Managing Movies and Videos in the Home

- If you're worried that a film might not be suitable for your kids, preview it yourself. Talk to other parents who've seen it, read newspaper reviews, or use one of the many Internet movie review sites for parents.

- Designate a regular "family movie night," when you pick a movie and everyone watches it together. Use this as an opportunity to introduce your kids to some of the classics.

- Use movie content as an opportunity to discuss serious issues with your kids: stereotyping, violence, smoking, sex, values, drug and alcohol use. (Be subtle, though, and don't preach—your movie time should be a fun time.) The Teach With Movies website (www.teachwithmovies.org) has wonderful ideas on how to use movies to teach kids about the world.

- When you watch movies and television with your kids, watch for openly flaunted brand names. Then discuss the issue of product placement.

- If you're troubled by the movies shown to your child at school, voice your concerns to the teacher, administration or parent council and be ready with some good alternative titles. Parents should have a say in the number of movies used in the classroom, and their quality.

- Don't put any device that kids can use to watch movies in children's bedrooms, where you can't monitor what or how much they're watching.

- Be aware of what your kids are watching on mobile devices as well.

- Ask your local video store to put a restriction on your rental account that will prevent your kids from renting or buying movies rated for older ages. Most family-friendly stores will respect such requests.