

On Our Screens

2024 Survey Snapshot

Introduction

The Classification Office - Te Mana Whakaatu is an independent Crown entity that classifies potentially harmful content and provides research and resources to help New Zealanders make informed viewing choices. We recently asked New Zealanders key questions about their experiences and attitudes toward age ratings and content warnings for the media they watch and play, spanning watching movies at the cinema, playing video games, watching series and movies on streaming platforms, and content appearing on our screens.

This national survey is a snapshot of public opinion, and was first undertaken in [2023](#) as part of an omnibus survey of New Zealanders. The results help us to identify strengths and gaps in our approach to classification.

The results from our latest snapshot have highlighted the public's desire for more information about the challenging topics that are appearing on our screens.

Keeping Tamariki Safe with what's on Screen

Parents are not alone in worrying about harmful content online. In our survey, 85% of New Zealanders expressed concern about kids being exposed to harmful content on social media and other online platforms, and most were also concerned about video games (74%) and movies or TV shows (65%).

The challenge?

Three-quarters of parents with dependent children feel it's hard to protect kids from inappropriate online content, and nearly half of all participants said harmful material is difficult for them to avoid personally.

While most parents or caregivers (66%) feel they know enough to help their whānau stay safe online, only 36% trust social media platforms to remove harmful material effectively. Age ratings and content warnings remain critical tools for making safe choices, with most parents saying they're essential when choosing movies, shows, and games.

By staying informed and making use of available resources, parents can take small but meaningful steps to protect their whānau in an ever-changing digital landscape.



Key Findings

New Zealanders are concerned about children and young people seeing harmful content

85% were concerned about children and young people seeing harmful content in social media and other online spaces.

74% felt this way about video games.

65% felt this way about movies and TV shows.

75% of parents and caregivers think it's hard to protect children from inappropriate or harmful online content.

66% of parents and caregivers felt they know enough to help their whānau stay safe online.

Harmful content can be hard to avoid online, regardless of age

46% agreed it's hard for them to avoid seeing harmful or offensive content online.

30% had seen content online that promoted some form of violence.

22% had seen content promoting some form of self-harm.

35% felt that websites and social media sites provide them with tools and features they need to stay safe online.

28% trust social media sites to remove dangerous, violent or harmful material. Parents and caregivers were more likely to agree (36%).

Most think age ratings are important when choosing movies, TV shows and games

85%

helped choose a movie, TV show or video game with a young person in the past year.

Of this 85%

74% think age ratings are important, including just over half who think they're 'very important'.

65% think content warnings are important, including around two-thirds who think they're 'very important'.

How can we help?

PREPARE

At Te Mana Whakaatu – Classification Office, we provide a range of resources to help New Zealanders make informed decisions about what to watch and play. Whether it's a movie, video game, or TV series, supporting whānau to know the appropriate age rating and content warnings is key to ensuring a safe viewing experience for everyone.



Find a Rating:

Our easy-to-use tool lets you look up ratings and content warnings for films, video games and series.



Gaming Resource Hub:

Your go to for all things related to gaming, including our role in gaming classification, a guide to understanding classifications, and how to keep children safe while gaming.



Parental Controls:

Parents can learn what tools to use to protect children from unexpectedly seeing unwanted content on streaming services and social media.



Blogs:

Access detailed information and guidance about specific types of content, especially when it has the potential to be harmful.



NOT OK?

Seen something on your screen that's not ok? Check out our website for information about how to make a complaint. Our office can take complaints about a variety of content. We classify entertainment content on NZ screens and also potentially illegal content online.



classificationoffice.govt.nz/contact

Methodology and Reporting

The question set was developed by Classification Office – Te Mana Whakaatu with assistance from AK Research.

Results in this report (2024) are based upon questions asked in AKR's nation-wide online omnibus survey of n=1,000.

The sample for the online omnibus was sourced from Dynata, one of the largest global panel providers. The sample was stratified by gender, region, and age to reflect the New Zealand adult population.

The margin of error for a probabilistic sample of 1,000 from this panel would be $\pm 3.1\%$ (for a 50% figure at the 95% confidence level).

The online survey was conducted from the 16th of October to the 22nd of October 2024.

This is a summary report, you can view the complete report of findings on our website here:



classificationoffice.govt.nz