



# *Remembering Family*

**Insights and New Research on Family and Media**

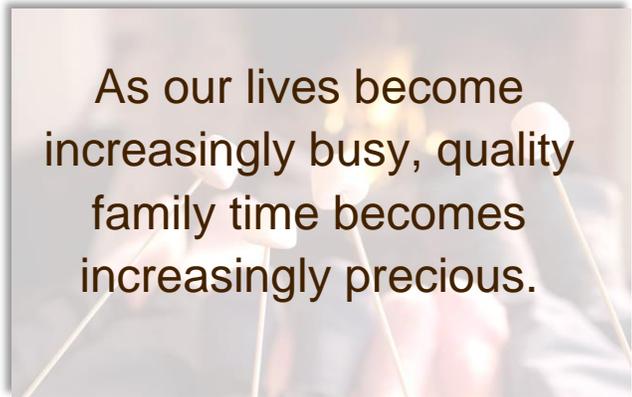


# Remembering Family

As families search their televisions for family-centric fare, the Parents Television Council decided to observe whether families can feel safe in expecting family-centric shows to be family-friendly. Specifically, we asked:

***“Can families come together to watch shows about family without viewing or hearing sex, violence, or profanity?”***

To answer this question, PTC analysts examined every major broadcast network and every primetime show that featured family as central to their storyline. The study period was from the beginning of each network’s fall 2013 season through December 31, 2013. This study reveals findings every parent should know.



## Major Study Findings

**Finding #1:** { Within the range of shows about family, some are typically considered “family-friendlier” than others (i.e. Family Guy vs. The Michael J. Fox Show). The study revealed that families are viewing sexual content and hearing explicit language even when choosing shows that are often considered “family-friendlier” options.

\*It is important to note that although all of the shows in the study have “family” as a central theme, not all of the shows should be considered “family-friendly.”



33% of shows about family contain violence



81% of shows about family contain sexual content



94% of shows about family contain profanity



99% of shows about family contain some form of adult content

**Finding #2:** { Even in the “family-friendlier” shows, explicit adult content was not only delivered by adult characters. Explicit adult content was delivered by children. See examples below:

**The Michael J. Fox Show**

**11/7/2013 TV-PG**

Michael’s son Graham walks into the main hallway completely naked with his privates pixilated for the audience. Michael tells his son he can’t walk around the house naked, but Graham tells him that it is ok since he saw his Aunt walking around the house naked earlier that day.

**The Millers**

**10/3/2013 TV-PG DL**

A little boy by the name of Zachary is wearing a sign that his parents made him wear. The sign indicates that Zachary has a foul mouth. In a news story, Zachary answers the reporter’s question by saying:

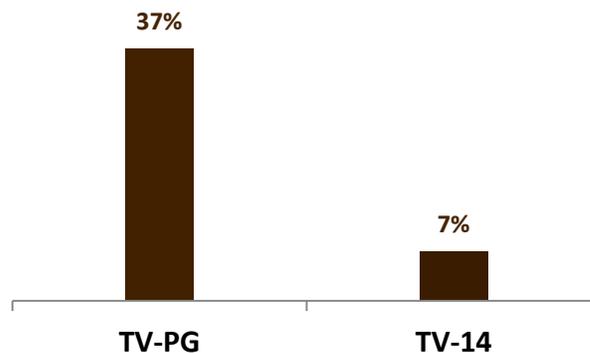
Zachary: *Shut up ass [bleep]. Before I wrap your [bleep] around your [bleep] and shove my [bleep] in your [bleep].*

Total Number of Episodes  
TV-PG vs. TV-14

| Rating | N   | Percent |
|--------|-----|---------|
| TV-PG  | 109 | 54%     |
| TV-14  | 93  | 46%     |

**Finding #3:** Over half (54%) of the shows about family were rated TV-PG. However, the TV-PG shows were **5 times more likely** not to include rating descriptors (D, L, S, V) that warn parents of the presence of **explicit language** compared to TV-14 shows

Percent of Shows without Appropriate Rating Descriptors



**Finding #4:** TV-PG shows were equally as likely to contain explicit language as TV-14 shows (93.6% and 93.5% respectively). Language on TV-PG programming included: **Bleeped s-words, bleeped f-words, bitch, penis, son-of-a-bitch, dick, screw, vagina, slut, ass, banging, hell, douche, bone, piss, slut, whore and more...**

Family Shows Containing Adult-Themed Content

| Type of Content | # of TV-PG | % of TV-PG   | # of TV-14 | % of TV-14   | Total |
|-----------------|------------|--------------|------------|--------------|-------|
| Sex             | 88         | 80.7%        | 75         | 80.6%        | 163   |
| Language        | 102        | <b>93.6%</b> | 87         | <b>93.5%</b> | 189   |
| Violence        | 18         | 16.5%        | 49         | 52.7%        | 67    |

**Finding #5:** — Seventy-three percent of the violent content was found in TV-14 shows and was appropriately rated to warn parents. Scenes that did contain violence but did not have a ‘V’ descriptor in the rating tended to be scenes that depicted milder forms of violence.

**Finding #6:** — Some of the most explicit content identified in the study (e.g. pixelated nudity, bleeped profanity, etc) aired on shows that would typically be considered “family-friendlier” fare.

| List of Shows About Family |                         |             |               |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| ABC                        | NBC                     | CBS         | Fox           |
| The Goldbergs              | The Michael J. Fox Show | The Millers | Raising Hope  |
| Last Man Standing          | Parenthood              | Mom         | The Simpsons  |
| The Neighbors              | Welcome to the Family   | Blue Bloods | Bob’s Burgers |
| Trophy Wife                | Sean Saves the World    | Hostages    | Dad           |
| The Middle                 |                         |             | Family Guy    |
| Back in the Game           |                         |             | American Dad  |
| Modern Family              |                         |             |               |

\*\*This study examined whether content was present and does not include data describing how much content was present in each show.

## Tips From the Experts

These findings demonstrate the need for writers, producers, and network executives to do a better job of **Remembering Family**. In an effort to provide parents with tools to keep your family’s television viewing consistent with the values you have set for your home, here are a few tips you might find helpful:

- Realize that kids are consuming information from all of their various personal media spaces (smartphones, tablets, television, video games, and more).
- One of the greatest tools parents can give their children is to promote critical thinking skills necessary to understand the complex issues facing them every day.
- Help kids understand that issues in real life are sometimes over simplified by the media. This can be addressed by helping kids distinguish issues from images and rhetoric from reality.
- Recognize that there is a difference between reality and the way media represents reality.
- Let your children know that it is OK to perceive the world differently from the way media presents the world.
- Help your kids understand that media messages contain values and ideologies that can produce social and political consequences.
- Child development research shows that children under the age of eight have difficulty critically comprehending televised media messages and are prone to accept messages as truthful, accurate, and unbiased.