



Parents Television Council

2020 Annual Report

PO Box 4210
Burbank, CA 91503-4210
(213) 403-1300
info@ParentsTV.org
www.ParentsTV.org

Because Our Children Are Watching ®

A Nightmarish Year Yields an Unprecedented Opportunity to Protect Children from Harmful Media



A Letter from Tim Winter, President

Dear Friends:

For 25 years, the Parents Television Council (PTC) has been dedicated to protecting children from the scientifically proven harm that comes from exposure to graphic sex, violence and profanity in entertainment media. Throughout this quarter century, there was never a time when this mission was more relevant – and indeed more urgent – than in 2020.

When the coronavirus pandemic struck the United States, the “stay-at-home” lockdown orders suddenly transformed daily life. Millions of parents had to adapt to working from home. Schools across the country closed, and children were forced to spend entire days indoors, in front of computer screens to continue their education via the internet.

Many working parents were overwhelmed as they juggled their jobs and tried to manage their children’s online activities. With children separated from their classmates and friends, they spent far more hours with electronic media and became more reliant on computers, tablets and smartphones for their education and entertainment. They are at greater risk than ever of being exposed to explicit and age-inappropriate programming that Hollywood markets to children and teens.

These are truly vexing times for families. COVID-19 has resulted in tragic loss of life and immeasurable suffering. **The pandemic also has changed media consumption habits and accelerated the ongoing shift from traditional television to streaming video platforms like Netflix, Hulu, Amazon Prime Video and many others.** Parents now face the daunting task of overseeing the enormous streaming media content available on wireless, mobile devices that children literally hold in their hands. According to The Nielsen Corporation, 2020 was truly a transitional year for streaming video and the media landscape has been permanently altered. We expect children’s increased usage of electronic media – especially streaming video – to grow in 2021.

Thanks to our generous supporters, the Parents Television Council has successfully expanded its mission to monitor content on the most popular streaming video services. We are identifying and fighting against the latest threats to the emotional and physical well-being of children and teens. We are proud to share just a few highlights from our work in 2020. ***Because Our Children Are Watching.***

Tim

“2020 has been branded with an assortment of labels and titles, but from a media perspective, it was truly a transitional year for streaming video...the aftermath reflects a permanently altered media landscape, with streaming video accounting for a larger share of overall media consumption than in previous years.”

The Nielsen Corporation, 1-21-21

Our Mission and Vision

The Parents Television Council began in 1995 as a Hollywood project of the Virginia-based Media Research Center (MRC). In 1998, the MRC, with the help of legendary entertainer Steve Allen, led a national campaign calling for the entertainment industry to clean up sex and violence portrayed on primetime television. This campaign was launched under MRC's new initiative "The Parents Television Council" (PTC) and attracted more than 600,000 members and supporters.

In August 2000, the PTC began operating independently as a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit research and education organization. Now in its 25th year of service to families across the nation, nearly 1.5 million Americans have joined with the PTC to protect children from an increasingly toxic entertainment media. The PTC maintains headquarters in Burbank, California and a Public Policy office in Fairfax, Virginia.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Parents Television Council is to protect children from the proven harm that comes from their exposure to graphic sex, violence and profanity in entertainment media.

Vision Statement

The vision of the Parents Television Council is to provide a safe and sound entertainment media environment for children and families across America.

Board of Directors

[Don Noblitt, Board Chairman](#)

[Linsly Donnelly, Board Secretary](#)

[Timothy Stabosz, Board Treasurer](#)

[Bill Abbott](#)

[Sam Sorbo](#)

Corporate Officers

[Timothy F. Winter \(President\)](#)

[Bradley Tweten \(Chief Financial Officer\)](#)

2020 Program Highlights

PTC Supports Parents during Quarantine

When schools closed their doors due to the pandemic, and children were forced to stay home, the PTC heard a desperate cry from parents who were searching for safe and reliable entertainment options. The PTC produced and distributed weekly emails and blog posts to tens of thousands of families, providing them with [essential resources](#) for [trustworthy entertainment](#).

We also spoke directly with producers and distributors of family entertainment and shared their thoughts directly with the public, including the Chief Executive Officers of [UP-TV](#), [INSP-TV](#) and [BYU-TV](#).

PTC Study Finds Netflix Rates Sexually Explicit Content and Profanity Suitable for Teens

Already the nation's most popular streaming service, Netflix added 15.8 million subscribers in the first quarter of 2020, and streaming video became an essential part of daily life for families as they sheltered in place, worked from home and practiced social distancing. In these challenging times, the Parents Television Council faced the urgency to provide resources to educate parents of the actual content of streaming video programs rated appropriate for teenagers and younger viewers.

The PTC produced the report [“Teen-Targeted Broadcast TV Can Be Vulgar...But Stranger Things Are Happening on Netflix”](#), a comprehensive examination of the age-based rating for all Netflix programming listed in a “Teen” category or with a “Teen” designation as of April 6, 2020. This study found that Netflix is marketing adult content to teens:

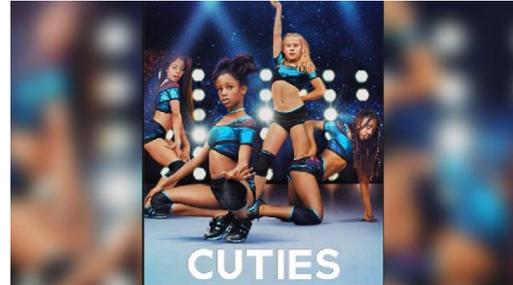
- Nearly half of all programming (104 titles or 40.8 percent) designated as “Teen” by Netflix was rated either TV-MA (for mature audiences) or R (23 titles, or 9.0 percent).
- Every program Netflix rated TV-14 (suitable for 14-year-old children) included harsh profanity, and of the 11 Netflix original titles rated TV-14, every program contained multiple uses of the word “s*it”.
- The teen science fiction series *Stranger Things* used “s*it” 257 times over three seasons, an average of 10 instances per episode.
- All but two of Netflix's TV-14-rated original programs included the word “f*ck” and the teen movie *Rim of the World* used “f*ck” five times in 98 minutes.

These findings demonstrate that explicit profanity is nearly ubiquitous on Netflix's teen programming, and there is a large discrepancy between content that Netflix believes is appropriate for children and material the typical parent may consider suitable. The study was featured in [The Federalist](#), [Washington Examiner](#) and [The Christian Post](#).

PTC Advocacy Leads to Criminal Indictment of Netflix for Lewd Depictions of Children

PTC's examination of streaming entertainment programs revealed grotesque evidence that several streaming programs on Netflix are graphically sexualizing children for the sake of entertainment.

The French film *Cuties*, depicts an 11-year-old girl taking photos of her genitals and posting the pictures online, and removing her jacket and pants in an attempt to seduce a grown man who is a family member. In the film *Desire*, a 9-year-old girl brings herself to orgasm by writhing back and forth on a pillow; the series *Sex Education* depicts high school-aged children engaged in graphic sex and using language normally heard only in X-rated movies; and the animated series *Big Mouth* includes a 13-year-old girl who talks to her vagina.



The PTC built a powerful case against Netflix and *Cuties* based upon compelling evidence, and with the help of our grassroots activists across the nation, these efforts resulted in a great achievement. Federal lawmakers including Senators Ted Cruz, Josh Hawley, Kelly Loeffler, Tom Cotton and Mike Lee publicly called for an investigation into Netflix to determine if Netflix violated federal laws against child pornography. **In October, a Texas grand jury levied a criminal indictment against Netflix for “promotion of lewd visual material depicting a child.”**

PTC Launches Campaign against AT&T Subsidiaries for Teen-Themed Pornography

Netflix's decision to distribute *Cuties* is a very disturbing reflection of the growing and dangerous tendency toward sexualizing children in the entertainment media. In 2020, the PTC found that AT&T, through its subsidiaries HBO and DirecTV, also is recklessly pushing dangerous, pornographic images that exploit children.

PTC research revealed HBO's teen-targeted series *Euphoria*, which stars a young Disney actress, celebrates full-frontal teen nudity, teen opioid abuse, children performing sexual favors on adults in exchange for drugs, and depicts the brutal rape of a transgender teen by an adult. AT&T also owns DirecTV, one of the largest satellite TV providers in the nation. DirecTV offers subscribers several pornographic channels, and much of the content depicts young adult actors portraying children in their sexual activity. These movie titles and their descriptions are marketed in a way that is attractive to – and within easy reach – of children and teens. As vile as this content is, there is good news: the PTC has heard from the Office of the Chairman and CEO of AT&T and confirmed the company is considering a number of our recommendations.



PTC Wages a Massive Advertiser Accountability Campaign

In addition to the groundbreaking investigation of streaming video content marketed to children and teens, the PTC continues to monitor broadcast and basic cable television programs. PTC research found Viacom's series *Awkwafina is Nora from Queens* features a popular young actress who spends her day masturbating with a sex toy; discussing her father's "dick pics" on the internet; using illegal narcotics; discussing "anal bleaching"; and unleashing a tsunami of the harshest profanity. Viacom rated episodes of this program TV-14, suggesting to parents that the content is appropriate for middle-schoolers. Despite the PTC's direct personal pleas with an Executive Vice President at Viacom to change the program's content rating to TV-MA (Mature Audiences Only), we were told the network is "proud" of *Awkwafina* and feels the age rating is correct.

Not only did original episodes of *Awkwafina* air each week, but each episode re-aired throughout the day and across several of Viacom's cable network properties, including child-targeted Nickelodeon. The PTC launched one of our broadest advertiser accountability campaigns in recent memory, contacting over 100 advertisers which sponsor *Awkwafina*. By the end of the program's premier season, more than 80 percent of these sponsors subsequently left the show. If Viacom executives want to renew this program which they are so proud of, they must do so at a financial loss going forward.



PTC Calls Out Famed Toymaker for Role in Child Sexual Exploitation

In opposition to arguably the most damning evidence of the entertainment industry's obsession to groom children for sexual exploitation, the PTC engaged in a campaign against American toymaker Hasbro. Partnering with DreamWorks Animation, Hasbro produced "The Trolls World Tour Giggle and Sing Poppy" doll based on the *Trolls* children's movie franchise. This innocent-looking toy was marketed to 4-year-old children, but included a hidden button under the skirt in the doll's genital area that when pressed made the doll giggle and exclaim "wee!" and "oh!"

The PTC held Hasbro publicly accountable for this disgusting product. Faced with hundreds of thousands of complaints about child abuse, Hasbro removed the doll from store shelves, and company executives acknowledged the product was a mistake.



PTC Recognizes Best and Worst TV Advertisers of Past 25 Years

Every year, the PTC releases its annual Best and Worst TV Advertisers List, which applauds companies that consistently sponsor family-friendly TV programming and criticizes corporations that underwrite shows containing sex, violence and profanity. Because many consumers choose to support brands that are committed to family values, the PTC encourages families across the nation to purchase goods and services from companies on our Best list, and avoid products offered by companies on our Worst list.

To commemorate the PTC's 25th year of advocacy, in 2020 we announced the winners of our Best and Worst Advertisers of the past 25 years.

BEST	WORST
(1) Walmart	(1) Target
(2) Coca-Cola (other brands include Dasani, Smart Water, Simply Orange, Minute Maid)	(2) Yum! (parent company of Pizza Hut, KFC and Taco Bell)
(3) Procter & Gamble (parent company of Always, Bounty, Charmin, Crest, Dawn, Downey, Febreze, Gain, Gillette, Head & Shoulders, Olay, Oral B, Pampers, Luvs, Pantene, Tide, Vicks)	(3) Unilever (parent company of Axe, Dove, Hellman's, Knorr, Lipton, Lux, Degree, Sunsilk, Surf)
(4) General Mills (parent company of Betty Crocker, Yoplait, Colombo, Totino's, Pillsbury, Old El Paso, Haagen-Dazs, Cheerios, Trix, Cocoa Puffs and Lucky Charms)	(4) Limited Brands (Victoria's Secret)
(5) Ford	(5) Toyota
(6) Smuckers (parent company of Jif, Crisco, Hungry Jack, Dunkin' Donuts, Meow Mix, and Milk-Bone)	(6) Sprint/T-Mobile
(7) TJX (TJ Maxx, Marshalls, HomeGoods)	(7) Kohl's
(8) Wendy's	(8) AT&T
(9) Clorox (parent company of Brita, Burt's Bees, Fresh Step, Scoop Away, Formula 409)	(9) Subway
(3-way tie) (10) Dairy Queen (10) Google (10) State Farm	(10) Burger King

The Crusade to End the Sexual Exploitation of Children for Entertainment

Throughout the history of the Parents Television Council, our goal has always been to provide a safer entertainment media environment for America's children and families. Despite the enduring changes to media consumption behavior which resulted from the pandemic in 2020, we are as committed to the PTC vision as we were 25 years ago.

The PTC's advocacy has never been more critical as major streaming video platforms blatantly produce and distribute programs which sexualize children. This wretched practice must be stopped, before Hollywood creates a more accepting sexualized entertainment culture that asks viewers to be entertained by the exploitation of child actors and child-aged characters.

Children's use of computers, tablets and smartphones will only increase, and their risk of exposure to the most harmful streaming video content which is marketed to children also will increase. In addition, the number of new streaming video services and programs continues to multiply, and more computer-savvy kids are learning to bypass parental safety controls on their electronic devices. As a result, even the most careful parents cannot completely protect their children from toxic media unless they take away their computers and smartphones.

That is why the Parents Television Council continues to fight for children and families. We will pressure executives in Hollywood and urge lawmakers in Washington D.C. to cease sexualizing children for entertainment purposes and resolve to better protect children from toxic media. And we will keep you informed of the latest harmful entertainment programs that target your children.

Thank you for your support.

2020 Financial Highlights

PARENTS TELEVISION COUNCIL INC.
STATEMENT OF ACTIVITY
AND CHANGES IN NET ASSETS
For the Year Ended December 31, 2020

	<i>Without Donor Restriction</i>	<i>With Donor Restriction</i>	<i>Total</i>
Revenue and Support			
Contributions	\$ 1,488,752	\$ 175,000	\$ 1,663,752
PPP grant	-	148,196	148,196
In-kind contributions	4,941	-	4,941
Gain on disposal of assets	11,769	-	11,769
Investment income	22	17	39
Other income	6,126	-	6,126
Net assets released from restrictions	350,597	(350,597)	-
Total Revenue and Support	1,862,207	(27,384)	1,834,823
Expenses			
Total Program Services	1,153,380	-	1,153,380
Support Services			
Management and general	107,621	-	107,621
Fundraising	187,277	-	187,277
Total Support Services	294,898	-	294,898
Total Expenses	1,448,278	-	1,448,278
Change in Net Assets	413,929	(27,384)	386,545
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	44,516	27,384	71,900
Net Assets, End of Year	\$ 458,445	\$ -	\$ 458,445

PARENTS TELEVISION COUNCIL INC.
STATEMENT OF
FINANCIAL POSITION
December 31, 2020

Assets	
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 549,286
Investments	1,038
Prepaid expenses	17,989
Property and Equipment - net	25,314
Right of use asset - lease	67,453
Deposits	2,896
Total Assets	\$ 663,976
Liabilities and Net Assets	
Liabilities	
Accounts payable	\$ 49,553
Accrued expenses	58,525
Operating lease - current	30,974
Operating lease - noncurrent	36,479
Deferred compensation liability	30,000
Total Liabilities	205,531
Net Assets	
Without donor restrictions	458,445
With donor restrictions	-
Total Net Assets	458,445
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$ 663,976