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Children's Concerns

Children's Conferences

Children's Conferences

Children Defense Fund

- Early Childhood Development
- Youth Development/After School/Violence

Children – Families/Childcare

- Childcare

Children Immunizations

- Immunizations

Children's Nutrition

- Early Childhood Development

Children Orphanages

- Adoption

Children – Republican Budget Cuts

Children – T.V.

- Youth Development/AfterSchool/Violence

Children – T.V.

- Youth Development/AfterSchool/Violence

Children – Violence

- Youth Development/AfterSchool/Violence

Children's Commission

Children's Rights

ENCLOSURES FILED OVERSIZE ATTACHMENTS

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Children's Defense Fund

- Early Childhood Development
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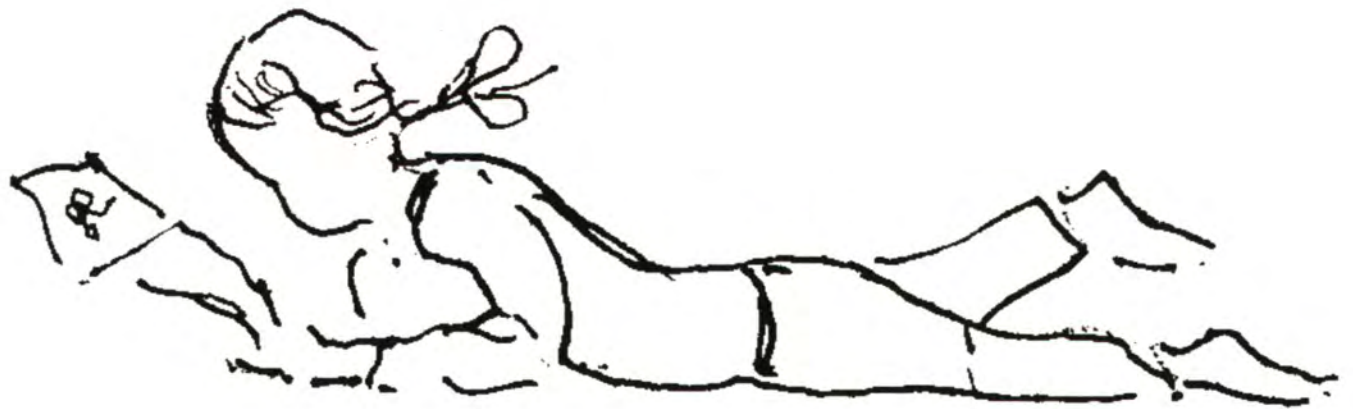
BEYOND TV

Setting goals for TV use in your home.

WINTER 1996

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 3

Spring is just around the corner. . .



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BEYOND TV

Setting goals for TV use in your home.

SEPTEMBER 1995

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 2



Make a placemat,
create a leaf collage
and laminate it

Fall. It's the Perfect Time To. . .



Make a bird feeder out
of a large soda bottle



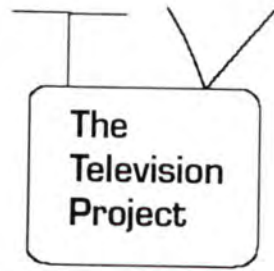
Rake the leaves into
a huge pile and
jump in it



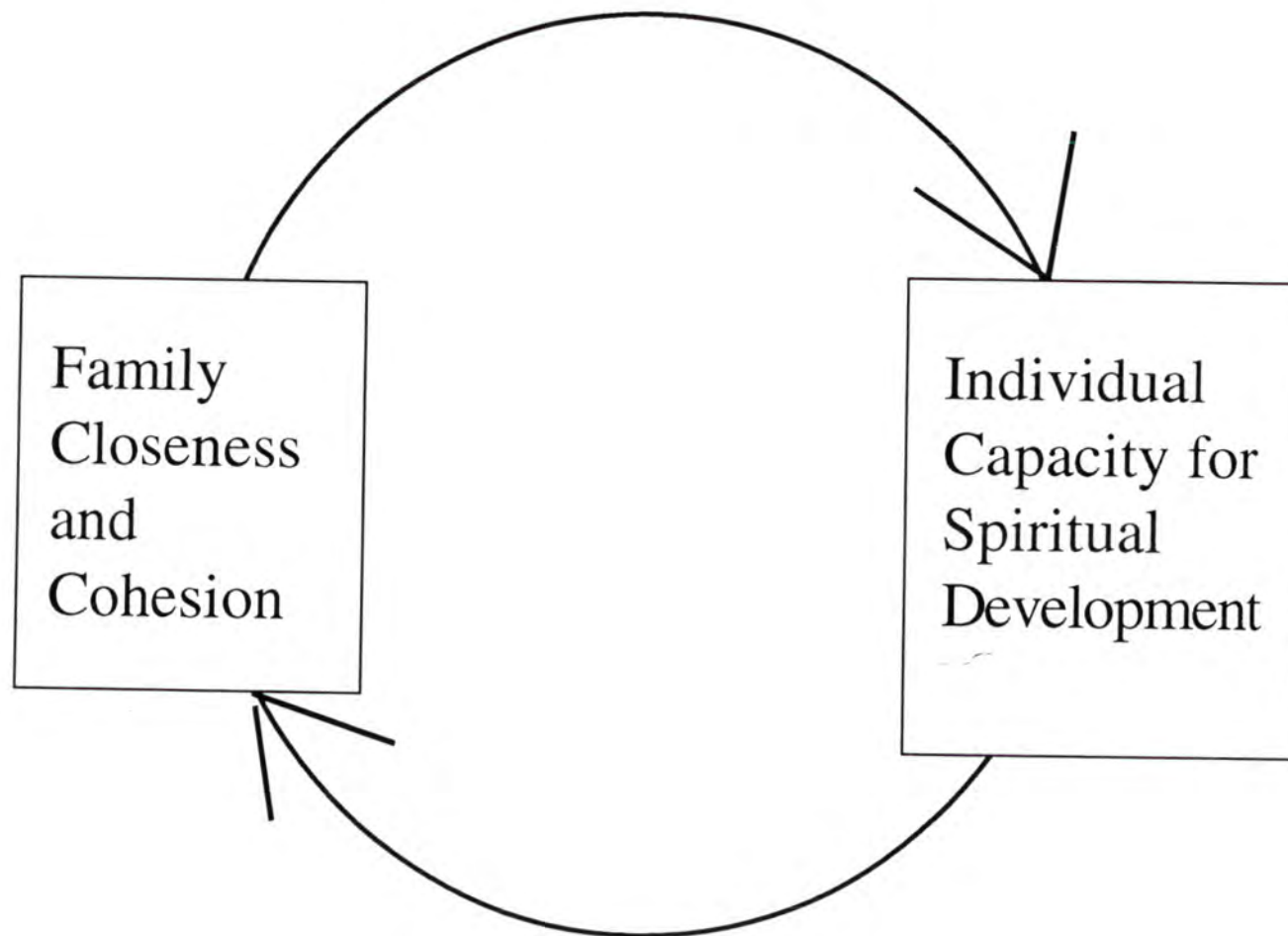
Do leaf rubbings with
crayola or chalk

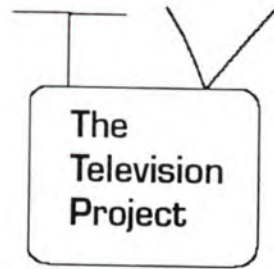


Take a walk in the neighborhood

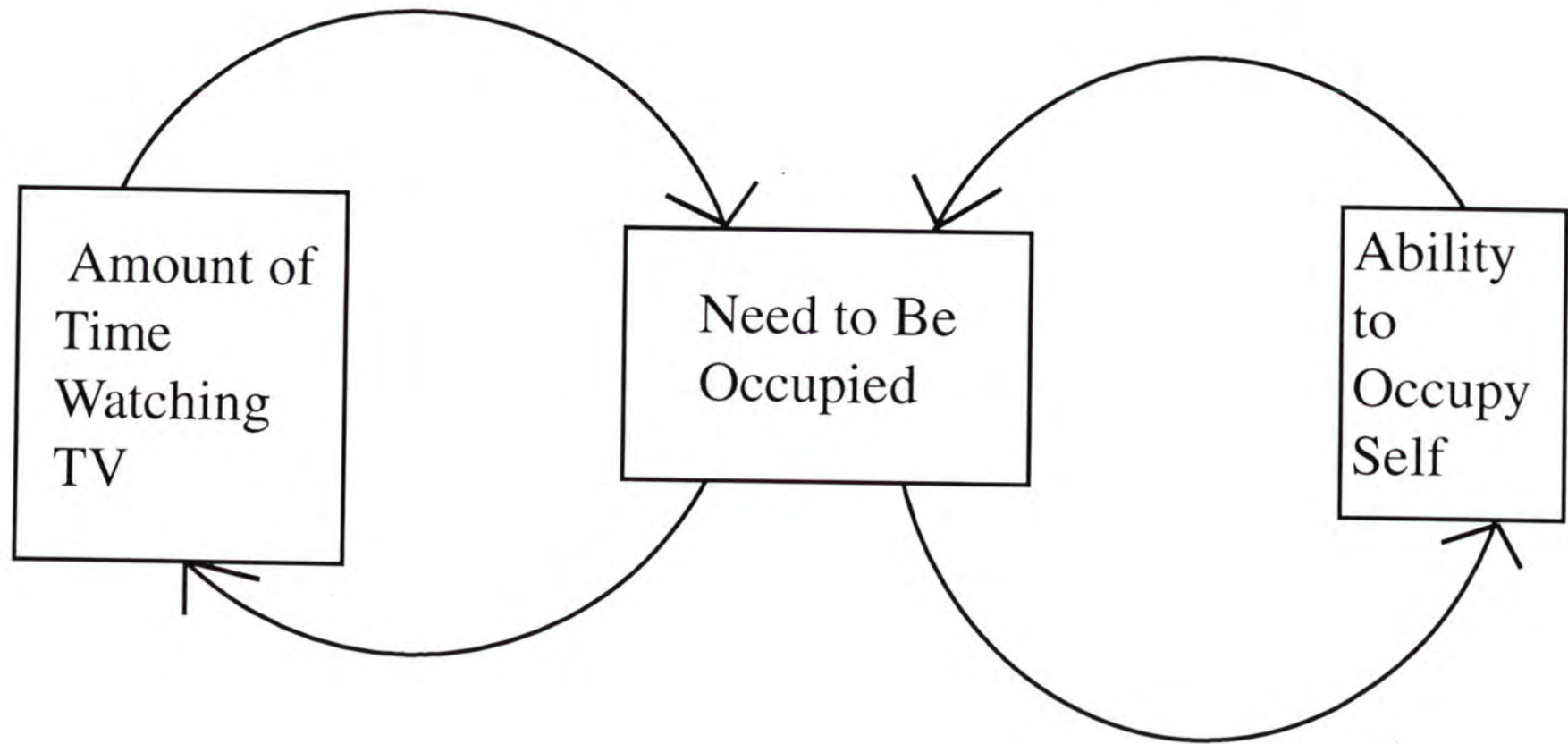


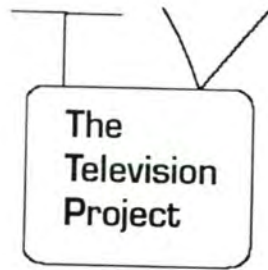
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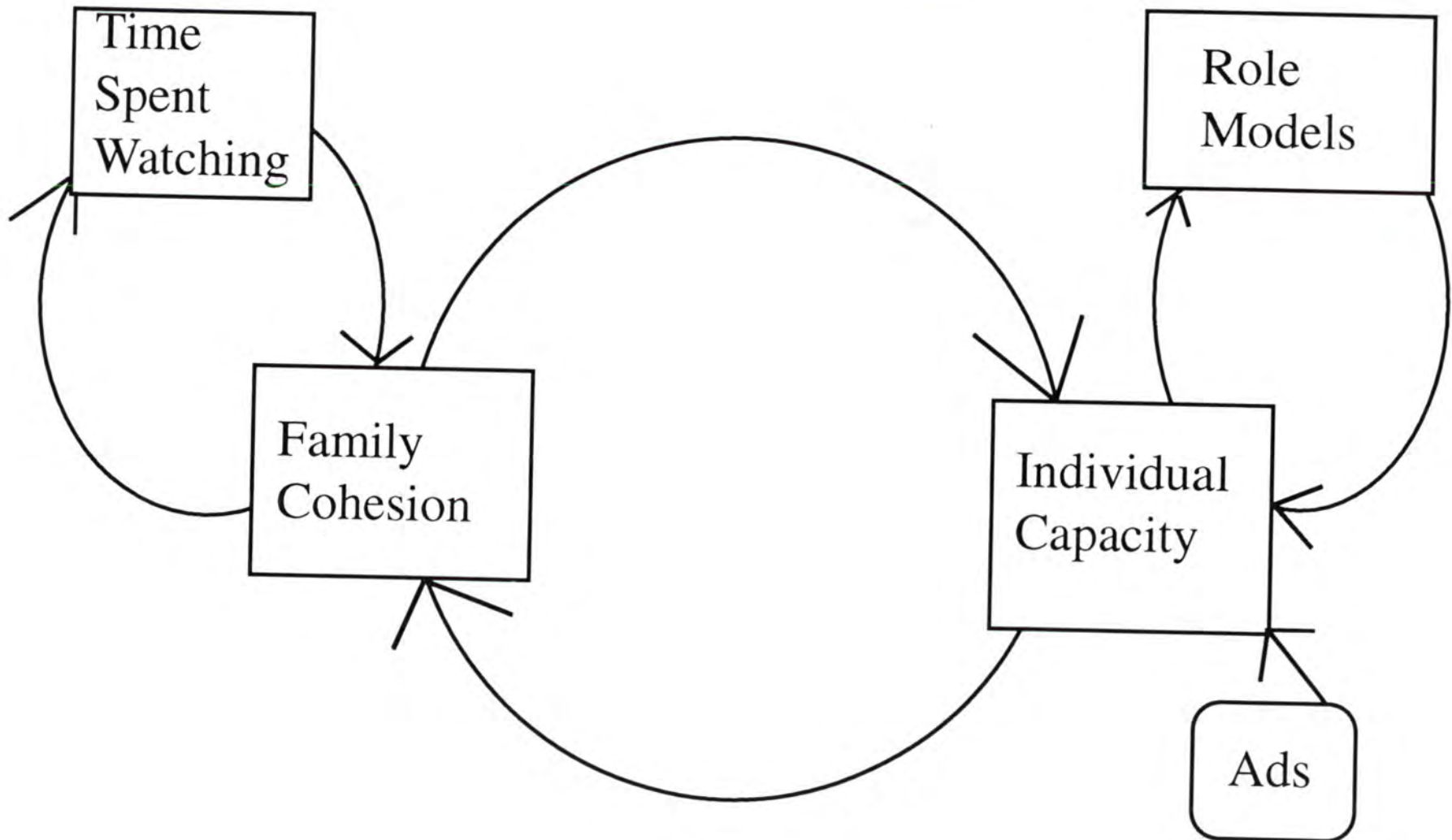


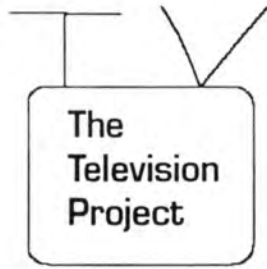
The Vicious Cycle of TV Use





Television Affects Spiritual Development





Spiritual Qualities

Vices

Indifference

Vengefulness

Selfishness

Laziness

Hatred

Alienation

Virtues

Compassion

Forgiveness

Sacrifice

Diligence

Love

Intimacy

*file Kids to
Internet web*



CENTER FOR MEDIA EDUCATION



PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION

The New York Times

NEW YORK, FRIDAY, MARCH 29, 1996

Advertisers Chase a New Target: 'Cybertots'

By LAWRIE MIFFLIN

Two fast-growing trends — advertisers' use of computer sites to target consumers, and children's use of computers — are combining to produce a new type of customer, the "cybertot," and a new concern for parents already worried about media influences on their children.

Not only are products promoted, but data are also gathered from children that let advertisers "micro-target" them, by finding out a child's favorite movie or television character, and then linking that preference to a toy, a cereal or another product.

A six-month study of web sites and on-line services directed at children was released yesterday by the Center for Media Education, a nonprofit research and lobbying group in Washington that focuses on children and the media. The study called

On-line marketing of products to children using computers.

many of the new marketing methods "manipulative, deceptive and exploitive," and called for Federal regulations on marketing to children in cyberspace similar to the rules governing advertising to children on television.

Marketing to those the advertisers call "cybertots" can take several forms. For example, a child clicking on the Kellogg's Clubhouse site on the World Wide Web can enter a "rec room" where the cartoon characters Snap, Crackle and Pop greet the user. Depending on where the child clicks, the characters offer to display a Rice Krispies Treats recipe, send the child an E-mail greeting from Snap, Crackle or Pop, or help the child send a Kellogg's greeting card to a friend through E-mail.

At other sites, a child may be invited to play a computer game, join a club or enter a contest, but to do so, the child will have to answer a series of questions — presented as a sort of

game — asking how old the child is, how old his or her siblings are, the last movie they saw, what their parents do or what toys they like.

At Pepsi's website, completing such questions enters a child in a contest to win a trip to Orlando, Fla., to meet the basketball star Shaquille O'Neal. At the Microsoft Network's "Splash Kids" play area, a portable CD player is the prize.

Among the companies whose children's web sites or on-line areas were examined in the new study are PepsiCo Inc., Nabisco Inc., Oscar Mayer, Toys "R" Us Inc., Nintendo, Sega, Time Warner Inc., The Walt Disney Company and Nickelodeon.

"I believe the on-line medium will be the dominant medium in children's lives in the 21st century, surpassing television, and I don't think people realize this," said Kathryn C. Montgomery, president of the media study group and a co-author, with Shelley Pasnik, of the report. "Parents see it as an alternative, and computers still have this 'halo effect' as something new and wonderful, something they'd rather have kids do than sit in front of the TV.

"But it's in no way safe from the kinds of advertising and marketing practices that can harm kids. Most parents can't see the possibilities; they don't even know how to log on."

Relatively few families are susceptible to the possibilities just yet; about two million children under 18 regularly use the Internet, according to Jupiter Communications, a New York media research firm that tracks computer usage. But that number is growing fast; Jupiter expects it to be 15 million by 2000.

Advertisers are already developing one-to-one marketing techniques for computer users, tailoring the pitches to the customer's preferences. The Saatchi & Saatchi advertising agency has a division called Kid Connection, which last year hired psychologists and cultural anthropologists to study families' use of computers and recommend how to tailor computer marketing to them.

Ms. Montgomery, herself the parent of a 3-year-old, acknowledged that children are exposed to plenty of

promotional pitches and tie-ins already, on television, in the movies and at fast-food restaurants. The dangerous difference, in her view, is the interactive nature of computers.

"If parents could realize, though, this is not a character on TV talking to all kids, but it's a character interacting with my child, using her own name. It's my child getting unsolicited E-mail from 'spokescharacters,' which is to say, from advertisers."

Ms. Montgomery said her group's goal was not to ban advertising from cyberspace, but to see it regulated.

Since 1972, the Federal Communications Commission has required television stations to use "bumpers," five-second segments separating a program from a commercial (for example, "Now, a word from our sponsors"); to restrict the number of minutes of commercials in each hour of children's programs; to ban commercials during a show that feature the show's characters or hosts, and to prohibit promotion of products as part of a program's content.

Jeffrey Chester, executive director of the media study group, was reminded of Soupy Sales, the host of a children's show in the early years of television, who once told his young viewers to find Mommy or Daddy's wallet, take out some of the crisp green pieces of paper, and mail them to him at the address he showed on the television screen.

"Imagine thousands of virtual Soupy Saleses in cyberspace, ordering kids to buy this or that," Mr. Chester said. "Commercial forces are just beginning to figure this out, and that's why we're sounding the alarm now."

CIRCULATION:
58,498 DAILY 1,457,583 SUNDAY

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TIMES MIRROR COMPANY

AN EDITION OF THE LOS

By DENISE GELLENE
TIMES STAFF WRITER

The nation's children are being subjected to manipulative advertising on the Internet, with companies using questionable tactics to amass information about their tastes and preferences, a watchdog group and the national PTA charged Thursday in calling for the government to control such practices.

The Center for Media Education said businesses, including Kellogg, Nabisco and Frito Lay, have designed areas on the Internet's World Wide Web with strong kid-appeal that are little more than advertisements.

In some cases, the center said, children as young as 4 are asked to provide detailed information about themselves before they can enter a Web site—places where companies or individuals post information on the Internet, often using games and other forms of entertainment to attract traffic.

"Marketers are pursuing children with a no-holds-barred approach," center president Kathryn Montgomery said at a press conference in Washington. "Never before has there been a medium with this kind of power to invade the privacy of children and families."

She said that many of the marketing tactics used on the Internet are not allowed on TV.

The call for controls comes amid a heated national debate over whether and how to regulate the burgeoning Internet. But until now, the fight has centered mainly on fears about criminal activity and online pornography. A telecommunications reform bill approved last month imposed a broad ban on "indecent" communications over the Internet in the name of protecting children from

Internet Marketing to Children Is Seen as a Web of Deceit

■ **Technology:** Groups seek controls, call firms' tactics an invasion of privacy. Advertisers deny manipulation.

pornography, but civil libertarians and many Internet backers are fighting the law as an unconstitutional infringement of free speech.

Consumer products companies, whose Internet activities thus far have largely escaped scrutiny, vehemently denied Thursday that they are manipulating children and said that any personal information collected was closely guarded. They accused the center of scaring parents with Big Brother imagery.

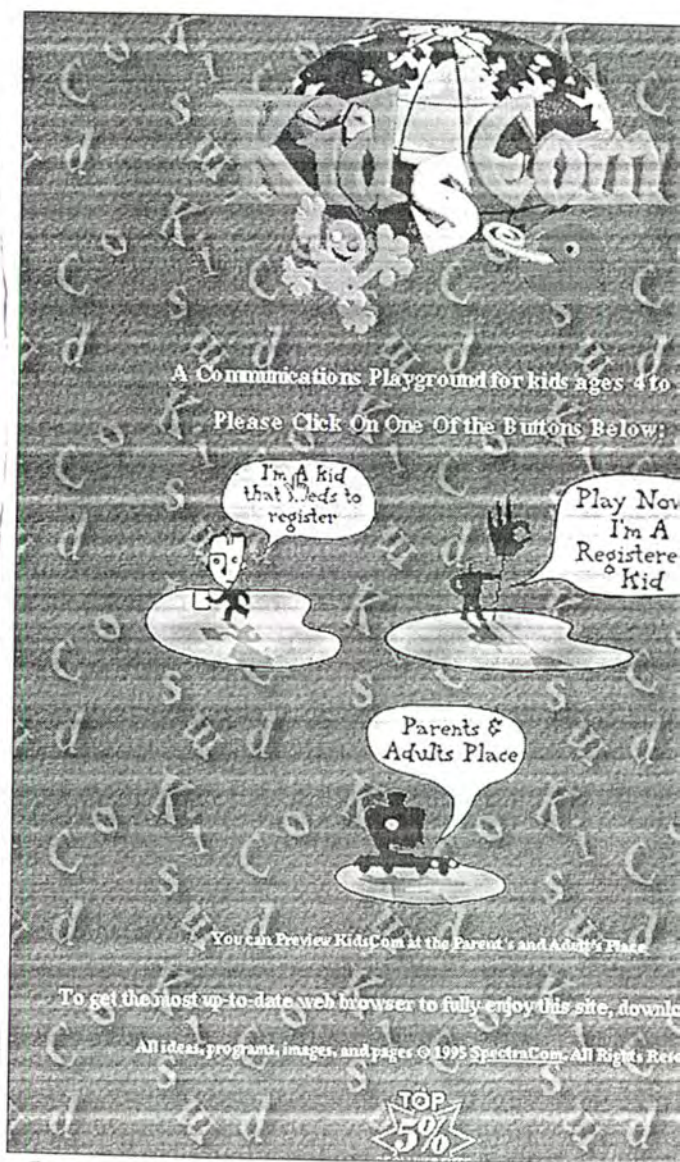
"We are very disturbed and dumbfounded by this attack, and we reject it as unfounded," said Nabisco spokesman John Barrows, asserting that most of the

'It is much easier for children to give a lot of information not just about themselves but about their home and family, and this goes to privacy and safety issues.'

ELIZABETH LASCOUTX
Better Business Bureau

visitors to the company's Web site are adults. "I think they are preying on the fears of people who lack knowledge of the Internet."

The center, along with the National Parent-Teacher Assn.



KidsCom Web site asks children for information about their

(FRONT PAGE)

and other advocacy groups, formally asked the Federal Trade Commission to regulate electronic advertising aimed at kids. The commission polices false or deceptive advertising claims but has no specific rules for Internet advertising.

"We take all allegations about deceptive marketing practices toward children seriously," said Lee Peeler, the FTC's assistant director for advertising practices.

"The thing that leaps out at you is the whole question of people collecting identifiable information from children without any intervention from the parents."

While advertising to children on television and in magazines is closely regulated, the Internet is wide-open territory where few of the old rules apply.

On the information superhighway, "we don't have designated children's time; we don't have bumpers"—five second breaks—"between shows and commercials.

It is more seamlessly interwoven," said Elizabeth Lascoutx, director of the Better Business Bureau unit that regulates children's advertising.

The ability of marketers to directly survey children presents another set of issues, she said.

"It is much easier for children to give a lot of information not just about themselves but about their home and family, and this goes to privacy and safety issues," Lascoutx said. "We are dealing with things we haven't seen before in the traditional

media."

Lascoutx said her organization is developing guidelines for electronic advertising.

Estimates on how many children use the Internet run as high as 1 million. Advertisers view the interactive medium as a unique way to build loyal customers. Speaking at an industry conference last October, an executive from Saatchi & Saatchi Advertising declared that "there's probably no other product or service we can think of that is like it in capturing kids' interest."

Advertisers disagree over how far they can go to reach children on the electronic superhighway. When conducting online surveys, Saatchi & Saatchi first obtains parental permission. Not all marketers do.

A Web site singled out by the center was developed by the marketing research company SpectraCom. To enter the Web site, children must first provide information about themselves, including name, sex, age, e-mail address, favorite TV show and musical group. In return for completing the survey, children receive "kids cash," a form of virtual money they can turn in for toys, games and other prizes. After entering the site, children can receive more "kids cash" for filling out other surveys.

Jori Clarke, SpectraCom president, said the information is needed to match children with electronic pen pals, one of the Web site's features. She said that while her company conducts research for such companies as Nabisco and Atari, the identities of the 25,000 children registered at the site are protected and the list is not sold.

"The whole focus of the site is educational," Clarke said, noting that it includes writing contests and geography games.

"The ultimate purpose for that site is marketing and research,"

said Shelly Pasnik, a researcher for the Center for Media Education. "Their purpose is to gather information as a marketing tool."

The center and the other advocacy groups are asking the commission for a ban on marketing surveys directed at children, a clear separation between advertising and content, and a prohibition on interaction with product spokescharacters, like Frito Lay's Chester Cheetah and Kellogg's Tony the Tiger.

A Kellogg representative said that its Web page is "consistent with existing children's advertising guidelines."

A Frito Lay representative could not be reached.

In calling for government action, the center noted that technology is not available for parents to block many advertising messages. They noted that it is difficult, if not impossible, for parents to monitor every move a child makes on the Web.



USA TODAY • FRIDAY, MARCH 29, 1996

Kids snared in Web of ads, group says

By Leslie Miller
USA TODAY

WASHINGTON — New cyberspace marketing techniques can “manipulate children and rob them of their privacy,” says a report released Thursday.

“This is an early warning to anybody who cares about kids,” says Kathryn Montgomery of the non-profit Center for Media Education, which spent six months studying “microtargeting” of kids on line and is calling for government limits. Key concerns:

► **Invasion of privacy.** Companies offer prizes for personal information (e-mail addresses, birth-

days) to be used for direct marketing; some electronically track on-line use to develop consumer profiles of individual kids.

► **Deceptive ads.** Laws limit TV commercials and separate them from programming. But on line, the two can be “seamlessly interwoven” into electronic playgrounds where kids interact with product “spokescharacters.”

“Children are gullible and advertising targeted at them can be very powerful,” says Marilyn Benoit of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, which endorses the report.

The report cites such companies as Frito Lay, Kellogg’s and Na-

bisco, but “we don’t all do the same things,” says Nabisco’s John R. Barrows, who says Nabisco doesn’t track kids. “They make it sound like an insidious invasion (but on line) you have to come to us.”

“I agree in theory . . . but who do they think is going to pay for these wonderful sites for children?” says Jori Clarke of SpectraCom, criticized in the report. SpectraCom sells market research from its KidsCom site, but “never gives personal information to companies.”

Clarke says the site has won awards for its educational content. Registration isn’t to track kids but to discourage anonymous adults and “make it a secure place.”



Nabisco site: Invites Internet visitors to ‘play for hours’

Internet marketing said to exploit young loyalties

By JEANNINE AVERSA
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — A group that wants television and other media to be more educational asked the government yesterday to protect children from what it considers exploitative marketing on the Internet.

The Center for Media Education said a number of businesses, late children's advertising safeguards in traditional media, including television," asserted Kathryn Montgomery, president of the center, in an interview. "Parents need to be wary of what is being created to target their children."

The nonprofit research center is funded with foundation grants. Most funding for its web-site project came from the Carnegie Corporation in New York.

The FTC does not regulate advertising for children over the Internet and other on-line services, said FTC spokeswoman Bonnie Jansen.

But she said the agency's jurisdiction over deceptive market practices does extend to the international computer network.

The Center for Media Education said some web sites invade children's privacy by requesting personal information through promises of prizes or other means.

Others exploit them by weaving products and opportunities to buy into such on-line activities as sending e-mail or playing games.

Taking a page from Federal Communications Commission regulations regarding TV advertising aimed at children, the center recommended labeling ads and promotions and separating them from editorial content.

It also proposed that product characters like Tony the Tiger and Snap! Crackle! Pop! not be allowed to communicate with children over computer networks and that personal information should not be collected from children.

None of the web sites mentioned in the center's report makes a direct sales pitch or urges children to ask their parents for a

including Kellogg's Co., Frito Lay Inc. and SpectraCom Inc., have designed web sites — places on the Internet where companies or individuals can be reached — "to capture the loyalty and spending power" of children.

Kellogg's, Frito Lay and SpectraCom, which runs KidsCom web site, insisted their sites don't exploit children.

"It is not a soft sell," said Frito Lay spokesman Tod MacKenzie. "It is almost a no sell."

Many of the web sites are advertisements in disguise that unfairly target children, the Center for Media Education said.

It asked the Federal Trade Commission to investigate and set guidelines to protect children.

"Marketers are pursuing children with a no-holds-barred approach, many of which would violate particular product or service. But many offer opportunities to make credit card purchases.

One on-line activity on Frito Lay's web site asks visitors to describe their dream date and choose which of the company's snacks their virtual date would prefer. Upon choosing, the virtual date is pictured holding the snack.

On the Kellogg's web site, the Rice Krispies cereal characters Snap! Crackle! Pop! invite on-line visitors to come into their clubhouse, but only after typing their e-mail addresses. Once inside, a visitor can send a friend an e-mail card and select a Kellogg's cereal character to appear on it.

Kellogg's spokeswoman Karen Kafer said most of the company's web-site browsers are adults. "Many people think Tony the Tiger and Frosted Flakes are kids-oriented. But 50 percent who eat Frosted Flakes are adults, and they want to go visit Tony the Tiger on the Internet, too," she said.

She said the site was developed using Better Business Bureau guidelines on children's advertising.

Baltimore Sun

Friday, March 29, 1996

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

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★ ★ ★ EASTERN EDITION

FRIDAY, MARCH 29, 1996

WHITE OAK, MARYLAND

On-Line Marketing Aimed at Children Needs Federal Regulation, Groups Say

By ALBERT R. KARR

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

WASHINGTON — Children's advocacy groups called on the federal government to regulate the growing volume of cyberspace marketing aimed at children.

The Center for Media Education, a public-interest organization that is leading the fight, released a report yesterday targeting 32 snack-food, toy, entertainment and on-line computer service companies that sell products or services for children. The report contends that the companies are using the Internet's World Wide Web and other interactive computer sites to communicate with unsuspecting youngsters, some as young as four years old; the companies are also obtaining personal information about the children and making aggressive pitches for their products.

The Center was joined by six other groups, including the National Parent Teacher Association, the Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and the Electronic Privacy Information Center. The groups want federal regulatory and possibly legislative action that would nip in the bud such marketing activities as mixing advertisements with programs delivered over on-line services. Their warning is one of a growing number of calls for regulation of the Internet and other on-line services.

Report Criticizes Ad Integration

The report targets, among others, the Binney & Smith unit of Hallmark Cards Inc. and its Crayola marketing, PepsiCo Inc.'s Frito-Lay subsidiary, RJR Nabisco Holdings Corp.'s Nabisco Foods Group and SpectraCom Inc., Web-site publishers and researchers. It complains that advertisements and programming content are seamlessly integrated, so that children make no distinction between the programs and product pitches, the report says. By contrast, the study notes, the Federal Communications Commission has for 20 years required television programming to be separate from commercials, particularly during children's viewing hours.

Frito-Lay offers entertaining Web-sites, including one where children are

asked to design their dream date, including which Frito-Lay snack they prefer. The Crayola site gives kids information about the company's colorful crayons, offers "great prizes," but emphasizes selling Crayola products, the report says.

The companies disputed the report, saying they aren't pushing products on gullible children. Frito-Lay said its site is for fun, not for selling snacks. A Binney & Smith spokesman called the Crayola site a "consumer resource," not an ad vehicle. Nabisco said it isn't engaged in any "deception" because the company doesn't advertise its site and most of the products are for the adult market. And SpectraCom President Jori Clark said that marketing data garnered from the company's "electronic playground" are provided to clients, but children's names aren't.

Compiling Data on Children

The group analyzed Web sites, surveyed on-line marketing discussions in trade publications and interviewed advertising experts. "Using sophisticated techniques and tactics, marketers are creating unprecedented opportunities to manipulate children and rob them of their privacy," the center asserted. The companies, it said, are regularly compiling detailed information on children's personal preferences and habits, often inducing them to divulge the information with offers of club memberships, "free gifts" such as T-shirts or portable compact-disk players, or in games or surveys, the report said. Unlike TV commercials, Internet messages can be tailored specifically for the child, the groups said.

The groups called for some strong governmental and industry actions to set standards governing on-line marketing aimed at children. The idea isn't to ban ads for children on the Internet, but to "make it a safer place for children," said Helen Liebowitz, a director of the National PTA.

"It is much easier for adults to monitor and turn off the television than it is to monitor the vast array of offerings that children see or interact with in an on-line environment," Ms. Liebowitz said.

FTC plans to zoom in on kids online issues

Response to critical report on tactics used by marketers

By Ira Teinowitz

Federal Trade Commission staffers said they will closely study the issues raised last week in a sweeping attack by children's advocacy groups opposed to online marketing to children.

"Clearly the issue that jumped out at you was the individual data

being collected without intervention by their parents," said Lee Peeler, FTC associate director for advertising practices. "We have not looked at these particular issues ourselves."

WIDENING ONLINE CONCERN

FTC involvement in the issue of online marketing to kids would extend existing FTC concern with online marketing practices to a new area, and would be a coup for the Center for Media Education, the public interest group at the center of this emerging issue.

The center last week issued a report entitled "Web of Deception," in cooperation with the Na-

tional PTA and several other groups.

It targeted specific marketers by name and called for strict FTC rules that would virtually eliminate the sites for children presently offered by marketers and some media companies.

Among the restrictions sought: prohibit marketers from obtaining any personal information, including the age and e-mail address of children; force the clear labeling of advertising and promotion and its clear separation from other content; ban product mascots as spokespersons for Web sites; bar hypertext links jumping from content areas to advertising; and

ban any microtargeting of children and direct-response marketing based on Web site-gathered data.

WHAT MARKETERS SEEK

The report cited examples of marketers seeking household information from kids; sending direct mail; offering prizes; using advertising characters to reach children; and of mixing advertising and non-advertising content in a variety of Web sites.

Among sites cited were some from Kellogg Co., PepsiCo, Frito-Lay, Microsoft Corp., Nabisco Foods Group, Sargento's Mootown Snackers, Walt Disney Co., Warner Bros. and Nickelodeon.

A spokeswoman for Kellogg said the company followed the Better Business Bureau's guidelines for children's TV advertising in the development of its Internet site.

A Frito-Lay spokesman said its Web site material "is not soft sell, it's no-sell. It's humor-based and grounded in fun." □



C E N T E R F O R M E D I A E D U C A T I O N

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 28, 1996

CONTACT: Jeff Chester
202-628-2620

NEW REPORT DOCUMENTS THREATS TO CHILDREN IN CYBERSPACE
FROM ONSLAUGHT OF INTERACTIVE MARKETING PRACTICES

INVASION OF PRIVACY AND MANIPULATIVE ADVERTISING
FOUND IN ONLINE SERVICES TARGETING "DIGITAL KIDS"
National PTA, Consumer Federation of America, and Other Groups Ask
for New Safeguards to Protect Children Online

WASHINGTON, D.C. The Center for Media Education (CME) and other education, consumer, and health groups called on the Federal Trade Commission today to develop comprehensive safeguards designed to protect children from exploitive and unfair advertising and marketing practices online. A report released today by CME documents an emerging pattern of online marketing practices designed to manipulate children and invade their privacy.

"The interactive nature of the Internet has given marketers unprecedented powers to gather detailed information from children," said CME President Kathryn C. Montgomery, the report's principal co-author. "Marketers want this information to establish direct and intimate relationships with children online."

The report documents how children's privacy is routinely threatened. In order to encourage children to disclose personal information about themselves and their families, a number of Web sites promise gifts or offer an opportunity to win prizes. Tracking technologies make it possible to monitor every interaction between a child and an advertisement. The ultimate goal is to create personalized interactive ads designed to "microtarget" the individual child. "Never before has there been a medium with this kind of power to invade the privacy of children and families," Montgomery said.

In addition to threatening children's privacy, many marketing practices documented in the report unfairly manipulate and deceive children. "Some of these practices would be clear violations of existing safeguards designed to protect children in other media such as broadcast and cable TV," explained Montgomery. But because neither the proprietary online services (such as America Online) nor the World Wide Web have been subject to such rules, "online marketers are able to pursue children with no holds barred."

--1 of 3--

According to the report, national advertisers and content providers are targeting the new "digital kids" marketplace by creating sophisticated interactive electronic environments designed to capture a child's attention. Advertisers have hired teams of cultural anthropologists, psychologists, and other researchers in order to study how children's developmental needs can be exploited online.

Advertising and content are often seamlessly interwoven in new online "infomercials" for children. Entire electronic advertising "environments" have been built to entice children to spend countless hours playing with such popular product "spokescharacters" as Tony the Tiger, Chester Cheetah, and Snap! Crackle! and Pop! Interactive forms of product placement are being developed to encourage children to click on icons in their favorite games and play areas and immediately be transported to advertising sites.

"Though still in its early stages of development," explained Montgomery, "the online medium is already becoming a powerful force in children's lives. As it matures, it is likely to be even more powerful than any other medium in existence. When full motion video becomes increasingly prevalent, the online world will be particularly captivating for children, who will be easily drawn to the colorful, fun-filled, virtual playrooms, where they can interact not only with other children anywhere in the world, but also with the fictional characters that will increasingly inhabit cyberspace."

"We hope this report serves as an early warning to parents, educators, and others concerned about children," Montgomery added. "Our goal is not to ban advertising and marketing to children in cyberspace. What we want are rules of the game that will place limits on manipulative and exploitive practices and ensure that children are treated fairly, truthfully, and appropriately. It is critically important to develop safeguards now, before the most egregious marketing techniques become commonplace."

CME recommends that five principles be adopted by regulators and children's content providers to ensure that children are not exploited by online advertising and marketing:

1. Personal information (including clickstream data) should not be collected from children, nor should personal profiles of children be sold to third parties.
2. Advertising and promotions targeted at children should be clearly labeled and separated from content.
3. Children's content areas should not be directly linked to advertising sites.
4. There should be no direct interaction between children and product spokescharacters.
5. There should be no online microtargeting of children, and no direct-response marketing.

"We are asking the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) to conduct a comprehensive investigation of these practices and to create a set of effective policies designed to protect children," said Jeffrey Chester, CME's Executive Director. In addition to the FTC, CME will meet with leading members of Congress, the Federal Communications Commission, and state attorneys general. The group also plans to meet with key advertising and marketing industry leaders to encourage the development of industry-wide policies designed to protect children. But, explained Chester, "we believe that regulatory intervention will be necessary to ensure that truly effective safeguards are put in place."

Joining CME today are the Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, the American Psychological Association, the Center for Science in Public Interest, Consumer Federation of America, the Electronic Privacy Information Center, and the National PTA.

CME is a nonprofit research and advocacy organization founded in 1991 to educate the public and policymakers about critical media policy issues. CME's *Action for Children in Cyberspace* project is designed to help ensure that children's needs are met in the new media environment.



The National PTA[®]

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NATIONAL PTA SOUNDS WAKE-UP CALL--KEEP CYBERSPACE CLEAN OF CHILDREN'S ADVERTISING

*Statement by Helen Liebowitz,
National PTA Board of Directors Member*

Washington, DC -- The National PTA, comprised of over 6.9 million members devoted to pursuing policies that improve the quality of media for children and youth, joins the Center for Media Education and others this morning in sounding the alarm--Madison Avenue is once again "giving kids the business," and this time its on the Internet and the World Wide Web. Parents and families beware!!! The wires of the next generation of telecommunications are barely warm, but the advertising targeted at children is heating up.

The report released by the Center for Media Education pertaining to on-line advertising targeted to children gives

reason for concern. Apparently it is not enough that the marketing establishment feeds children and youth a diet of product advertising in traditional media such as magazines, radio, billboard ads in sports stadiums and along the highway, and television. They now are beginning to cater a new menu of advertising in Cyberspace to children which is only a mouse-click away from the school or home computer.

Indeed, the Web IS the medium of the young. The new medium is much more powerful in attracting the attention of children and youth than any other prior electronic system. Cyberspace, thus, has great potential as an educational and entertainment tool for our children, and it also has an tremendous appeal to children in which the distinction between fact and fiction, between programming and advertising, is all but blurred.

This presents special challenges to parents and to educators who are concerned about what children see and watch. It is much easier for adults to monitor and turn off the television than it is to monitor the vast array of offerings that children see or interact with in an on-line environment. The person who has the real control of the computer is the child, and with the flick of a mouse can retrieve information, tune in to the "home page" which can present text, sound and video, and to noncommercial sites that offer tremendous amounts of education programming. But

the heavily promoted new sites on the Web today, especially those which want to attract the younger child, have commercial overtones and objectives.

Advertising directed at children assumes a variety of forms on the Web and other related services. Straightforward messages of retailers looking to expand their child customer base to the more enticing offerings of some of the media giants are obvious. The interactive environment that offers a seamless blend of fun, games, content, cartoon characters, commercials, and the offering of free gifts to children who disclose detailed personal information about their "marketing preferences". All of this is cloaked in a seductive and compelling entanglement of computer programs, chat boxes, electronic penpals and commercial playgrounds.

The National PTA, has a history of opposing commercial exploitation of children in the classroom, deceptive and unfair advertising targeted at children, program-length commercials on television, and ads that market to children hazardous products such as tobacco, alcohol, sugared cereal and unsafe toys. This is a different medium, but it has the same potential problems and objectives.....getting children to buy products. The difference is that on-line services are not subject to the same Federal Communications and Federal Trade Commission rules as television.

Before cyberspace becomes a junkyard for ads, the National PTA agrees with the Center for Media Education's recommendation that guidelines around ads targeted to children be developed. These guidelines, many of which are in agreement with the CME's proposal, should assure that:

- no deceptive or unfair ads are targeted to children.
- there is a clear separation between advertising and content on all on-line services, especially those designed for educational use in preschool, elementary and secondary schools.
- no personal data is collected from children. This is an invasion of privacy and violation of confidentiality.
- no program-length commercials or on-line services that encourage interaction with brand characters are permitted.
- programs which are educational are identified as such and contain no advertising.

As parents become aware of the content of on-line services their children watch, and the advertising targeted toward children, they will want the same opportunity to control their child's on-line use as they do television through controls using the technology such as the recently passed v-chip. The National PTA supports computer coding of

advertising which permits automatic screening by those parents who do not wish their children to have access to advertising.

Furthermore, the National PTA has been engaged in an excellent TV Critical Viewing Skills program with the National Cable Television Association. It provides skill building workshops for parents around the country to make them more adept at evaluating TV programs with their children. The National PTA would welcome the opportunity to explore a similar relationship with the major commercial Internet content providers who would provide similar funding to develop and disseminate skill-building information using on-line technology.

Let us not lose this opportunity. Before cyberspace degenerates into a commercial wasteland similar to commercial TV, or before parents demand that the government step in, let's put the children before profits and agree to guidelines and a policy framework that will head off a selling frenzy directed at children.



Consumer Federation of America

STATEMENT OF MARY ELLEN FISE
GENERAL COUNSEL
CONSUMER FEDERATION OF AMERICA

ON
PROTECTING CHILDREN ON THE INTERNET
Thursday, March 28, 1996

Consumer Federation of America (CFA) is pleased to join with the Center for Media Education and the other groups here today to call upon the Federal Trade Commission to establish guidelines for advertising and marketing to children on the Internet.

This emerging consumer issue will require increased protection by the government and increased vigilance by parents. Many of us as parents may not be able to maneuver the World Wide Web skillfully or quickly enough ourselves. But our children are fearless when sitting in front of a computer. They are drawn in by this medium and are risk takers extraordinaire.

Yet, our children are very vulnerable. They are not sophisticated consumers -- be it the computer marketplace or the traditional marketplace. They have little experience in or knowledge about how marketers operate. I recently had an experience that underscored this lack of sophistication. My ten-year old son, while examining his name on an address label on a soccer catalogue, asked, "How did they know to send this to me?" I replied that the company probably had bought his name from either his soccer league or soccer camp. He had a look of shock on his face and said "They SOLD my name!?" After learning that he wasn't going to personally profit from this sale, he then asked several more questions about how this all took place. My son fortunately asked these questions. But as a parent I had never ever thought to explain this as an essential fact of American consumer life.

As parents, we know that for our children to succeed in the world they will have to be computer literate. We applaud their computer skills and acumen and we encourage them to acquire even greater competence. I suspect many parents would be happy if their child was watching less television and using the computer to explore the Internet. With products to safeguard against their child's access to pornography, the misconception that World Wide Web is a fun and harmless place to explore is further enhanced.

Safeguards are necessary to protect against the manipulative, unfair and deceptive advertising practices highlighted in the Center's report. In addition, the concept of consumer privacy does not apply only to adult consumers. These advertising and privacy threats are not ones we can take a wait and see attitude about or study for years and years. The FTC needs to address this issue today to stay ahead of the exploding popularity of this medium. CFA applauds the Center's efforts to highlight these abuses and we look forward to working with the Center, the FTC and others to sensibly protect our children as they explore this new technology.



AMERICAN
PSYCHOLOGICAL
ASSOCIATION

AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION URGES
FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION TO CONSIDER EFFECTS OF
INTERNET ADVERTISING ON CHILDREN

The American Psychological Association (APA), an organization of 142,000 members and affiliates, commends the Center for Media Education's efforts to urge the Federal Trade Commission to examine the issues regarding children and advertising on the internet.

Nearly four million children under the age of 18 currently have access to the internet. At the projected rates of growth, that figure will roughly quadruple by the turn of the century. It is of the utmost importance that the FTC establish a regulatory framework for internet advertising that takes into account the growing population of young web users.

Behavioral research on the effects of advertising indicate that certain marketing practices may be harmful to children. This research shows that until age seven, children can not discern the intent of persuasive advertisements. After age seven, children and adolescents are still particularly vulnerable to peer and status appeals. Lengthy exposure to advertising may result in several potentially damaging effects on children, including increased parent-child conflict, lowered self perceptions of physical attractiveness and/or lowered self esteem, and experimentation with products that may be detrimental, such as cigarettes and alcohol.

The marketing methods in place on the internet (e.g., the integration of advertising and program content, children's direct interaction with "spokescharacters", and direct marketing to children), warrant careful attention. The APA urges the Federal Trade Commission to carefully examine internet advertising directed at children. Further, we urge the FTC and related organizations to sponsor additional research in this area, particularly with regard to the effects of interactive media on children's emotional and psychosocial development.

For further information, please contact Jeff McIntyre of the American Psychological Association at 202-336-6064 or jxm.apa@email.apa.org.

Statement Concerning On-Line Advertising
American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
Marilyn B. Benoit

Prepared for Press Conference
Center For Media Education
National Press Club, Washington, D.C.
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Child and Adolescent Psychiatrists focus on the total development of children. We know that children are gullible and that advertising targeted at children can be very powerful. In the isolated world of cyberspace, where a child is interacting with a computer, a child becomes much more vulnerable to manipulation from promotional programs that promise rewards for compliance with request for information. If parental guidance is not immediately available, vulnerable children are unable to understand the consequences of choices made in response to computerized prompts which entice them to advance through the program, much like computer games with which they are familiar. Children's privacy can definitely be at risk in such a cyberspace environment. Child and Adolescent Psychiatrists are strong advocates for children's rights and protection. On line advertising, though still in its infancy, presents a threat to children's privacy and we believe that now is the time to "nip this threat in the bud". Advertisers should not be allowed to collect any personal or family data from children on line. We are all familiar with the pressure tactics of successful advertising and especially how easily seduced children are by those tactics targeted towards them. How many parents were happy to be able to put phone blocks on 1-900 numbers and to have the choice of grocery check-out in candy free lanes! Children isolated on-line are highly vulnerable to the clever manipulations of the very compelling advertising practices in cyberspace.

The American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry does not condone a "wait and see" attitude about on-line advertising targeted at children. The Academy supports the efforts of the Center for Media Education to protect children's privacy and vulnerability as regards on-line advertising.