a four-year high this year (48.2%). The proportion of older children (12-17) with bedroom television sets is over three in five (60.2%), a high for this age group. Nearly half of children 6-11 years-old has sets in their rooms, up nearly twelve percentage points from last year, also the highest for elementary-aged children since we began the survey in 1996.

Figure 1.8: Proportion of Children 2-17 with TV Sets in Bedroom 1996-1999



The proportion of homes with multiple television sets also reached a high in 1999 (87.0%). The average number of sets in homes with children is 2.75 in 1999.

Figure 1.9: Proportion of Homes with 2+ TV Sets

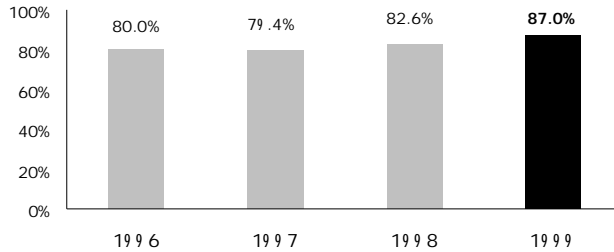
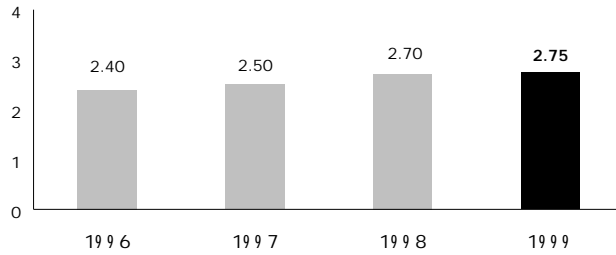


Figure 1.10: Average Number of Television Sets in Homes with Children



With television sets actually increasing in prevalence, it is not surprising that there has not been any reported significant decrease in television viewership by children over the years of our survey, even with the introduction of new media into a high percentage of homes. This suggests electronic media as a whole are playing a larger role in the lives of children. This year, the average total time spent in front of screens (television, videotapes, computers and video games) averaged nearly four and a half hours (4.35 hours/day) among 2-17 year olds.

Figure 1.11: Time Spent with Media by Children, according to parents (in hours per day)

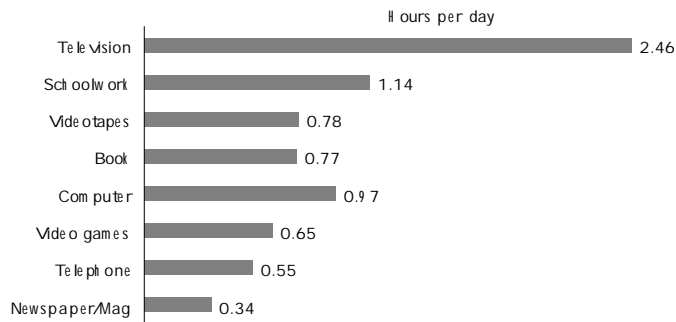
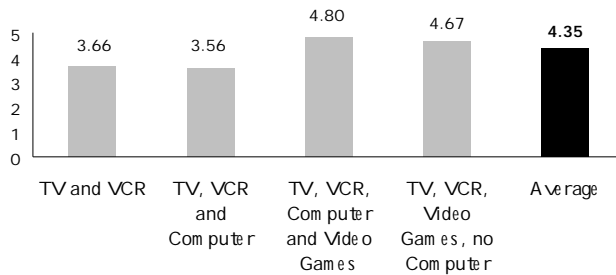
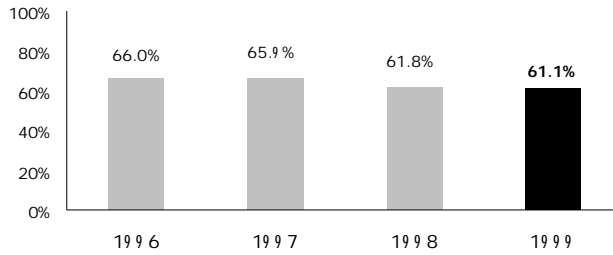


Figure 1.12: Average Time in Front of Screens by Technology Ownership Category (in hours)



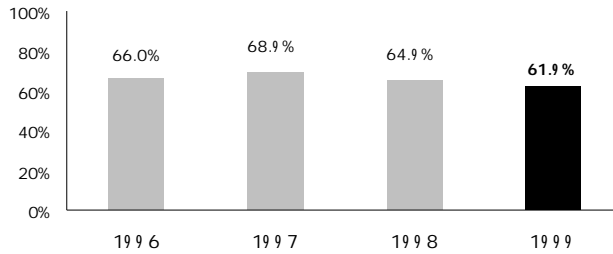
With the increase in the proportion of children with televisions in their rooms, we have seen no significant decrease in the frequency with which parents supervise their children's viewing. While in 1996 and 1997, about 66% of parents supervised their child's viewing "a great deal," that number was 61.1% in 1999.

Figure 1.13: Parental Supervision of Child's Television Viewing (percent reporting "a great deal" of supervision)



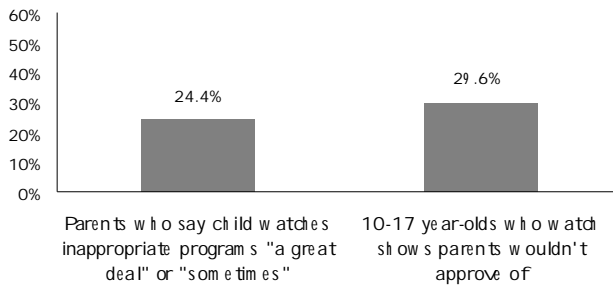
However, the proportion of parents who say they have established rules governing their children's television viewing has decreased after reaching a high in 1997. In that year, nearly seven in ten parents had established rules, while today 61.9% have household rules about TV viewing.

Figure 1.14: Households with Rules About TV Viewing 1996-1999



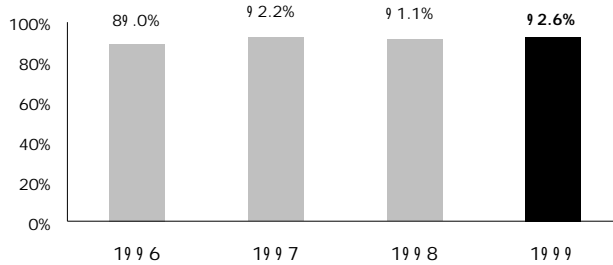
How effective are these rules? In 1999, 24.4% of parents say their child watches inappropriate programs "a great deal" or "sometimes." Nearly three in ten 10-17 year-olds (29.6%) say they watch shows that their parents would not approve of.

Figure 1.15: Viewing of Inappropriate Programs



Parents still say they watch television with their children at least “once in awhile.” This measurement has been consistently high over the life of the survey.

Figure 1.16: Co-viewing (percent of parents reporting “almost always” or “once in awhile” viewing with child)



Among 10-17 year-olds, reported viewing of tabloid news shows (such as “Hard Copy,” “Inside Edition” or “A Current Affair”) dropped sharply in 1999 (to 29.2% from 52.7% last year), while watching TV talk shows (such as “Ricki Lake,” “Jenny Jones” or “Jerry Springer”) rose to nearly half of young people (46.6%). Viewing of cartoons and other kids’ shows increased nearly twenty percentage points to an all-time high of 74.6% of 10-17 year-olds.

Viewing of TV talk shows continued to tail off among parents this year. Fewer than a quarter of parents reported watching talk shows (24.4%); two in five had reported watching them just two years ago. Viewership of PBS programming also reached a low-point among parents this year. Two-thirds of parents (66.2%) reported watching PBS regularly, compared to three-quarters in 1996 (74.0%).

Figure 1.17: What 10-17 year-olds are Watching 1996-1999

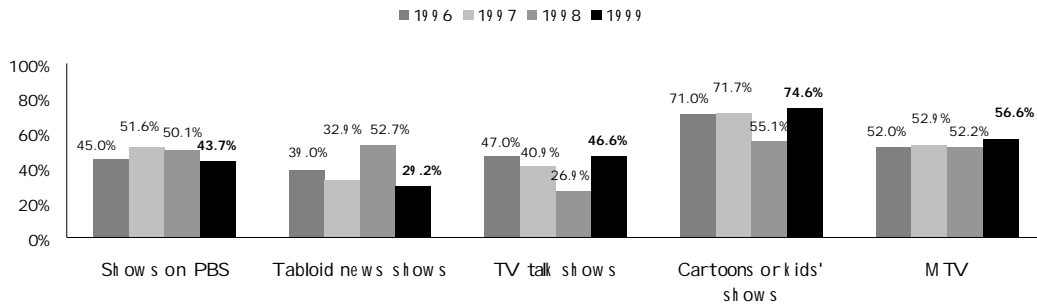
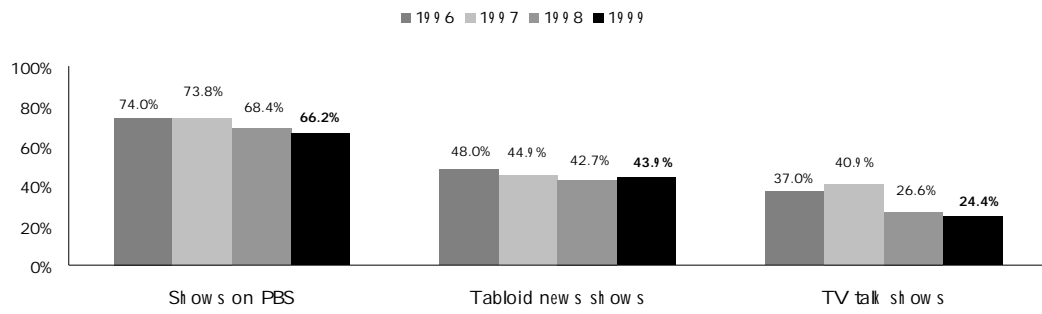


Figure 1.18: What Parents are Watching 1996-1999

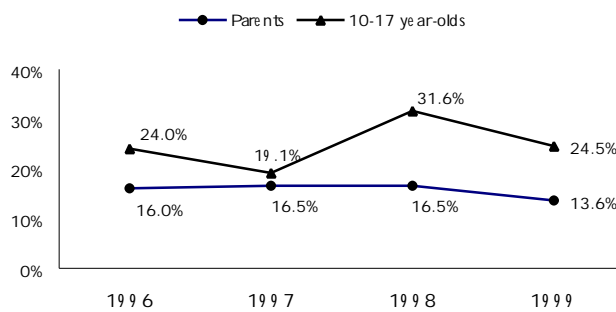


[Note: only 10-17 year-olds were asked if they watch cartoons, kids' shows or MTV.]

2. OPINION OF CHILDREN’S TELEVISION

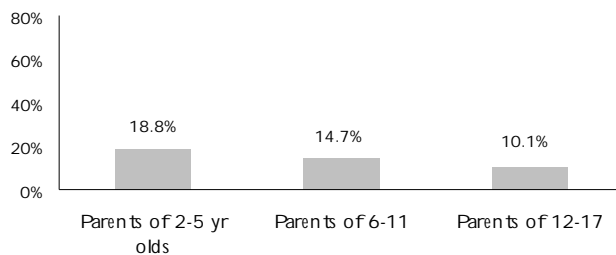
Parents’ opinion of children’s television is at its lowest point in the four years of our survey. Only 13.6% of parents reported either “mainly” or “very positive” opinions about what is on television for their children. Over the four years, parents’ opinion has been generally stable, but also very negative. Ten to seventeen year-olds’ opinions dropped from a high of 31.6% positive in 1998 to only 24.5% positive in 1999, although this figure is still higher than in 1997.

Figure 2.1: Opinion of Children’s Television 1997-1999 (percent “very” or “mainly” positive)



While all parents have a generally poor opinion of what television has to offer their children, parents of older children have an even lower opinion. Only one in ten parents of secondary school-aged children report a “mainly” or “very positive” opinion of what is on television for their children to watch (10.1%).

Figure 2.2: Opinion of Children’s Television, by age of child 1999 (percent “very” or “mainly positive”)



In 1999, cable television regained the top spot among 10-17 year-olds as the place where the best programs for their age group can be found. Commercial broadcast networks had surpassed cable in 1998. However, this year, 42.2% of 10-17 year-olds said cable is the place to find the best programs, ahead of commercial broadcasters (38.5%) and public broadcasting (15.6%).

Parents of 2-17 year-olds, on the other hand, still believe public broadcasting offers the best programming for their children, although this figure has waned in recent years. Although the largest proportion of parents (44.3%) says the best shows for young people can be found on public broadcasting, this is down from a high of 61.1% only two years ago. Meanwhile, cable (38.4% of parents think it offers the best programs) and commercial broadcast networks (10.6%) reached their highest levels in the four years of the survey.

Figure 2.3: Where Parents Believe Best Programs for Young People Can Be Found 1996-1999

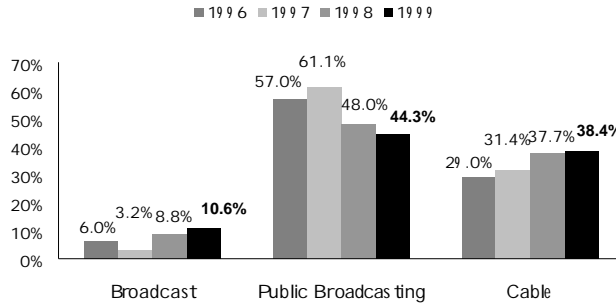
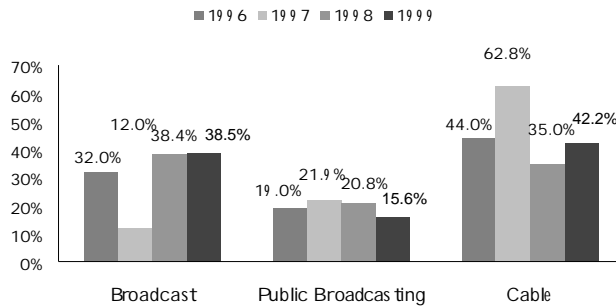
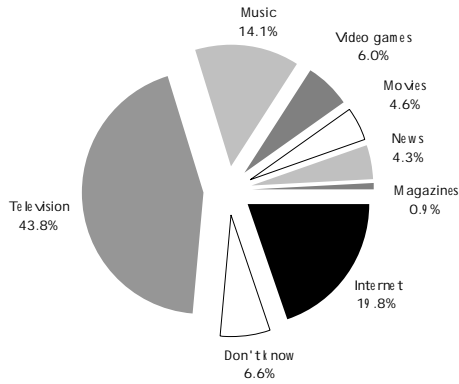


Figure 2.4: Where 10-17 year-olds Believe Best Programs Can Be Found 1996-1999



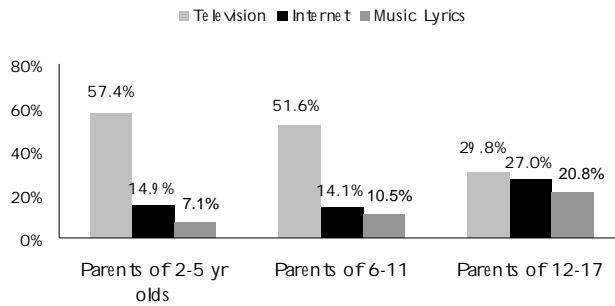
This year saw a significant shift in the focus of parents' concern about media influences on their children. In past years, television has routinely been identified by a majority of parents as the influence of most concern (55.6% last year). However, in 1999, although still topping the list of biggest concerns, fewer than half of parents are most concerned about television (43.8%). Concern over the Internet grew significantly this year, surpassing music lyrics for the second biggest concern of parents. Two in five parents (19.8%) named the Internet, up from 12.9% last year. Since this survey entered the field the week of the shootings at Columbine, that event may have affected reported concerns.

Figure 2.5: Media Influence of Most Concern to Parents 1999



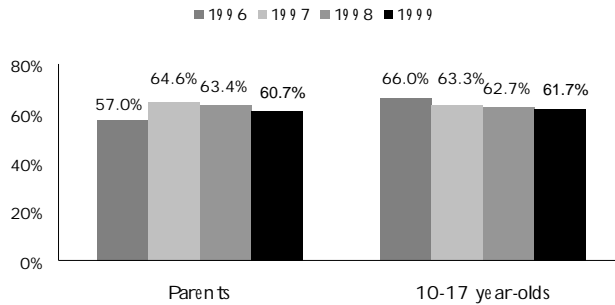
Parents' concerns about media influences change significantly as their children get older. Namely, parents of preschoolers (2-5) and elementary school children (6-11) tend to be much more concerned about television and less concerned about the possible influence of the Internet. Parents of secondary school-aged children are significantly more likely to be concerned about the Internet than parents of younger children, and much less concerned about television. Parents of 12-17 year-olds are as likely to report the Internet as their biggest concern (27.0%) as they are to name television (29.8%). Concern over music lyrics increases steadily as the child ages – 20.8% of parents of 12-17 year-olds are most concerned about music lyrics, while only 10.5% of parents of 6-11 year-olds and 7.1% of parents of 2-5 year-olds name music lyrics as their biggest concern.

Figure 2.6: Three Biggest Media Concerns of Parents by Age of Child 1999



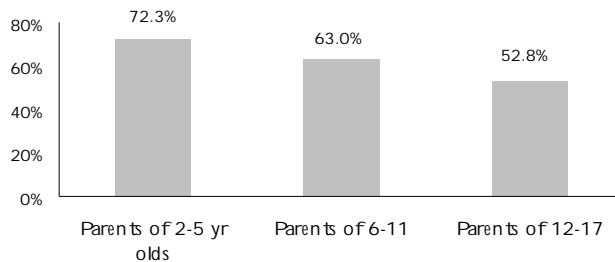
Parents and young people still have an optimistic view of the effects of television overall. When asked to rate the impact of television, as in past years, parents and 10-17 year-olds alike tend to say it has done more good than harm.

Figure 2.7: Perceived Effect of TV on Children 1996-1999 (percent “more good than harm”)



Just as parents of older children have a lower opinion of the quality of what is on television for their children, optimism about the possible effect of drops significantly among parents of older children. While 72.3% of parents of preschoolers (2-5) say television has done “more good than harm” to their children, this figure drops to 63.0% among parents of elementary school-aged children (6-11) and 52.8% among parents of secondary school-aged kids (12-17).

Figure 2.8: Perceived Effect of TV on Kids, by age of child 1999 (percent “more good than harm”)



Parents are still much more concerned with *what* their children watch than they are about *how much* they watch. As in past years, seven in ten parents say they are more concerned with what their child watches (70.0%). Consistent with this finding, fewer than a quarter of parents think their child watches too much television (23.1%).

Figure 2.9: What Concerns Parents More – What Child Watches or How Much Child Watches?

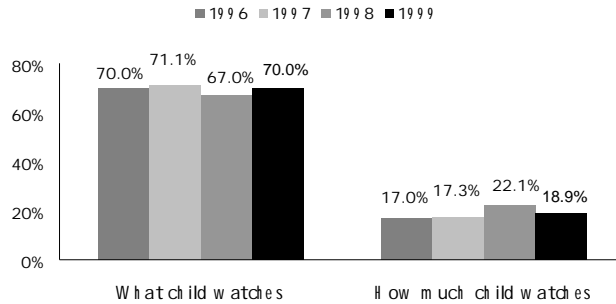
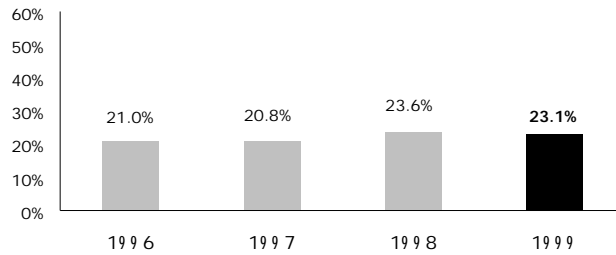
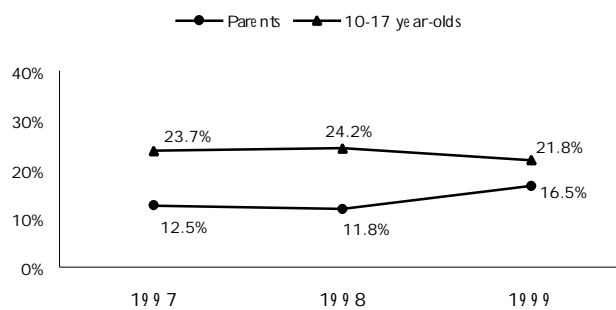


Figure 2.10: Parents Who Think Their Child Watches Too Much TV



As in past years, relatively few parents feel there is a lot of good television for their children – 16.5% of the parents interviewed perceived “a lot.”

Figure 2.11: Perceived Amount of Good Television for Young People 1997-1999



After falling behind “Barney” as the show parents think is the best for their children, “Sesame Street” regained the distinction this year – 14% said “Sesame Street” was a good program for their child. Parents were also likely to name Nickelodeon and the Discovery Channel as offering good programming for their children.

Figure 2.12: Best Shows for Kids, According to Parents 1997-1999 (percent of parents mentioning, allowed up to five responses)

1999 Program	1998 Program	1997 Program			
Sesame Street	14	Barney	19	Sesame Street	21
Barney	11	Sesame Street	17	Barney	20
Nickelodeon Network	9	Rugrats	9	Magic Schoolbus	6
Discovery Channel	8	Arthur	8	Home Improvement	6
Blue's Clues	8	Blue's Clues	8	Family Matters	6
Arthur	8	Magic Schoolbus	7	Bill Nye, The Science Guy	5
Seventh Heaven	8	Home Improvement	6	Gullah Gullah Island	5
Touched by an Angel	7	Discovery Channel	5	Rugrats	5
Rugrats	6	Touched by an Angel	4	Blue's Clues	5
Home Improvement	4	Saved by the Bell	4	National Geographic	5
PBS Network	4	Sabrina, The Teen-Aged Witch	4		
Teletubbies	4	Bill Nye, The Science Guy	4		

“Seventh Heaven” displaced “The Simpsons” as the program perceived by 10-17 year-old as being the best for their age group. “Saved by the Bell” dropped out of the top ten from number three last year, replaced by “Dawson’s Creek” and “Friends.”

Figure 2.13: 10-17 year-olds Perception of Good Programs for Their Age Group (percent mentioning, allowed up to three responses)

10-17 year-olds 1999	10-17 year-olds 1998		
Seventh Heaven	12	The Simpsons	15
Simpsons	10	Home Improvement	12
Dawson's Creek	9	Saved by the Bell	8
Friends	9	Rugrats	7
Home Improvement	9	Seinfeld	7
News (any)	7	Boy Meets World	7
Rugrats	6	Dawson's Creek	7
Nickelodeon Network	5	South Park	7
MTV Network	5	Sabrina, The Teen-Aged Witch	6
Sister Sister	4	Seventh Heaven	5
Cartoon Network	4	Friends	5
Full House	4	X-Files	5
Futurama	4		
Saved by the Bell	4		

When asked to name their one favorite program, 10-17 year-olds named “The Simpsons” for the second consecutive year. “South Park” dropped from the top five, as “Dawson’s Creek” and “Seventh Heaven” moved to numbers two and three respectively.

Figure 2.14: Favorite Programs of 10-17 year-olds 1997-1999 (allowed one response)

1999 Favorite Program		1998 Favorite Program		1997 Favorite Program	
The Simpsons	7	The Simpsons	8	Seinfeld	7
Dawson's Creek	5	South Park	8	Home Improvement	4
Seventh Heaven	5	Home Improvement	3	Family Matters	4
Friends	4	Rugrats	3	The Simpsons	3
Rugrats	3	Wrestling	3	Martin	3
Wrestling	3	Dawson's Creek	3		
Home Improvement	3				
Drew Carey	2	11 shows tied with	2	11 shows tied with	2

For the second year running, "The Jerry Springer Show" was named by 10-17 year-olds as the program their parents were most likely to prohibit them from watching – one in five parents prohibit their children from watching the program (21.2%). "South Park" and "The Simpsons" remained the second and third most prohibited shows.

For the third year in a row, and with increasing frequency over that time period, news is the type of programming parents are most likely to encourage their children to watch, according to 10-17 year-olds. Over one in three of the young people interviewed said their parents encourage them to watch the news (36.2%). This year, cable offerings on the Discovery Channel, Learning Channel and History Channel were also highly encouraged by parents, according to their children.

Figure 2.15: Most Prohibited Shows 1997-1999 (according to 10-17 year-olds, allowed up to three responses)

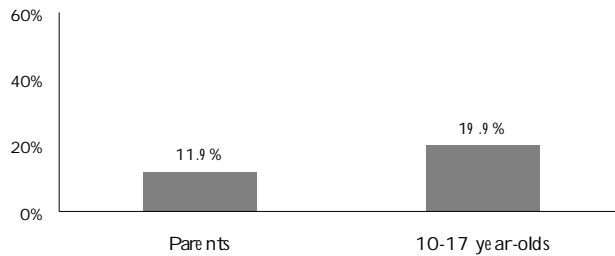
1999 Top Prohibited Programs		1998 Top Prohibited Programs		1997 Top Prohibited Programs	
Jerry Springer Show	21	Jerry Springer Show	18	Beavis and Buttthead	21
South Park	11	South Park	15	The Simpsons	9
The Simpsons	11	The Simpsons	14	M TV Network	8
M TV Network	9	Beavis and Buttthead	14	X-Files	6
El BO Network	7	King of the Hill	4	Melrose Place	5

Figure 2.16: Most Encouraged Shows 1997-1999 (according to 10-17 year-olds, allowed up to three responses)

1999 Top Encouraged Programs		1998 Top Encouraged Programs		1997 Top Encouraged Programs	
News (any)	36	News (any)	24	News (any)	17
Discovery Channel	13	Discovery Channel	12	Discovery Channel	8
The Learning Channel	12	Touched by an Angel	5	National Geographic	5
Seventh Heaven	9	Seventh Heaven	5	Bill Nye, The Science Guy	5
PBS	7	Bill Nye, The Science Guy	3	Touched by an Angel	5
Bill Nye, The Science Guy	5	Rugrats	3		
Touched by an Angel	5	Disney programs	3		
History Channel	4	Family Matters	3		
National Geographic	4				

For the first time this year, APPC asked parents and 10-17 year-olds their opinion of the quality of Internet content. Their opinions are similar to those of television content. Parents and 10-17 year-olds alike hold fairly negative opinions of Web content – only 11.9% of parents has a “mainly” or “very positive” opinion of what is on the Internet for young people, and 19.9% of 10-17 year-olds hold positive opinions.

Figure 2.17: Opinion of Internet Content for Children (% “very” or “mainly positive”)

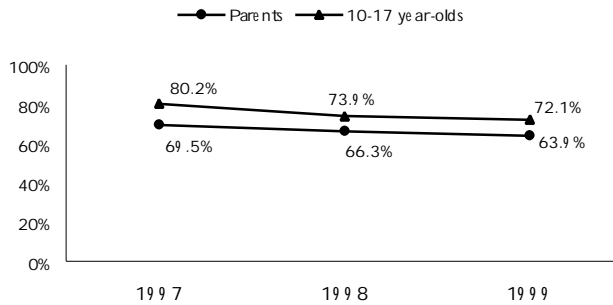


3. POLICY ISSUES IN CHILDREN’S TELEVISION (RATINGS, E/I AND THE V-CHIP)

For the third time, the Annenberg Public Policy Center assessed parents’ and children’s awareness, knowledge and use of program ratings and the educational/informational designation (“E/I”) provided by broadcasters. Our results continue to show that there has not been an increase in awareness of on-screen information and that the information is neither widely understood nor widely used.

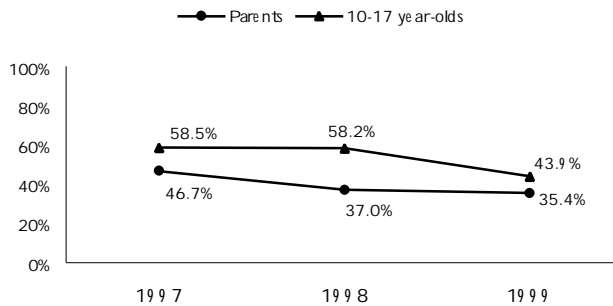
As in previous years, the data demonstrate that the overall awareness of the existence of a TV rating system is relatively high, but far fewer parents and children recognize the “E/I” designation for educational children’s programming. In 1999, seven in ten young people (72.1%) and two-thirds of parents (63.9%) are aware of the TV rating system. About one third of parents (35.4%) and just over two in five 10-17 year-olds (43.9%) are familiar with the “E/I” designation.

Figure 3.1: Awareness of TV Rating System 1997-1999



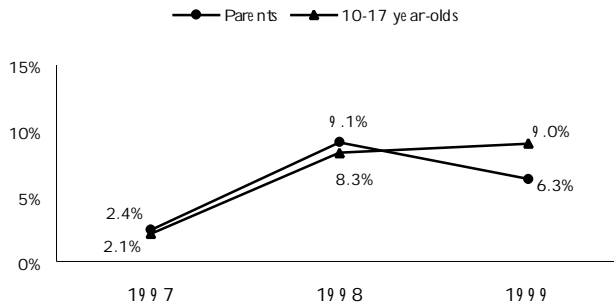
Awareness of the rating system among parents and children has not changed significantly since we first measured it in 1997. However, parent’s and children’s awareness of the “E/I” designation has decreased significantly from highs in 1997. That year, 58.5% of 10-17 year-olds and 46.7% of parents were aware of the “E/I” symbol – today only 43.9% and 35.4% respectively say they know broadcasters put information on the screen about which of their shows are educational for children.

Figure 3.2: Awareness of Educational/Information Designation 1997-1999



Knowledge of what the “E/I” symbol means (“educational or informational” programming for children) remains extremely low among both children and adults. One out of ten 10-17 year-olds can correctly identify the E/I symbol (9.0%) and only 6.3% of parents were able to correctly say what the label means. For the first time in 1999, 10-17 year-olds were more likely to know what “E/I” means than parents (although this result is within the margin of error of the survey).

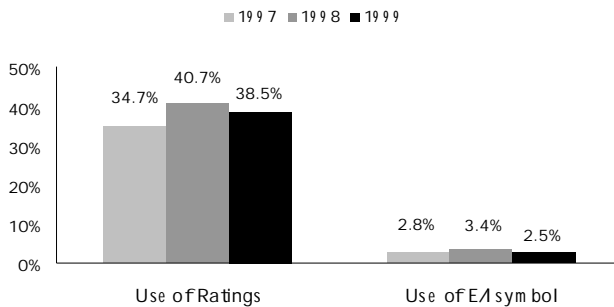
Figure 3.3: Knowledge of What E/I Means 1997-1999 (Respondents need only say “educational” or “informational, not both, to be given credit. They also need only say a form of one of those words.)



The pattern of families’ use of on-screen information about TV programming for children has not changed significantly since we first asked these questions in 1997. In 1999, two in five parents report using the TV ratings to guide their child’s viewing (38.5%). Similarly, the number of 10-17 years-old who say they use the TV ratings when selecting programs remained the same from last year – three out of ten young people say they use the system (30.4%).

Use of the “E/I” symbol remained extremely low in 1999. As in past years, virtually no parents said they use the label to guide their child’s viewing (2.5%).

Figure 3.4: Use of the Rating System and E/I Symbol by Parents to Guide Child’s Viewing 1997-1999



Parents and children alike are not aware of the programs commercial broadcasters are putting forth to satisfy the three-hour requirement. Fewer than half of parents have heard of the show "Popular Mechanics," the highest figure for any of the "E/I" programs measured (43.5%). One in five parents has heard of "Mythic Warriors" (18.8%), and just over one in ten has heard of the "E/I" shows "One World" (11.2%) and "Hysteria!" (14.8%). Only 5.7% of parents have heard of the "E/I" show "Squigglevision."

Even those parents who have heard of the E/I programs are not likely to know that they are intended to be educational. Fewer than half of parents know that "Hysteria!," "Mythic Warriors," "One World," and "Squigglevision" are intended to educate. In fact about as many think "Pokemon" is educational as think "Mythic Warriors" is intended to educate.

Figure 3.5: Awareness of Commercial Broadcasters' Educational Efforts

Program	Parents' Awareness (% have heard of program)	Intended to be Educational? (of parents who have heard of it)	10-17 year-olds' Awareness (% have heard of program)	Intended to be Educational? (of 10-17 year-olds who have heard of it)
<i>E/I Programs:</i>		(correct)		(correct)
Hysteria!	14.8%	42.4	45.0%	51.7%
Mythic Warriors	18.8	25.1	28.0	26.1
One World	11.2	33.0	22.4	41.0
Popular Mechanics	43.5	78.2	28.3	84.6
Squigglevision	5.7	46.8	12.9	59.0
<i>Non-E/I Programs</i>		(incorrect)		(incorrect)
Mystic Knights of Tir Na Nog	17.4%	28.1%	45.1%	21.7
Pokemon	38.0	27.2	71.4	26.9
Seventh Heaven	66.1	56.0	88.4	55.9
Spy Dogs	10.6	31.3	28.2	26.2
Young Hercules	66.0	30.5	79.5	31.9

The majority of parents continues to believe that children would not turn away from programs clearly labeled educational. While half of parents think that an "educational/informational" label would make no difference in their child's likelihood of viewing a program (49.3%), two in five think that their children would be more likely to watch a program with such a label. Only 8.1 believe that such a label would be a turn-off to their kids.

Young people's opinions are similar to their parents. A majority of 10-17 year-olds say that labeling a program "educational" would make no difference in their likelihood of watching it (53.1%). About one third say it would in fact make them more likely to watch (34.0%). Only one in ten children (11.8%) say they would be less likely to watch a program labeled "educational or informational."

Figure 3.6: Effect of E/I Symbol on Child’s Likelihood of Viewing, According to Parents

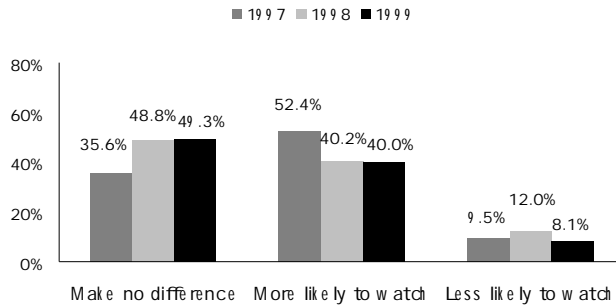
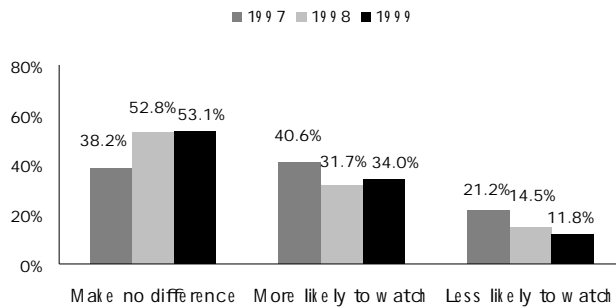


Figure 3.7: Effect of E/I Symbol on 10-17 year-olds’ Likelihood of Viewing, According to 10-17 year-olds



As V-Chip technology is about to become a reality for Americans, parents continue to voice strong support for the device – 84.1% of parents of 2-17 years-old “strongly” or “somewhat” favor the V-Chip, and 71.9% say they will use the V-chip “often” or “once in awhile” if they had one. Only about one in ten parents say they will never use the V-Chip.

Figure 3.8: Support for the V-Chip Among Parents of 2-17 year-olds 1996-1999 (% “strongly” or “somewhat” favor)

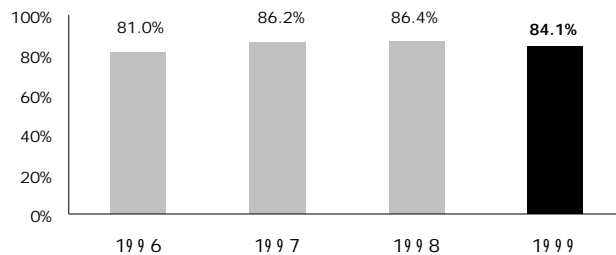
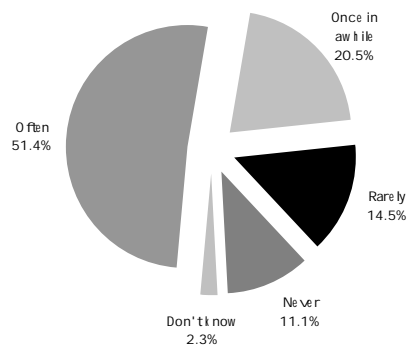


Figure 3.9: Projected Use of the V-Chip



The “Three-Hour Rule” stipulates that broadcasters must provide information about their educational programming to local newspapers. However, in 1999, only 7.1% of parents say they use the newspaper most often to find out about children’s programming. Instead, parents are far more likely to watch the program themselves (45.7%) or consult TV Guide (26.2%). Not surprisingly, only two in five parents consider their local paper helpful in providing information about children’s programs, unchanged from previous years. As other APPC work indicates, most newspapers do not carry the information about programs designated as educational.

Figure 3.10: Source Parents Use Most for Information About Children’s Television 1999

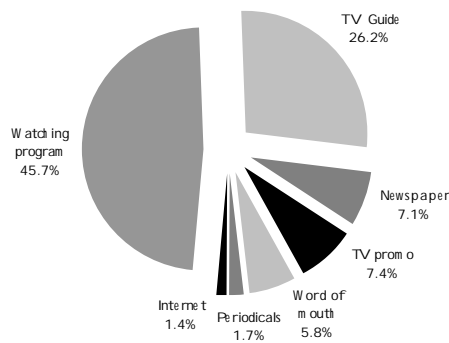
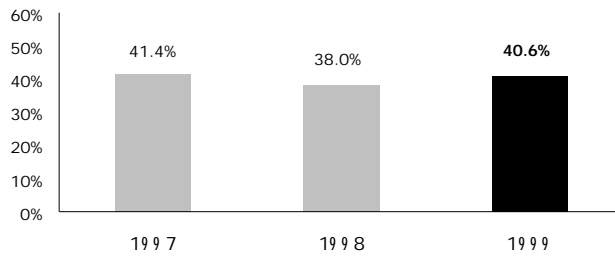


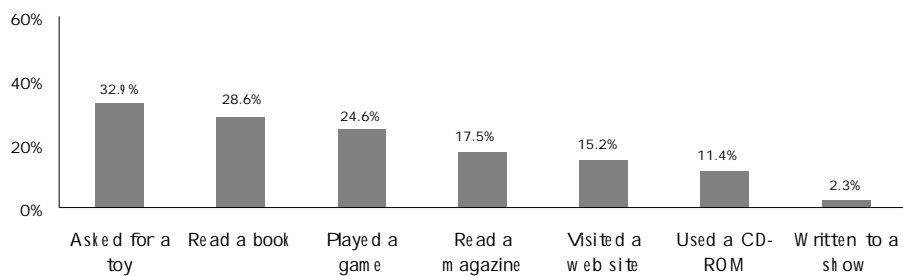
Figure 3.11: Helpfulness of Local Newspaper in Providing Information About Children's Television 1997-1999 (% "very" or "somewhat" helpful)



4. USE OF TV SHOW-RELATED PRODUCTS BY CHILDREN

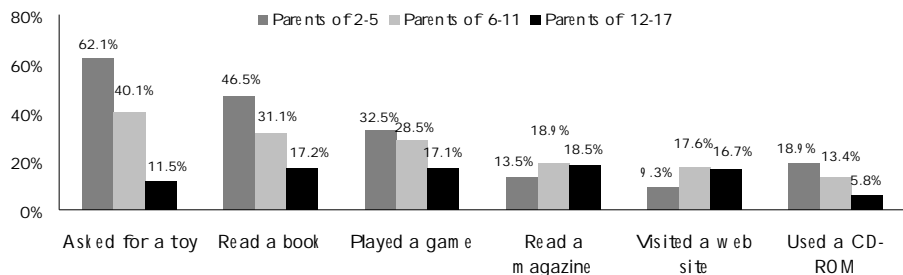
This year, the Annenberg survey questioned parents and 10-17 year-olds about children’s program-related activity and use of program-related products. According to parents, their children are most likely to ask for program-related toys (32.9%), read books based on television programs (28.6%), and play games based on shows (24.6%). In addition, 17.5% of their children have read magazines based on programs, 15.2% have visited web sites and 11.4% have used a CD-ROM based on a show.

Figure 4.1: Children’s Program-Related Activity in the Past Month, according to parents



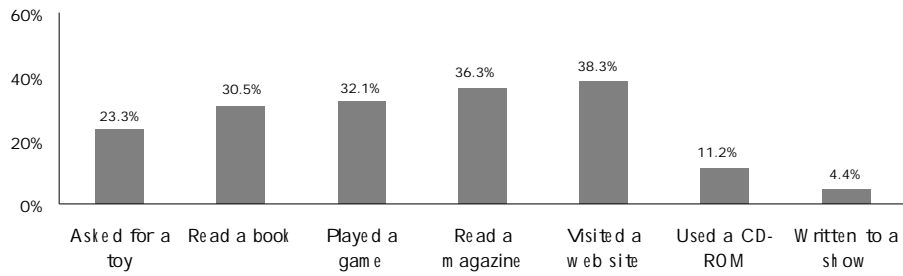
Children’s desire for and use of program-related products changes as the child gets older. Elementary (6-11) and secondary school-aged young people (12-17) are more likely to visit web sites based on television programs and read magazines based on shows. As children grow older, they are less likely to play games, ask for toys, read books or use CD-ROMs based on TV programs.

Figure 4.2: Children’s Program-Related Activity in the Past Month, by age of child, according to parents



When asked the same series of questions, 10-17 year-olds confirm that they are indeed more interested in visiting Internet Web sites and reading magazines based on television shows. Nearly two in five of the young people interviewed (38.3%) said they had visited a Web site affiliated with a television program in the past month and nearly as many (36.3%) said they had read a magazine based on a television program during that same period.

Figure 4.3: 10-17 Year-Olds' Program-Related Activity in the Past Month



5. KNOWLEDGE OF PUBLIC FIGURES AND POPULAR CULTURE

Last year, the Television in the Home national survey assessed parents' and children's knowledge of public and popular culture figures. The results showed quite strongly that young people were more likely to know television characters and sports figures than who is running the country.

We renewed and modified the knowledge measures in 1999, and the results show a similar picture. More 10-17 year-olds recognize the Budweiser frogs and lizards (67.0%), Joe Camel (69.4%), the Simpsons (91.3%), and Dennis Rodman (69.3%) than know the name of the Vice President of the United States (63.1%). Basketball star Dennis Rodman is nearly as well known (69.3%) as First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton (78.0%).

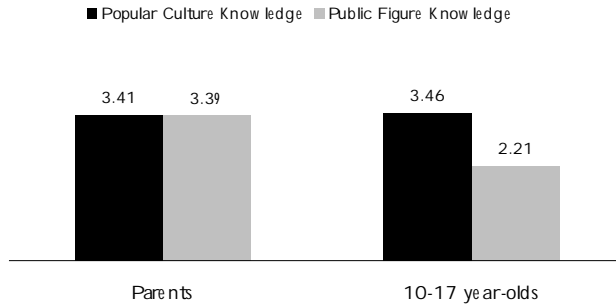
The First Lady enjoys nearly universal recognition among parents (93.4%), but significantly fewer parents can name the Vice President (79.6%). Elizabeth Dole is recognized by fewer than half of parents (46.0%). Nearly twice as many 10-17 year-olds can name the television network that airs Ally McBeal (45.8%) than can correctly identify Dole as the woman who is considering running for President of the United States (24.9%).

Figure 5.1: Knowledge of Public Figures and Popular Culture 1999

Question	Parents	10-17 year-olds
<i>Popular Culture Knowledge:</i>		
Can you tell me what TV show has characters named Homer, Bart and Maggie? (The Simpsons)	83.6%	91.3%
What product do you associate with advertisements featuring talking frogs and lizards? (Budweiser, beer)	76.2	67.0
Can you tell me the name of the famous cartoon animal that is associated with cigarette advertisements? (Joe Camel)	70.5	69.4
Can you tell me who the professional basketball star is who dyes his hair and plays for the Los Angeles Lakers? (Dennis Rodman)	71.2	69.3
What TV network airs the show Ally McBeal? (Fox)	35.3	45.8
<i>Public Figure Knowledge:</i>		
Can you tell me the name of the Vice President of the United States? (Al Gore)	79.6	63.1
Can you tell me the name of one of the women on the United States Supreme Court? (Sandra Day O'Connor or Ruth Bader Ginsburg)	23.1	4.7
Can you tell me the name of the First Lady of the United States? (Hillary Rodham Clinton)	93.4	78.0
Can you tell me the name of the woman who is considering running for President of the United States? (Elizabeth Dole)	46.0	24.9
Can you tell me on what kind of TV program you would see Peter Jennings, Tom Brokaw or Dan Rather? (News)	89.0	51.8

In this year's survey, we asked five knowledge questions concerning popular culture and public figures. Creating an index for parents' and children's knowledge (from 0-5), we see that parents and children are comparably knowledgeable about popular culture icons, but 10-17 year-olds are significantly less knowledgeable about public figures than they are about popular culture.

Figure 5.2: Mean Knowledge Scores (0-5 scale)



There were no statistically significant changes from 1998 to 1999 among the questions asked in both years, except that parents showed a modest increase in recognition of Dennis Rodman (up from 63.7% in 1998).

Parents and children alike tend to get most of their information from local television news –84.9% of parents and 68.9% of 10-17 year-olds report watching the local news at least three times per week. Newspapers are the least frequently used source of information.

Figure 5.3: Use of News Sources 1999 (percent using news source at least three times per week)

