

Family Movie Night

It is family movie night and you decide to head to your local theatre for some fun and entertainment. As parents, you want to choose a movie that is appropriate for your child or youth to view. Many movies today that are aimed at children and youth through advertisements, children's toys and paraphernalia include themes, sexually suggestive scenes and violence that may not be right for your family. By doing some quick research on the movie your child or youth want to see, you can make informed choices about the content and determine the suitability of the movie for your family.

The Alberta Film Classification is a Government of Alberta office responsible for rating films before they are shown to the public. Movie ratings are one way that families can choose a movie they feel is appropriate for their family. Rated G or general rated movies mean the movie is suitable for viewing by all ages. Occasional violence, swearing and coarse language may be included. As well sexually suggestive scenes and nudity are also permitted in the general category. If your child is sensitive to violence and prone to nightmares, you may want to investigate the movie further. Animated movies can sometimes be just as frightening to children as movies with real people. A movie rated PG means that Parental guidance is recommended. The theme or movie content of these movies may not be suitable for all children however there is no age restriction on a PG movie. These movies may contain more obvious sexual scenes, nudity and a more realistic depiction of violence than in the general category and you may hear coarse language more often than in a movie rated G. A 14A classified film means that this movie is suitable for youth 14 years of age or older. Children and youth under 14 must have an adult with them to see this movie in a theatre. Movies in this category may contain a realistic depiction of violence, regular coarse language and/or more obvious sexually suggestive scenes. Finally, an 18A classified film means that children and youth under 18 years of age must have an adult with them to see this movie in a theatre. These movies will contain horror, explicit violence, frequent coarse language and/or scenes that are more sexually suggestive than in the 14A category. The final two categories are Restricted and Adult. These movie ratings are only permitted for those over 18 years of age.

If you are unsure of the suitability of a movie for your family there are a few other tips you may find helpful:

- Ask other parents if they have seen or heard about the movie your child or youth is interested in seeing.
- Watch the movie with your child or youth so that you have the choice to leave the theatre if the movie is unsuitable, for any reason.
- If you purchase or rent a movie, watch it yourself first before allowing your child or youth to see it or watch the movie together so that you have the option of turning the movie off.

- Consider your values and beliefs around the type and amount of violence, coarse language and suggestive sexual scenes that you are comfortable exposing your child or youth to, depending on their age, (both development and chronological age) and maturity level.
- Have an open conversation with your child or youth about the movie afterwards to learn their thoughts on the movie.

Finally, if you are interested in learning more about current movies that are playing in theatres across Alberta, visit www.albertafilmratings.ca/nowplaying.aspx for more details. This website offers a brief description of each movie currently in theatres and a brief explanation around the content of the movie including violence, profanity and sexual scenes. Themes are listed such as the bonds of friendship or the importance of honesty and an explanation as to why the movie was classified in the rating chosen.

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