

such kind would require knowledge about the convention and its functioning, a systematic approach and competent reporters.

2. The media could also analyze its own performance in the light of the principles and standards of the convention. Corrective measures need to be taken to ensure that the *integrity of individual children* be respected, for instance in the media reports on abuse or crime. Intervention against the honour and reputation of the child shall not be accepted; the convention recommends legal support for the protection against that form of abuse.

3. The image of the child in the media should be discussed and *stereotyping* criticized. A self-critical appraisal by media organizations themselves would be helpful as a platform for such discussion.

4. Further efforts towards opening the media for children and their *participation* should be encouraged. Special newspaper pages or radio-TV programmes for and with children are important. The schools could play a role in creating a dialogue between children and the media, for instance, within the framework of the "Newspaper in Education" project.

5. The authorities should actively support efforts to ensure *production of information material* for children, including child literature. It is important that there exists such basic information in languages used by the children. Supplementary efforts are likewise needed to open media for children with disabilities.

6. The authorities also have a special responsibility for the dissemination of information material "of social and cultural benefit to the child." Children have the right to be acquainted with *positive values* of "understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin."⁹ This might be achieved through subsidizing existing media or via supplementary action.

7. Governments need to develop a comprehensive policy on how to protect children from *harmful influences of media* — both through supporting "positive" alternatives and finding effective ways of limiting the "negative" aspects. Some countries have already developed a variety of approaches in this field in what appears to be a deliberate policy. The government of Norway has developed a comprehensive

plan of action which could serve as a model for other countries.

8. *Guidelines* are needed for how the "best interests of the child" should be protected in a competitive media market. Regulations — voluntary or mandatory — on certain hours for broadcasting of violent materials or on special ages for entry to cinemas have had some positive effect. Systematic efforts of informing parents also seem to have some potential. Such endeavours should be maintained. At the same time it is clear that new methods for protection are needed in connection with videos and computer programmes consumed in the home.

9. The discussions on media violence have to include a *broader perspective* on how children now spend their day. The problems in relation to the modern media are augmented by the fact that many children spend more time in front of television than in school and that their time with their parents is reduced. Many children do not have an adult present to explain violent images in the news and to put these into an understandable context. This recent pattern raises a number of fundamental questions which seem not to be sufficiently addressed in several countries.

10. Awareness campaigns are needed in order to reduce the market for exploitative media violence. *Voluntary consumer movements* are needed to watch the performance of television and other information companies. The independent media should on their own initiative establish monitoring boards to react to harmful output and set common standards.

11. *International co-operation* should be developed to support the less resourceful countries with means and advice for giving children access to the media and to prevent the harmful aspects. The richer states may as well benefit from international exchange on, for instance, how to develop acceptable techniques for getting media producers to respect the rights of the child. In this regard, "Nordicom," the new UNESCO centre in Göteborg¹⁰ for pooling knowledge about "violence on the screen" can hopefully bring the discussion forward.

9. Wording from Art. 29 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

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