

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 or check out the reviews by parents and kids at [Common Sense Media](#). You can also use our tip sheet [Understanding the Rating Systems](#) to help understand what the ratings on a movie really say about it.
- 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. Criticizing our children's media choices can easily make them feel we're criticizing them. To keep them from getting defensive, you can focus on questions: Do you think that's a healthy way to act towards a girlfriend or boyfriend? Are the girls you know in real life like the ones in that show? How might an Indigenous person feel about how they're portrayed in a movie like Peter Pan?
- Don't be afraid to use the pause button if something comes up you want to talk about! Use our tip sheet [Co-Viewing With Your Kids](#) for tips on how to do that. 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.

Promoting the Best in Movies

Great movies can inspire and educate, as well as entertain. Show kids there's more to films than the formula movies the big studios pump out.

It may not be easy at first. Kids may laugh at the idea of black and white movies and openly rebel at subtitles! But if you persevere, you'll be amazed at how the magic of an intelligent, well-crafted movie can enthrall even the most jaded kids.

- Introduce kids to different kinds of films: Hollywood classics, documentaries, foreign films and Canadian movies. If you start when they're young, it's much easier to guide their viewing and help them to grow up with a love of good filmmaking.
- Mine the cinematic resources of your local library. Most offer a selection of classic films on video, and some carry National Film Board (NFB) videos as well (see side bar for the NFB catalogue). You can also view the entire NFB library for free on

a computer or using a tablet computer such as the iPad. To view NFB films on the Internet, go to the NFB website (www.nfb.ca); to view it on a tablet you will need to download the free NFB app (<https://www.nfb.ca/apps/>).

- If your community offers a children's film festival, check it out.
- Make a habit of pointing out positive or realistic representations when you see them online. If a movie has great non-stereotyped characters or authentically depicts someone's experience, make sure to let your kids know! (It's also good to tell them when some parts of a movie are positive but not others. It's also important to teach kids from early on that critiquing a part of something doesn't mean you don't like it, nor does critiquing a work mean that you are criticizing anyone who likes it.
- Encourage kids to create their own films with a tablet or smartphone. Nothing stimulates appreciation of an art form more than tackling its practical challenges yourself. There are lots of free and cheap video editing programs available to download or to use in a browser like Firefox, Chrome or Safari. Kids can even make their own animated movies with apps like [Stop Motion Studio](#) or [Clapmotion](#).