

The Children's Television Act in its Second Year

CME's Campaign for Kids' TV

The Children's Television Act is intended to improve the quality of children's educational programming on broadcast television. In the Summer of 1997, the Center for Media Education presented its first report on the law's strengthened 3-hour rule, "The Field Guide to the Children's Television Act," as a guide to the programs deemed "educational and informational" by the TV industry. In response to subsequent developments, this special edition of *InfoActive Kids* provides updated information on this programming.

Additionally, the new report examines the websites that accompany children's shows, the commercial time limits on such programming, and the latest academic research concerning the overall quality of educational programming for children. Finally, with tips about contacting local TV stations across the country, and the use of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Web site, this report offers a set of tools to help parents and advocates play a more active role in monitoring educational programming for children on broadcast TV.

In the fall of 1997, commercial broadcast stations entered an era of new responsibility to the youngest members of their audience. With new rules (adopted in 1996) designed to strengthen the Children's Television Act of 1990, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has called upon the broadcast industry to provide at least three hours of programs "specifically designed" to "educate and inform" children between the ages of two and sixteen. Prior to the enactment of the three-hour rule, stations were not required to air a specific amount of such programming each week. Not surprisingly, in the absence of any specified quota, many broadcasters offered only the barest minimum of educational programs

for children—in some cases only 30 minutes per week. Many were aired during pre-dawn time periods when most children were still asleep.

With the adoption of the three-hour rule, however, broadcast stations (including those owned by or affiliated with the big networks (ABC, CBS, NBC, Fox, WB, and the new Pax TV network) must offer this "core educational and informational-E/I," programming in order to renew their licenses every eight years. Additionally, the stations are required to indicate publicly which shows they have designated to fulfill their "E/I" programming requirement, both through quarterly "Children's Television Reports" available on the FCC website, as well as through a special "E/I" label displayed within the first 30 seconds of the program itself. And since the E/I programs must be shown between the hours of 7 a.m. and 10 p.m. on a regularly scheduled basis, children and parents should be able to locate these programs easily week after week.

How Is the Act Working?

In the second season since the enactment of the strengthened Children's Television Act, each network has chosen to meet the new FCC guidelines in slightly different ways, although certain industry-wide trends and patterns have become apparent. A closer look at some of the key questions and issues surrounding the "FCC-friendly" programs reveals a lot about how broadcasters are handling their new responsibilities to families—and about those areas of the new law that still need attention. Where are the E/I programs to be found in the broadcast schedule—and why? What are the main educational objectives of these programs—and how effective are they in this regard? Which children's age groups are being served—and which are not? How does the second season under the new rules compare to the first?

Commercial Time Limits: A Matter of Law

Bobbie Eisenstock, Ph.D.

The number of minutes of advertising permitted during a children's program is a matter of law. It is the job of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to make sure that the law is enforced. Commercials are limited during children's programming in two ways: one is part of the Children's Television Act (CTA), and the other involves the FCC's long-standing policy on program-length commercials.

The CTA limits the amount of commercial time during children's programming (for children age 12 and under) to 10.5 minutes per hour on weekends and 12 minutes per hour on weekdays. Additionally, children's programs cannot include commercials for products related to the program, or to a character within that particular program, during that show. These would be considered "program-length commercials," which are strictly prohibited during children's programming.¹ Thus, the "Magic School Bus" show could not be used to sell *Magic School Bus* books and videos. Similarly, a fast food chain promoting a trip to Disney World could not use even a brief image of Winnie the Pooh and friends during the "Winnie the Pooh" show. Nor could a cereal company offering a free *Ducktales* character advertise during the "Ducktales" program. Such restrictions as these attest both to the power of advertising, and to the special nature of children's programming,

which must remain as free as possible from commercial inducements.²

In order to have their licenses renewed, commercial broadcast stations must comply with these rules. A recent FCC review of current station license renewals found that a little over one-quarter (26 percent) of the broadcast stations had exceeded their commercial limits and were thus at risk of having their licenses expire.³ This led the FCC to implement an ongoing audit process to make certain that broadcasters adhere to the time limits for commercials during programming designed for children 12 years old and under. The audit involves unannounced monitoring of commercial TV stations.

- *Why are commercial broadcasters not complying with the law?*

Broadcasters offer many explanations in their license-renewal applications. Some of these involve a misunderstanding of what commercial time actually comprises during a program, or a misinterpretation of FCC rules and policies on program-length commercials. Other reasons for the excessive advertising include human or mechanical error, scheduling changes or mistakes, and the inability to prescreen satellite-delivered programming before it is broadcast.

- *What will happen to broadcasters who do not comply with the law?*

Stations that do not comply will be subject to sanctions that include substantial forfeitures, provisional license renewals, and increased reporting requirements. The specific sanctions imposed on an individual station will be determined by the number and type of violations, as well as by FCC actions in similar cases in the past. In recent years, these actions have included fines ranging from \$7,500 to \$125,000 against at least 85 stations for violations of their commercial limits.⁴

¹ See Children's Television Report and Policy Statement, 50 FCC 2d 1, 16 (1974); Children's Television Act of 1990, Pub. L. No. 101-437, 104 Stat. 996-1000, codified at 47 U.S.C. §§ 303a, 303b, 394.

² See Campbell, Angela J., "Ads2kids.com: Should Government Regulate Advertising to Children on the World Wide Web?", 33 Gonzaga Law Review, 313 (1997).

³ FCC Public Notice DA 98-950, "Mass Media Bureau Advised Commercial Television Licenses Regarding Children's Television Commercial Limits," May 20, 1998, p. 1.

⁴ FCC Public Notice DA 98-950, p. 4.

The CTA and its new three-hour requirement, in short, raises as many questions as it answers. But these are questions that parents should be asking, and that stations should be answering, "as part of their obligation to serve the public interest," as the original CTA expressed it, with "programming that serves the special needs of children."

What's Where: Educational Programming "Packages"

Most stations have responded to the new requirements by airing "packages" of children's programs prepared by the broadcast networks-ABC, CBS, NBC, Fox, WB, and the newest entrant, Pax TV. Instead of spreading

the educational programs throughout the week, these packages are offered during the time period traditionally devoted to children's television-the Saturday morning block (with the exception of Fox, which airs its two E/I programs during the week, and WB, which offers episodes of its lone E/I program during the week and on Saturday morning). Each network programming block includes its own catchy title-ABC's "Disney's One Saturday Morning"; "CBS Kidshow"; NBC's "TNBC" (Teen NBC); and Paxnet's "Cloud Nine"--as a means of establishing its identity.

To the extent that young viewers can count on finding their favorite shows at the same time every week, this strategy of "packaging" E/I programs is beneficial. It also means, however, that most E/I pro-

What Parents Can Do To Make the Children's Television Act Work

Bobbie Eisenstock, Ph.D.

The Children's Television Act (CTA) gives parents a way to identify programs that are educational and age-appropriate for their children. Most parents, however, are not aware of this new law or what to look for when they watch television. Parents who know about the new guidelines can help take responsibility to make sure that the CTA regulations are enforced in their community. Here are 10 steps parents can take to ensure that local TV stations are obeying the CTA:

1. When you and your children watch TV, look for the "educational/information" symbol that appears on-screen at the start of the show.

Most stations have adopted the E/I logo to identify these programs. Although the majority of this programming can be found during the traditional Saturday-morning time slot, E/I programs can turn up any time between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m. Work with your children to determine when these programs are available in your area, and encourage them to choose these programs when they watch TV.

2. Check your local TV listings to find out when E/I programs are scheduled.

E/I programs should be regularly scheduled every week between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m. Create a "Family TV Guide" of E/I programs that are age-

programming is concentrated on a single weekend morning, leaving much of the rest of the commercial broadcast schedule devoid of educational fare altogether.

What do they claim to teach?

The Children's Television Act regulations allow a certain amount of flexibility for the networks in defining their approach to "educational and informational programming" focusing either on *social/emotional* or on *cognitive/intellectual* development. After two seasons, a distinct pattern is evident, with the marked dominance of the *social/emotional* over the *cognitive/intellectual*, with just 3 out of 28 E/I programs claiming a cognitive/intellectual objective, the industry-wide focus is clear: Given the choice between offering more rigorous, curriculum-based programming and softer, more entertaining fare, the networks opt for the latter nearly nine times out of ten.

Teenagers, especially, are not well served in the area of cognitive/intellectual content, since the entire menu of E/I programming for teens is offered on only one network-NBC. As NBC itself explains it, the *social/emotional* objective of the "Teen NBC" package "is achieved in each program by offering teenagers engaging and relatable [sic] characters who share their

point of view and storylines that present a unique perspective on some of the social issues teenagers face today: drinking and driving, dyslexia, eating disorders, gambling, teen smoking, racism and the right and responsibility to vote."¹ In practice, this translates into sit corn-type programs that often revolve around dating going to the mall, and the like (although some sense of a pro-social moral is usually included at the end). The lone exception to TNBC's stable of "engaging and relatable characters" is "NBA's Inside Stuff," which—despite the network's claims for its "peaceful conflict resolutions and global awareness"—has been much more aptly described by Peggy Charren (founder of Action for Children's Television) as "a half hour of basketball commercials for the NBA."²

All of the CBS programs, similarly, which are based on popular children's books, fall under the "social/emo-

"Most educational and informational programming is concentrated on a single weekend morning."

tional" heading, as do most of those offered by ABC and Pax TV stations. And of the two programs offered on Fox, one—"Life with Louie"—is based on a socialization theme. Following the pattern of the other networks Pax TV executives cast their "Cloud Nine" package in a decidedly social/emotional light: "Life lessons presented as an overall theme include overcoming fears, being responsible, how to deal with jealousy, having respect for others, handling anger, learning to trust, resolving conflict, having a good attitude and self-esteem, using teamwork and being cooperative, being prepared, helping others, why cheating and lying are not good, and knowing hard work and dedication pay off."³

In contrast, the three programs with stated *cognitive/intellectual* objectives offer educational material that draws on concepts of science, math, history, vocabulary and analytical reasoning. For example, the goals of the more curriculum-focused "The Magic School Bus," according to a Fox Kids' statement, are "to motivate children's interest in science; introduce science ideas; inspire positive attitudes toward science and education; and model age-appropriate science problem-solving behavior. Each of the fifty-two half-hour episodes explores a different science topic through an animated journey aboard the magically transformed school bus to destinations such as the center of the earth, inside the human body, to outer space, to remote ecological environments, inside a molecule, and inside of a plant."⁴ (It should be noted that "The Magic School Bus" got its start on PBS, and the episodes currently airing on Fox continue that series.)

appropriate for your children. If you can't find the E/I symbol (an E/I in a circle) next to the program in your local TV listings, ask the publisher to include it, and call the station for its E/I program schedule. If a program is preempted, call the station to find out when it will be re-scheduled.

3. Contact the station representative in charge of providing information about the CTA guidelines.

Each station is required to have a children's television liaison to answer your questions. Keep in touch with the liaison on a regular basis to discuss the E/I program schedule. Invite the liaison to speak at a PTA meeting or other community organization to explain how the station is complying with the new regulations for children's programming, and what its plans are for the future.

4. Check the stations' public inspection files for compliance with the CTA.

Each station is required to make available to the public a quarterly "Children's Educational Informational Television Report," which describes the educational objectives and target audiences of its E/I programs. Ask the children's television liaison to help you review the report if you have any questions about it. You can also find these reports on the FCC's website, where it is possible to compare stations' performances with one another. If the report is not readily available at the station or online, contact the FCC.

5. When you and your children watch E/I programs, judge the quality and educational value of the program, and make sure the commercials are no longer than the required time limits.

The CTA limits commercials to 10.5 minutes per hour on weekends and 12

ABC Schedule

E/I Programs	Target Age	Category	Description
<i>Disney's Doug</i>	8-12	social/emotional	"This series uses humor and fantasy in depicting the struggles of a twelve-year-old boy to form identity, develop self-confidence, resolve family and school problems and maintain friendships." [animated]
<i>Disney's Recess</i>	8-12	social/emotional	"A collection of animated stories about a group of fourth graders who attend suburban public school.. these children are an ethnically and gender-diverse group." [animated]
<i>Disney's Pepper Ann</i>	9-12	social/emotional	"From week to week. Pepper Ann, a seventh-grader growing up in a single-parent family, learns that it is okay to make mistakes, that she's actually good at a lot of things (even science and math) and that it is important to speak out for what she believes." [animated]
<i>Disney's 101 Dalmatians</i>	7-11	social/emotional	"This series challenges assumptions, rewards perseverance, invites creative problem solving, resolves conflict, addresses critical and strategic thinking, demonstrates the importance of teamwork and celebrates differences." [animated]
<i>The New Adventures of Winnie the Pooh</i>	3-6	social/emotional	"Series episodes convey strong prosocial messages about honesty, personal responsibility, persistence, cooperative effort, friendship and caring." [animated]
<i>Squigglevision (formerly Science Court)</i>	7-11	cognitive/intellectual	"Two new animated characters, Fizz and Martina, guide viewers through the half-hour program from the Squigglevision TV Studio.. Science concepts are illustrated by means of imaginative courtroom 'demonstrations' and graphics." [animated]

Scum: "ABC Kids Programming Guidebook." Fall 1998.

ABC's "Squigglevision," a re-titled version of last season's critically acclaimed "Science Court," has expanded its educational focus to include two new features: "See You Later Estimator," a math segment; and "The Last Word," a vocabulary call-in show. The program's educational objective—encouraging viewers to "use critical thinking skills to examine and describe scientific phenomena"—is demonstrated through clever and entertaining plots in which scientific principles (such as gravity and inertia) are used to solve mysteries and comedic court cases.

WB's "Histerial," finally uses animated

characters to highlight notable historical figures and events "to provide children with historical knowledge through an entertainment format. . . , helping children use logic and analysis to make sense of historical information."⁵

Which age groups are being targeted?

Although the Children's Television Act states that stations must air three hours of programming for the full age range of children—from 2 to 16—it does not stipulate how the various age groups should be served. As a result, the existing E/I schedule is almost as skewed chronologically away from the very youngest and oldest viewers (3-to-5 and 13-to-16 years-old) as it is pedagogically (with the preponderance of social/emotional content). Out of a total of 28 programs offered to children, only two-7 percent—are designed for the very youngest viewers: ABC's "Winnie the Pooh" (3- to 6-year-olds), and CBS's "Rupert" (3- to 7-year-olds). Equally troubling is the narrow focus of programming for this age group on social and emotional teaching exclusively, despite the proven gains in cognitive development, such as reading and math skills, demonstrated repeatedly by "Sesame Street" over the years. In fact, members of this age group may stand to gain the most from educational television, since

CBS Schedule

<u>E/I Programs</u>	<u>Target Age</u>	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Description</u>
<i>Rupert</i>	3-7	social/emotional	Features the adventures of a "lovable bear" main character, Rupert. [animated]
<i>Anatole</i>	5-9	social/emotional	"Based on the Caldecott Award-winning book series by Eve Titus, tells the tale of the dignified mouse Anatole, a loving husband to Doucette and father of six charming children." [animated]
<i>Dumb Bunnies</i>	5-9	social/emotional	Based on a Scholastic book series, the program is "a comedy about Momma, Poppa and Baby Dumb Bunny - a family of lovable, fun-loving and extremely naïve bunnies." [animated]
<i>Flying Rhino Junior High</i>	7-11	social/emotional	Revolves around the antics of Earl P. Sidebottom (a.k.a. 'The Phantom of the Auditorium'), who plots against the other Flying Rhino Junior High students." [animated]
<i>Birdz</i>	7-11	social/emotional	"Follows the comic adventures of a family of birds. Mischievous 10-year-old Eddie Storkowitz is an aspiring filmmaker who practices by filming his eccentric family." (animated)
<i>Mythic Warriors: Guardians of the Legend</i>	7-11	social/emotional	"An action adventure anthology series based on heroes of Greek mythology, including Andromeda, Theseus, Atlanta and Hercules." [live-action]

Source: CBS Communications Press Statement, Aug. 26, 1998

Fox Schedule

<u>E/I Programs</u>	<u>Target Age</u>	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Description</u>
<i>The Magic School Bus</i>	6-9	cognitive/ intellectual	"Each of the fifty-two half-hour episodes explores a different science topic through an animated journey aboard the magically transformed school bus." [animated]
<i>Life With Louie</i>	6-11	social/emotional	"The educational and informational objective of the program is to offer children the opportunity to explore issues and scenarios that are common to growing up, yet might be perplexing to children, such as how to cope with family and friends as part of this process." [animated]

Source: Fox Kids' Programming Press Statement, Oct. 19, 1998

the youngest of them have not yet been exposed to formal classroom experiences.

The majority of E/I programs are directed at the "middle-childhood" bracket-&to-12-year-olds. The impending digital television revolution will presumably expand the station's offerings, but at the moment, the very youngest viewers, along with their teenage counterparts, have comparatively little E/I programming from which to choose.

The 1998/99 Season:
What Changed?
What Stayed the Same?

ABC:

ABC's educational children's programs are

minutes per hour on weekdays. When the commercial time exceeds these limits, report it to the station and the FCC.

6. Write letters with your children to compliment advertisers who sponsor E/I programs.

It is important to let advertisers know that you appreciate their efforts in sponsoring quality children's programming. Encourage companies whose products you purchase to support your favorite E/I programs, if they don't already.

7. Work with your local PTA, church, or other community organization to create a TV guide of recommended E/I children's programming.

There is more on TV today than any single family can handle, but a group of parents can work together to assemble a "TV Guide" of quality E/I programming available locally. Such a guide, updated periodically to reflect changing schedules, can be distributed through local groups, libraries, schools, clubs, pediatric clinics, and doctors' offices. You can even rate the programs and publicly praise stations for airing quality children's programming, particularly during prime-time periods. Make sure to compliment those stations that broadcast more than the three-hour minimum, and encourage others to do the same.

8. Involve the school and community in evaluating how your local broadcasters are meeting the CTA requirements.

Create a class project for students to calculate the total number of E/I programming hours per week for each station, record when the programs are scheduled, the types of programs and their suitability for different ages, and count the number of commercial minutes per program. Share these

NBC Schedule

<u>E/Programs</u>	<u>Target Age</u>	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Description</u>
<i>Saved by the Bell: The New Class</i>	13-16	social/emotional	"Explores social themes through the daily school life of six teenage friends at Bayside High who help each other make the most of growing up in a complicated world." [live action]
<i>Hang Time</i> (airs twice)	13-16	social/emotional	"Follows the Deering Tornados, a varsity basketball team in an Indiana high school that includes only one female player." [live action]
<i>One World</i>	13-16	social/emotional	"Focuses on a family of six adopted and foster children who live with Dave and Karen Blake, a high school baseball coach and his wife." [live action]
<i>City Guys</i>	13-16	social/emotional	"Originates at a densely populated multi-ethnic, public high school in the heart of Manhattan [characters] learn that getting beyond the superficial and seriously dealing with a deeper reality is the critical path to attaining success." [live action]
<i>NBA Inside Stuff</i>	13-16	social/emotional	"A half-hour news magazine program directed at teens between the ages of 13-16. The program features the pro-social off-court activities of male and female basketball players, coaches, team personnel and teenage athletes." [live action]

Source: NBC Press Statement, Sept. 30, 1998

WB Schedule

<u>E/Programs</u>	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Description</u>
<i>Histeria!</i>	6-12	cognitive/intellectual

offered in its Saturday morning package of animated programming, "Disney's One Saturday Morning" an "integrated two-hour block featuring long-form and short-form educational elements." According to the network's "ABC Approach" statement, "Last season we set out to create a destination—an address—where kids would want to spend time. And since we program to kids only once a week, this place ["Disney's One Saturday Morning"] had to be something really special. Building on last season, our goal now is to further encourage kids' sense of imaginations, creativity and confidence through characters they know and the Saturday Morning environment 'they have been coming to all year.'"

Overall, the current season of the ABC's E/I programming is relatively unchanged from last year's premier season, with the exception of a few details (including the title change of last season's "Science Court" to "Squigglevision").

In addition to the long-form (half-hour) programs, ABC's morning lineup includes short, single "educa-

evaluations with others and compare notes on which stations offer the best children's programming. 9. Create awareness in the community about the media's impact on children and teens, and the role parents can play in enforcing the Children's Television Act.

Ask your local newspaper critic or the person who writes about the media to do a story about what local stations are doing to fulfill the CTA requirements, and what parents can do to promote a quality media environment. Conduct parent-education workshops on the CTA and the educational benefits of the media. But look also at the potentially harmful effects of violent and suggestive content, of programming that reinforces stereotypes, and of advertising (especially advertising directed at children). And bring in experts to discuss the risk factors relating to media use and obesity, sexual activity, and alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drug use.

tional elements" between each program, "since kids don't learn only in neat, half-hour blocks," according to an ABC statement. The so-called "short-form interstitials" include "Genie's Great Minds Think for Themselves," "Boss of the World," "How Things Work," "Mrs. Munger's Class," "Nommercials," "Tube Dwellers," and "You Rock!"

CBS:

After last year's disappointing season (in which it trailed the other networks in ratings for its children's programming), CBS revamped its entire kids lineup. In place of the previous live-action menu it now offers an entirely new animated package, based on several popular children's books. All of the CBS programs have "social/emotional" objectives, with the target ages split almost evenly between the youngest viewers—3 to 7 and 5 to 9—and the middle-childhood bracket of 7-to-11-year-olds.

Perhaps most interesting, the network effectively went "offshore" for this season E/I line-up. A Canadian syn-

Pax TV Schedule

SATURDAY

<u>E/I Programs</u>	<u>Target Age</u>	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Description</u>
<i>Zak Tales</i>	5-9	social/emotional	"Zak is the Mayor of Fun Town with shoulders large enough and a heart big enough for children to share their inner thoughts. The costumed Mayor Zak offers children solutions to the universal problems associated with growing up." animated
<i>The Sylvanian Families</i>	5-9	social/emotional	"Sylvanian forest is a warm, wonderful, whimsical place where wishes come true and troubles melt away. It's a place where you feel like you've always belonged and can have the time of your life." animated
<i>The Tooth-brush Family</i>	5-9	social/emotional	"The world of the bathroom might seem like a very small world to many, but to the animated characters who live there, it is a vast macrocosm of relationships, learning, adventures and possibilities." animated
<i>Get Along Gang</i>	5-9	social/emotional	"In the pleasant town of Green Meadows, there lives a merry group of animated animal friends called the Get Along Gang who are always ready to lend a helping hand (or paw) in their own caring and clever way." animated

Source: Paxson Communications Corporation Press Statement, Dec. 2, 1998

dication house, Nelvana Ltd., is producing all CBS children's programming, a strategy that amounted to "educational TV shows on a cut-rate budget," according to the *Los Angeles Times*. "Benefiting from Canadian and French government subsidies covering as much as 30% of its production costs," the newspaper explained, "Nelvana agreed to supply CBS animated programs for a fee of \$50,000 per episode—less than a quarter of what other networks pay for their children's fare." That arrangement

programming resumes with "Birdz."

Fox:

The "Fox Kids" educational programming lineup differs from the standard Saturday-morning schedule, offering weekday broadcasts instead. "The Magic School Bus" airs for a half-hour every weekday, followed by "Life With Louie" on Mondays and Fridays.

NBC:

The current NBC Saturday morning program block maintains last season's non-animated sitcom-type programming model for the teen age group. The "Teen NBC" (or TNBC) lineup features five half-hour programs in a 2 ½-hour block on Saturday mornings, beginning later than the other networks' E/I shows (10 a.m.).

WB:

Although the WB network offers only one program that qualifies as educational/in-

Pax TV Schedule (continued)

SUNDAY

<u>E/I Programs</u>	<u>Target Age</u>	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Description</u>
<i>Swiss Family Robinson</i>	6-11	social/emotional	"The classic literary tale Swiss Family Robinson comes to life in this compelling live-action series." [live action]
<i>Hurricanes</i>	6-11	social/emotional	"The excitement of championship soccer comes to life, with all the behind-the-scenes, off-the-field drama and action this animated series can bring. The show features a cast of international soccer players as members of the Hurricanes, who travel to exotic locales around the world." [animated]
<i>Inquiring Minds</i>	6-11	cognitive/intellectual	"This engaging magazine-format show is designed to investigate many of the baffling questions about everyday life, such as: why is the ocean salty, why chili peppers are hot and why skin itches." [live action]
<i>Starcom</i>	6-11	social/emotional	"This animated show of heroes, exploration, adventure and excitement set against the backdrop of colonization of the Solar System shows the cooperative effort in keeping the peace in a growing planetary community." animated

Source: Paxson Communications Corporation Press Statement, Dec. 2, 1998

formational, "Warner Bros' Histeria!," (which airs. from 3.30 to 4 p.m. during the week, and from 11:30 to noon on Saturdays), the network is certainly not averse to scheduling children's programming. Indeed, WB offers a full five hours of animated shows on Saturday mornings. But since the majority of WB's kids' shows are of a combat, action nature-the violent "Beetleborgs" and "Beast Wars" among them-it seems that the broadcast of quality educational kids programs may not be uppermost in WB's programming strategy

Pax TV:

On the surface, at least, Pax TV's priorities seem much dearer. When it made its debut in 88 markets across the country last August, the new network promised to follow a straight and narrow path of strictly "family-oriented shows." But with the exception of just a handful of original programs, Pax TV's schedule comprises syndicated network reruns-the old "Swiss Family Robinson" series is one example-along with a kids' lineup produced entirely by DIC Syndication.

A combination of two "Cloud Nine" packages-Saturday and Sunday blocks-represent Pax TV's core educational programming for children age 5 to 9 (Saturday morning), and 6 to 11 (Sunday morning). According to a Pax TV kids' programming description, "A trio of live-action teen angels, Gabriel, Michael and Raphaella, have taken on the task of broadcasting children's programs hoping to inspire and inform children. While each [program] @segment will contain humor and fun, underlying it all will be heartwarming lessons that kids can take from their friends, the Angels. Cloud 9 serves to highlight and reinforce the educational and moral elements of the series presented as their programming."⁸

1. "TNBC Educational Objectives," Sept. 30, 1998.
2. Quoted in Rachel Taylor, "PG Watch: That's Edutainment," *Brill's Content*, Oct. 1998, 81.
3. Letter to CME from Paxson Communications Corporation, Dec. 2, 1998.
4. Letter to CME from Fox Rids' Programming department, Oct. 19, 1998.
5. Letter to CME from WB, Oct. 14, 1998.
6. "ABC Rids Programming Guide Book," Fall 1998.
7. Brian Lowry, "Just Don't Tell the Rids It's Educational," *Los Angeles Times*, Oct. 3, 1998, F1.
8. Letter to CME from Paxson Communications Corporation, Dec. 2, 1998.

