

Opinion: Parents need to monitor what kids watch

Publisher's note: *This editorial is from the Feb 6, 2015, Deseret News.*

The humorist Josh Billings, who lived and wrote about the same time as Mark Twain, once said, "To bring up a child in the way he should go, travel that way yourself once in a while." This wisdom applies today, even in the example parents set by what movies or TV shows they watch.

The Annenberg Public Policy Center conducted a survey in 2014 with the goal of finding out how parents gauge which movies are fitting for their children. Family Studies shared the survey; the results are shocking.

One thousand parents of children ages 6-17 were shown eight clips from popular movies. The shortest clip was 14 seconds long; the longest was 54 seconds. All eight clips contained some degree of violence or sexual content. Parents were asked to judge which clips were appropriate for which age groups.

Every time, although the clips were shown in random order, the first clip was seen as suitable only for older teenagers. But by the last clip, no matter the order the clips were shown in, parents always said it was suitable for younger viewers, as young as 6.

These results should be a reminder of how easy it can be to grow desensitized to invasive material over just a short time period.

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