

Violent films and their impact on children

[Sociology](#), [Violence](#)



Violent Films and Their Impact on Children The film industry, in this generation, has produced several great and highly successful films, many of which contain some form of excessive violence. Some examples of these movies include *The Boondock Saints*, *The Expendables*, and *Fight Club*. Although these films are indeed wildly successful, it is important that such films are watched by only their intended audiences, namely adults. Many children are getting their hands on, violent films which could alter their moods and behaviors. Even though the film industry continues to produce violent films, it is imperative that parents actively continue to make sure they are distant from children as they may evoke negative social behaviors, such as fear, violence, and aggression. Children continue to get hold of these violent films, mainly in their own home. It can be a difficult task these days for parents to see what their kids are constantly doing. "...in the real world, it can be hard for parents to monitor their children's media habits. With TV, movies, videos, and computer games, many parents do not know what their kids see every day, " says Miranda Hitti, writer for WebMD (Hitti). The expanding technology of this generation is certainly not on the parents' side. According to Hitti, children are able to access violent material from the use of technological advances such as cable or satellite (Hitti). The role of the parents also play a big part in a child watching violent films. According to Prof. Kevin Browne, and Catherine Hamilton-Giachritsis, families with one parent, apathetic parents, or parents who don't actively care for their children may lead to the delinquency which comes from them watching violent films (706). As can be seen, it is important for parents to censor what their kids watch. Many children in the U. S. are watching violent films. "

Almost 13 percent of the nation's estimated 22 million children between the ages of 10 and 14 are viewing extremely graphic depictions of violence in film, whether in theaters, on DVDs, or on television, " says Alan Mozes of Consumer Health Complete (Mozes). The viewing of these violent films can cause many forms of negative reactions from children. Although tied to aggression, that is not all media violence can evoke in a child; there is also fear (Hittie). Viewing the events of September, 11 on television brought out fear in American children seeing the attacks of terrorism on the country (Hittie). These fearful events may go on to impact the child's life later on. Another behavior violent films can evoke is drug use; most often films receive their R-rating for more than just violence. Worth, Chambers, Nassau, Rakhra, and Sargent, all manuscript authors for the National Institutes of Health, state that films violence can evoke more than just aggressive behavior, but that it can evoke alcohol abuse or drug use that can potentially stunt development (307). The most important negative social behavior that violent films can produce in children however, is violence itself. Aimee Tompkins of Allpsych Online states, "...that violent media is associated with aggressive behavior" (Tompkins). Children who watch violent films are usually more hostile, have no concern for the rules, and do not have any remorse of the consequences of their actions (Tompkins). Obviously, violent films often have very negative effects on children. Viewing violent films, under the right circumstances, can be a positive experience as well. According to Hittie, parents can view violent films with the company of their children in order to get them to think critically about the situations (Hittie). Tompkins also states, "...exposure to violent media can actually provide a

healthy release for the frightening emotions of children and young adults" (Tompkins). Although violent films can provide children with some positive learning experiences, ultimately, the cons outweigh the pros. According to Browne and Hamilton-Giachritsis, those who watched violent films, were more susceptible to violent acts even ten months down the road (706). In reality, showing children violent movies to stimulate them and to show them what not to do is not worth the possible life of crime they may live (706). It is better to keep children away from violent films than it is to expose them. Showing children violent films can be a positive thing, as they may cause the child to think critically, as well as learning what not to do in life. Ultimately however, showing children violent films may evoke negative behaviors and emotions such as fear, drug use and alcohol abuse, and violence which are more of a concern. It is important that this nation's youth be not exposed to violent films at an early, adolescent age. Works Cited Browne, Kevin D., and Catherine Hamilton-Giachritsis. "The Influence of Violent Media on Children and Adolescents: a Public-health Approach." *Consumer Health Complete*. EBSCO, p. 702-710 19 Feb. 2005. Web. 25 Oct. 2010. Hitti, Miranda. "Media Violence Spurs Fear, Aggression in Kids." *WebMD - Better Information. Better Health*. n. pag. 17 Feb. 2005. Web. 25 Oct. 2010. Mozes, Alan. "Many Kids Under 15 Watch Violent Movies." *Consumer Health Complete*. EBSCO, n. pag. 4 Aug. 2008. Web. 25 Oct. 2010. Tompkins, Aimee. "The Psychological Effects of Violent Media on Children." *Allpsych Online*. n. pag. 25 Oct. 2010. Web. 27 Oct. 2010. Worth, Keila A., Jennifer G. Chambers, Daniel H. Nassau, Balvinder K. Rakhra, and James D. Sargent. "Exposure of US Adolescents to

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