

Kidsonscreen: submission to NZOA

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This submission is
endorsed by
Unicef NZ



“After watching all the TV shows at the Prix Jeunesse I realised that NZ television has very limited, if any TV shows that are really relatable and has good content that would interest 12–15 year olds.”

*NZ Prix Jeunesse Youth Jury
Participant*

Summary

- 1 The rights of the child should be the framework of any new policy
- 2 Diverse, quality content that is available to children in a multitude of ways is the goal.
- 3 Any strategy must be responsive to new delivery opportunities
- 4 More discussion of economic models for successful production is required
- 5 A 'home' or brand is needed so that content can be easily found
- 6 The importance of stories for fuelling children's inner worlds needs to be highlighted
- 7 Audiovisual content is essential to the development of culture and identity and children should have priority access to such content.

The NZ Children's Screen Trust is a registered charity (CC50070).

The main aim of the trust as set out in our Trust Deed is to enrich the lives of New Zealand children by promoting diverse and accessible local content on all screens.

We welcome this Discussion Paper as an important step in ensuring that the needs of children are met in a fast-changing media environment.

The ongoing discussion and forum needs to be as inclusive and wide reaching as possible (as called for in The Media Rights Declaration).

- 8 Online delivery is essential in order to provide the interactivity and creativity that kids now expect from audiovisual content.
- 9 The strategy needs to reflect the overall policy framework, ie refer to content that reflects and fosters culture and identity



I really loved how the people in [#LoveMilla] weren't like models; they looked like real people and that made them a lot more relatable.

NZ Prix Jeunesse Jury

The Content Discussion document is a well-considered overview of the current funding environment for children and the surrounding issues. We have highlighted additional points and supporting material below.

1. There is widespread agreement that the speed of change in content delivery is unprecedented and increasing

(for US commentary read <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/david-kleeman> and for UK analysis *The Children's Media Yearbook* (June 2015) Lynn Whitaker & Beth Hewill eds.)

- Platforms are becoming increasingly interconnected
- Genres are dissolving and cross fertilizing
- Content and products are merging

2. The rights of the child are central to well-focused debate over our media delivery to New Zealand children.

The foregrounding and acknowledging of these rights will help us judge the value of emerging media opportunities.

As [Dame Sylvia Cartwright](#) has observed, the discussion of rights has "...moved away from talking about what these children's rights are – that they are members of the community, where they have equal access to all opportunities, education, sport, music, whatever they need to become well-formed and useful citizens - to one factor: Can they survive? Have they got enough to eat? Have they got enough clothing? Adequate housing?"

Children's rights need to be recognised and proudly asserted in any new policy concerning children.

**Discussion point 1:
Do these key issues effectively summarise the environment as it relates to NZ On Air funding strategy? Is anything missing?**

UNCROC

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCROC), 1989 is a comprehensive formulation of children's rights that has been ratified or acceded to by every country in the world except Somalia and the United States of America. The New Zealand government ratified it in 1993.

The Convention took ten years to develop and widely diverse countries had a hand in the process. As a consequence it is robust.

Specifically, the principle of children's best interest underpins the convention and guides decisions that affect children.

The right of children to be heard on matters that affect them (Article 12) and therefore the potential for NZOA to ensure that it has processes that enable it to hear from children when making decisions.

The right of children to get and share information, as long as the information is not damaging to them or others (Article 13)

The right of the children to reliable information from the mass media – delivered in ways that children understand. Also the need for children to be protected from material that is damaging to them (Article 17)

The Articles of the Convention with direct relevance to media see p. 5

The Broadcasting Act 1989

The importance of New Zealand's children having access to diverse and accessible local content is also supported by the Broadcasting Act 1989.

36 Functions of Commission

(1) The primary functions of the Commission are—

(a) **to reflect and develop New Zealand identity and culture** by—

(i) promoting programmes about New Zealand and New Zealand interests; and

(ii) promoting Maori language and Maori culture; and

...

(c) to ensure that a **range** of broadcasts is available to provide for the interests of—

(i) women; and

(ii) **youth**; and

(iii) **children**; and

(iv) persons with disabilities; and

(v) minorities in the community including ethnic minorities;

[own emphasis]

It's hard to find a show that I enjoy that is targeted specifically for my age group and even harder to find one that is local.... a local TV show for kids our age could help them get through problems they might be having or stand up for themselves and take action rather than sitting around.

NZ Prix Jeunesse
Jury

Article 8:
States Parties undertake to respect the right of the child to preserve his or her identity, including nationality, name and family relations as recognised by law without unlawful interference.

Article 13:
The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art or through any other media of the child's choice.

Article 17:
States Parties recognise the important function performed by the mass media and shall ensure that the child has access to information and material from a diversity of national and international sources, especially those aimed at the promotion of his or her social, spiritual and moral well-being and physical and mental health. To this end, States parties shall:

- (a) Encourage the mass media to disseminate information and material of social and cultural benefit to the child and in accordance with the spirit of Article 29;
- (b) Encourage international co-operation in the production, exchange and dissemination of such information and material from a diversity of cultural, national and international sources;
- (c) Encourage the production and dissemination of children's books;
- (d) Encourage the mass media to have particular regard to

- the linguistic needs of the child who belongs to a minority group or is indigenous;
- (e) Encourage the development of appropriate guidelines for the protection of the child from information and material injurious to his or her well-being, bearing in mind the provisions of Articles 13 and 18.

Article 28:
States Parties recognise the right of the child to education, and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity, they shall, in particular:

.....
(d) Make educational and vocational information and guidance available and accessible to all children;

Article 29:
(a) The development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential;
(b) The development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations;
(c) The development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate and for civilizations different from his or her own;
(d) The preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national

and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin;
(e) The development of respect for the natural environment.

Article 30:
In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities or persons of indigenous origin exist, a child belonging to such a minority or who is indigenous shall not be denied the right, in community with other members of his or her group, to enjoy his or her own culture, to profess and practice his or her own religion, or to use his or her own language.

Article 31:
States Parties recognise the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.

States Parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity.

The Declaration of Children's Media Rights

The Declaration of Children's Media Rights proposed by the NZ Children's Screen Trust (Kidsonscreen) is based on the World Media Charter. This charter has been considered by media professionals in successive World Summits.

The Children's Television Charter was presented at the [First World Summit](#) in March 1995 and initially endorsed by signatories in 38 countries. It was revised in Munich in May 1995 and further amended at the Second World Summit. Its objectives have been included in other declarations such as the Asian Declaration on Child Rights and the Media, 1996.

The Charter has been used in a variety of ways:

- as a checklist to assess how well the needs of the child audience was addressed
- influencing programme policy and company policy development
- to evaluate television licence applications and as a guide for use in government funding decisions
- as a founding principle for legislation (Children's Television Act, Philippines)

"As a child, images and stories set in the familiar environs of the inner city where I lived were a revelation to me. They overtly illustrated that a young person of my ethnic background and my economic circumstances can succeed, can be educated, and can be loved.

Those things were not just fantasies churned out by Hollywood, but narratives born amidst the chaos of my home. Local content allows children to see themselves in the world, and nothing in all of media can be more validating and inspiring.

I would urge the Minister of Broadcasting and NZ On Air to reveal to the young people of New Zealand, the beauty and the truth of the world in which they live, but especially the possibilities they may not have begun to consider."

— Jeff Gomez, CEO, Starlight Runner Entertainment

I like to emotionally
connect with
characters I view on
screen

Prix Jeunesse Jury

3. More discussion of economic models for successful production and distribution is required

Discussion of economic models is limited to the current funding constraints – ie static funding, lack of co-investors, broadcaster reluctance to invest in children's off peak content, short funding frames and expectations of immediate ratings success and the challenge for small scale digital experiments to find the audience.

Our small market size and lack of public service provider to brand and hothouse content are facts to be confronted and addressed as we plan rich local media spaces for our stories to be told in and for children to play in.

Currently economic models for children's production and distribution include:

- The television production

market: focuses on key marketing events like MIPCOM. Small innovative players are acquired by large rights holders and distributors.

- Regulatory measures such as tax cuts, co-productions and other incentives are included in national policies to gain access to this production industry and market.
- Television distribution:
 - Advertising: ratings favour well tested imports over riskier local content. Risk taking and experiment is not fostered.
 - Subscription: dedicated 'quality' global children's pay channels have proliferated. The subscription model has a tendency to accentuate an audiovisual divide between rich and poor children (see Zanker & Lustyik)
 - YouTube and other linear services are expanding. This enables both individuals, commercial and pbs channels to offer online channels appealing to children
 - YouTube also offers its own dedicated channels but there are pitfalls eg <http://www.brandrepublic.com/article/1352948/youtube-ads-wild-west-parents>

- Emerging models: eg Wonderreal in the USA which are designed to charge those who can afford it and be free for those who cannot. Wonderreal is global in market intentions.
- Public service broadcasters have a track record of supporting innovation by enabling experimentation and hot housing. They are often mandated to work across platforms to reach audiences. This is key for enabling some of the new products to engage with their target audiences.

Television content remains dominant but faces increasing challenges from online delivery of audiovisual content, interactive services and games. Cross platform delivery is increasing but content is dominated by globally focussed licence holders.

Delivering locally inflected productions for children where children can find them is the challenge. More blue sky thinking is required.

Case Study: Building the BBC Brand

As BBC innovators put it '*The best way to predict the future is to invent it*'.

The BBC exemplifies the ability of public service providers to hot house and innovate.

The 2015 UK year book provides diverse case studies to illustrate the BBC's 'all at once' approach:

- On line and interactive presence,
- Teach apps to kids (*Escargot* escape is the fastest download app in CBBC history...made by a kid
<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=uk.co.bbc.cbbscappsolutegenius&hl=en>)
- Empower kids with tools to play with longer, thus ensuring return visits.
- Create YouTube channels and rapidly produce memes and clips for them as well as provide bespoke brand related content.
- Enhance engagement by understanding the strengths of each platform,
- Make all website responsive so that they work on all platforms, thus growing reach.
- Make things fast and releasing them early in order to innovate with the child audience...not at them
- Never neglect simple story-telling... but providing fresh content just in time. (Bays, D. & J. Hayward 'Taming the future: the BBC' in *The Children's Media Year Book 2015* The Children's Media Foundation)

They sum up their approach as allowing audiences to connect and share freely but also safely. Content is to be as diverse as possible but personalized to connect with individual passions and needs.

Key Issues

- 1 the data shows only one to two core shows are effectively being delivered for each age group
- 2 little/no drama and animation whereas children desire this kind of content
(BBC hits demonstrate a hunger for stories by younger audiences... 'Storytime' is top for under 6 downloads)
- 3 biggest child audience in early evening primetime but free-to-air children's programmes screen in off-peak
- 4 lack of archive value/short life of magazine and other event style TV
- 5 difficulty of reaching secondary audiences
- 6 lack of pathways to education audience
- 7 little standalone transmedia/online content
- 8 the difficulty of finding audiences online

4. Online

'More kids know how to upload a picture to the internet than can boil an egg' (Childwise research on UK kids media use).

The pace of change is rapid. New developments are occurring daily such as [TOCA BOCA's move into Touch TV](#)

Parents are digital natives too.

The New OFCOM Report (<http://kidscreen.com/2015/06/19/ofcom-releases-first-findings-of-its-childrens-media-lives-study/>)

The greatest challenge is anchoring/branding content/apps so that they can be found by the child audience.

5. NZ ON Air's Current Funding Activity

While some prime time mainstream television programmes attract large numbers of children and young people this should not be counted as *content specifically made for children*. Also see KEY ISSUES highlighted from the discussion paper.

6. Digital Media Funding

The recent prioritising of children's funding in Digital Media rounds shows the difficulty of having a drip-feed/one-off solution, ie two local apps created in a crowded app market. *How do kids find these? How do they stand out from international offerings? How do producers continue to market them to audiences?* However, the niche nature of Sign Language Ninja points to the possibilities of such initiatives to reach special audiences.

Agree with the issues around Digital Children's Content

- needs to be a clear strategy rather than 'testing' the market
- needs more funds to build visibility
- need a 'home' or a recognisable brand so that communities can be nurtured and content can be easily found as budgets and skills don't stretch to provide robust user acquisition for these experiences (See our Digital Home proposal)



“... [the programmes] display issues that are very relevant to teenagers such as love, self confidence, bullying and family abuse.

NZ Prix Jeunesse Jury

7. What is Missing?

- acknowledgement of the importance of **stories**, ie drama and animation
- the paucity of other genres which could have repeatable/second life – science, documentary, animation etc
- lack of news and current affairs for children. (It can work: CBBC Newsround reported on how Harry and Charlie of the 800m hits 'Charlie bit my finger' now aged 11 and 9 felt about their 'fame'....this has had 2.1m views.)
- the context of overall funding from NZOA ie what the adults get from the contestable fund and the Platinum Fund cf funding for children

We support the inclusion of the Children's Media Rights Declaration as a framework for any children's policy. Given that NZ is a signatory of UNCROC and NZOA is the only dedicated fund for children's audiovisual content children's rights should be the benchmark for content creation and delivery – especially in the absence of other measures such as quotas and dedicated channels. There should also be a pathway for children to have a voice in the process.

Discussion point 2: Is this an appropriate policy approach to frame NZ On Air's children's funding work? Why or why not?

The **Youth Media Alliance** (Canada) has also used the world summit document as a basis for their objectives

A quality screen-based production for youth:

- is designed and produced to meet the needs and expectations of the children and teens that it targets, approaching reality from their perspective;
- allows young people to be active participants and even protagonists rather than passive spectators, playing an active and interactive role.
- consciously stimulates the intellect, curiosity and creativity of children and teens, letting them experience emotions that further their development;
- respects young people's intelligence, critical capacity and ability to think by avoiding oversimplification, stereotypes and propaganda;
- considers their development needs, age group and cultural background, relying on relevant studies to do so.

To provide a window on the world, a screen-based production for youth:

- accurately portrays reality while stimulating the imagination (the real and the imaginary are the two worlds in which young people grow up);
- allows children and teens to explore the world beyond their immediate experience (their family, friends, school, street, city, society, world and universe).

Children and teens are entitled to screen-based productions that:

- have access to the same technical and financial resources as productions intended for mainstream audiences, in accordance with recognized standards;
- are aimed at the least well-represented groups, while serving the interests of various age groups.

Note that there is currently research being undertaken in the area of **Digital Rights** by the LSE

“Children’s media has a powerful role to play in how our kids become the future. Diversity and quality really matter, as does ensuring that content reflects their lives and tells their stories, if we expect them to grow up as engaged citizens”

Greg Childs,
Director, The
Children's Media
Foundation UK

Discussion point 3: Are these correct assumptions and the most important? Why or why not?

YES we agree with these assumptions.

Diversity needs to be extended to the **type of content that is delivered – ie diversity of genres not just audience**

Discussion point 4: Is this proposed strategy setting out a strong path? Why or why not?

The strategy is the start of a discussion about values and how to communicate them to children through media.

It needs to reflect the overall policy framework, ie refer to culture and identity and the rights of children to diverse content.

We would suggest a 'design-led' approach with children, young people, and parents, contributing ideas about what is important to them.



1. Overall objective is too narrow and draws on old values of "Kiwi ingenuity" see the YMA document "stimulates the intellect, curiosity and creativity ... " and the Rights of the Child to be informed and safe.
2. Content goal – please refer to the YMA document above.
"Enriching content that fuels their cultural identity and expands their imaginative horizons (both reflecting their world and expanding it)"
3. Production goal – **producers being asked to form new partnerships as the main production goal is an item for debate.** The production goal should be to create world-class diverse, local content for kids.

Adult content producers are not required to bring more money to the table. **The strategy should include pathways being created and delivered by NZOA or a Children's Specialist panel, eg into education/health/NGOs**

4. Discovery goal – children will know they can find **quality** and **relevant** NZ content **made for them** – *on the platforms they use most?* We recognise that platforms are changing all the time and therefore the strategy for discovery needs to be flexible to remain current.

The NZ Children's Screen Trust supports a combination of 2, 3 and 4.

The research into media use strongly shows that:

- children are still watching and accessing content via television
- that television is still an important platform for family viewing
- that children are accessing content online and that they have right to see their local content where they are watching.

2. Combine children's television and digital content funding to create a larger fund that looks at content delivery across platforms (including traditional broadcast)

This should be underpinned by a robust rights-based policy as outlined above, and preferably advised by an independent children's panel, such as the [**Amazon Thought Leader Board**](#).

The continuation of content on a television platform is desirable so that children have access to content where they are watching on a daily basis and can find it.

We advocate for more diverse genres that are suitable for online or secondary screens. Content being funded by NZOA should be available after a broadcast screen on another platform (and not restricted to commercial on demand services)

3. Increase children's funding by reducing funding from other genres

Attention should be given to **growing the fund for children** to effectively deliver better outcomes. (See other economic models above)

Children are currently treated as a homogenous group when it is clear

**Discussion point 5:
Which is the
strongest operational
option? Why? Are
there others? If
change is preferred,
what is the best risk
mitigator?**

It is clear that if a new policy is to be child-centred then operational changes must reflect this.

that they are comprised of different ages and stages. Adults are currently served by about 75% of the contestable fund and the Platinum Fund.

As audiovisual content is essential to the development of culture and identity children should have priority access to such content.

- Producers of adult content are in a better position to bring more funds to the table due to the primetime and commercial nature of content
- Adults are able to 'double dip' – and access diverse local content and international content when and where they like.

Possible avenues include:

- re-purposing the Platinum Fund to be for children's content (currently they access none of what was formerly charter money)
- giving children a share of drama/documentary and other genre specific funding from the contestable fund. This funding has now been broadened to funding of current affairs for adults. If so we wish to see current affairs for children too.
- creating a children's fund that is from new funding (see Junior Platinum Fund document)
- create a new category of 'family' which specifically funds content for family viewing suitable for the needs of children.

4. Look ahead

Online is essential to provide the interactivity and creativity that kids now expect from audiovisual content.

Well branded, diverse and accessible content that is available to children in a multitude of ways is the goal.

In the absence of an existing NZ children's channel steps should be taken to develop a platform for online content. **(See Digital Home Proposal.)** In a complex, fragmenting ecosystem, it is essential to provide a 'home' where Kiwi content can be accessed by children and that makes NZ content recognisable and loved – such as PBS kids.

Creation of a brand or Digital Home for content (see attached document)

Creation of a special fund for children's content (see attached document)

**Discussion point 6:
Are there any other
important matters
raised in or omitted
from this paper that
need to be
considered?**

Prepared by the

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