



## **CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE: Kids and the Media**

1. You have a child. What specific rules did you have about media use in your home when she was growing up?

**Bill and I restricted both the amount and the kind of TV Chelsea watched as a child, and even when she was a teenager we checked up from time to time on her TV and movie watching. As parents, it's hard not to worry about the media's impact on your children.**

2. As a parent, what is your biggest concern when it comes to the media's impact on kids?

**We know that children, especially young children, are deeply influenced by the people and experiences to which they are exposed. That's why it troubles me, not just as a legislator but also as a parent, that our children are exposed to so much inappropriate material in the media today. Research has shown that violent and sexually explicit media contribute to aggressive behavior, early sexual experimentation, obesity, and depression.**

**Whenever I meet young parents and we talk about the challenges of parenting, they tell me that they are worried about losing control over the raising of their own children and about ceding the responsibility of implicating values and behaviors to a multi-dimensional media marketplace over which they have no control. They are concerned about the amount of sex and violence in the media today because they know – as we all do – that the media has a significant influence on our children.**

**Studies have found that exposure to TV violence can increase the risk of aggressive behavior in children and may be related to attention problems later in life. And some experts say that time spent watching too much TV or surfing the Internet or playing video games may detract from the time children spend interacting with their parents, participating in physical activity, or using their imaginations.**

**As Senator, I have talked about and advocated for harnessing the positive impacts the media can have on our children. I have also advocated for finding ways to re-empower parents – to put them back in the driver's seat so they are informed and able to shape the influences that affect their children. I will continue to champion these efforts when I am President.**

3. Kids today spend nearly 45 hours per week consuming media. They only spend 30 hours a week in school, and 17 hours a week with their parents. Given the huge proportion of time that kids spend with media, how big a priority will the media's impact on kids be in your administration if you are elected?

**This issue – the media’s impact on our children – has long been important to me. Almost a decade ago, my husband and I hosted the Children’s Television Summit at the White House, and we worked for the passage of the Children’s Television Act. That law led to the implementation of the V-Chip in every new TV larger than 13 inches and mandated that broadcasters show at least three hours of educational and informational programming each week. Since 1999, I have called on industry leaders to create a uniform ratings system that would warn parents about sex and violence in movies, TV, video games, songs, and other forms of media entertainment to which children are exposed constantly. Right now, there are different ratings systems in each sector and parents have a hard time understanding and using them.**

**Working with a bipartisan coalition of my Senate colleagues, I helped write the Children and Media Research Act to study the impact of electronic media on child development. This legislation would create the first-ever coordinated research center devoted to understanding the impact of media on our children. I also introduced the Family Entertainment Protection Act, which would prohibit any business from selling or renting a Mature, Adults-Only, or Ratings Pending game to a person who is younger than 17 years of age. The bill would help empower parents by making sure their kids can’t walk into a store and buy a video game that has graphic, violent, and pornographic content.**

**When I am President, I will build on this record. It is frustrating and troubling that, despite all the data we have that shows there is a clear connection between exposure to violence and increased aggression, we, as a society, have not come forward with a real, pragmatic response or solution to the problem.**

4. To date, nearly 10 states have considered legislation to keep violent video games out of the hands of kids. Would you support this type of legislation at the federal level? What other strategies would you support to keep the video game industry and other media companies from marketing and selling inappropriate content to children?

**When I introduced the Family Entertainment Protection Act two years ago, I did so because I felt that video game content was getting increasingly violent and sexually explicit, yet young people were able to purchase these games with relative ease while their parents were struggling to keep up with being informed about the content. Under that legislation, on-site store managers would be subject to a fine of \$1,000 or 100 hours of community service for the first offense; and \$5,000 or 500 hours of community service for each subsequent offense. The bill would also require an annual, independent analysis of game ratings and require the Federal Trade Commission to conduct an investigation to determine whether hidden sexual content like what was in “Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas” is a pervasive problem and to take appropriate action. In addition, the bill would help ensure that consumers have a mechanism to file complaints with the FTC and that the FTC would report these complaints to Congress. Finally, the bill would authorize the FTC to conduct an annual, random audit of retailers to monitor enforcement and report the findings to Congress.**

**I was motivated to take action when I found out that there was embedded illicit sexual content in “Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas.” The Entertainment Software Ratings Board was unaware of the embedded content. I called on the FTC to investigate the source of the content and, as a result, the company issued a recall of the game. When I am President, I will work to protect children from inappropriate video game content.**

5. School curricula today require that kids learn the fundamentals of language, mathematics and science – but very few schools teach kids how to understand the vast digital media environment that now occupies most of their time. Would you support legislation to require that every American kid receives instruction of this kind?

**The media is omnipresent – it is certainly one of the most insistent, pervasive influences in a child’s life. That’s why I think it is important that we teach our children, starting when they are very young, to think critically about the media and become smart consumers. We should teach them to question, analyze, interpret, and evaluate what they see or hear. There is no doubt that the media affect how we perceive and understand the world, how we interact with those around us, and how we make our purchasing decisions. As we have access to more forms of media – and at any hour of the day – it is even more crucial, I believe, that we teach media literacy to our children. Parents can do this in the home and educators can do this in our schools. Today, very few schools teach kids how to understand the vast digital media environment that now occupies most of their time, and as President, I will support significantly expanding these programs.**

**Two years ago, I spoke at the release of the Kaiser Family Foundation study, “Generation M: Media in the Lives of 8-18 Year-olds.” That study told us that, on average, that kids between eight and 18 years of age are spending 6.5 hours a day absorbed in media. That adds to 45 hours a week, which is more than a full-time job. TV alone occupies three to four hours a day of young people’s time. And we all know that in most homes, media consumption isn’t limited to the living room. In two-thirds of kids’ bedrooms you’ll find a TV and in one-half you will find a VCR and/or a video game consol. We have to do a better job of educating our children to become savvy media consumers.**

6. Statistics show that one in five American kids will be sexually solicited online. How can we make the Internet a safer place for children, and how do we balance that safety with legitimate privacy and free speech concerns?

**The Internet, without a doubt, offers an infinite world of opportunity for children to learn about the world around them. But when unmonitored kids access the Internet, it can also be an enormously dangerous instrument. The best solution, in my view, is to empower parents with tools to protect their children, to make it easier for parents to choose age-appropriate material for their children, and to do a better job of cracking down on online sex offenders. One tool that I believe can be highly effective in blocking some inappropriate content is parental controls or filters. Today, this technology is underutilized by parents, and I think that more parents should be encouraged and taught to use it. I also believe, as I mentioned above, that we need to teach our children how to be smart and safe when navigating the Internet.**

**Earlier this year, I co-sponsored the Keeping the Internet Devoid of Sexual Predators Act (or the KIDS Act), which would amend the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act to require convicted sex offenders to provide up-to-date e-mail addresses, instant message screen names, or other online identifiers to the National Sex Offender Registry. The bill would also require the Attorney General to maintain a system to allow commercial social networking Web sites to compare their databases of users to the Internet identifiers of people in the National Sex Offender Registry. I was a co-sponsor of the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act – which passed in the Senate in 2006 – that strengthened existing sex offender laws and updated registration requirements to include Internet offenses.**

**This issue has long been important to me. During my first year in the Senate, I held a press conference with then-Attorney General Eliot Spitzer and a member of a non-profit organization dedicated to educating children and teens about how to be safe on the Internet. At the event, I urged my Senate colleagues to provide \$25 million in funding to accelerate the expansion of Internet Crimes Against Children task forces in every state by the end of the following year. I also discussed my commitment to assisting law enforcement and educators in preventing Internet crimes against children and in investigating, arresting, and prosecuting predators who prey on children. Since then, I have worked hard in the Senate to create a safer, improved media environment for our children. When I President, I will continue to support these kinds of efforts.**

7. Childhood obesity has reached epidemic proportions in this country. The latest research suggests that junk food ads are a major contributing factor. Would you support legislation to regulate the type of foods that could be advertised during children's programming (similar to laws considered in Australia and the United Kingdom)?

**According to a Kaiser Family Foundation report released this year, "Food for Thought: Television Food Advertising to Children in the United States," a committee convened by Institute of Medicine found that "television advertising influences the food preferences, purchase requests, and diets, of children under age 12 years, and is associated with increased rates of obesity among children and youth." That's why, according to the report, policymakers in Great Britain have banned ads for foods high in fat, salt, or sugar in programming aimed at children under 16 years of age and have prohibited the use of premiums or children's characters in food ads to young people.**

**In the United States, we are going in the right direction: in December 2006, 10 of the top food companies in the country announced a new Children's Food and Beverage Advertising Initiative that includes a commitment to devote at least 50 percent of all advertising to healthier foods or to messages that encourage fitness or nutrition. I believe there is more work to be done. I would like to see the entire food industry come together to develop voluntary guidelines that take their responsibility to children seriously. I think that there are a lot of steps that the private sector and the public sector, working together, can take to curb marketing and availability of unhealthy products to our children. In the Senate, I co-sponsored the Improved Nutrition and Physical Activity Act – which passed in**

**the Senate – to address obesity and eating disorders in children, and I introduced the School Food Fresh Program that links schools with local farmers to bring healthy locally grown snacks to schoolchildren. When I am President, I will continue to explore these options and support measures to put our children on a path to healthy living.**

**As I mentioned earlier, I championed the Children and Media Research Advancement Act to study the impact of electronic media on child development. This bill provides targeted funding to research the links between advertising and childhood obesity. Since 1980, the proportion of overweight children has doubled and the rate for adolescents has tripled. We have to understand the relationship between advertising and obesity if we are to build the public will to take action.**

8. **Would you support any other type of regulation concerning the amount and type of advertising aired during children’s programming?**

**I support updating the Children’s Television Act rules for digital TV. Under the original Children’s Television Act, broadcasters were required to provide education and informational programming for children and to limit the amount of time devoted to advertisements. This legislation has been instrumental in harnessing the educational power of TV to serve our children, and I believe it is essential that these rules are applied in the digital age.**

**I also think the TV industry should air more public service announcements, particularly about the effect of TV on children and the need for parents to help their children utilize the media in the best possible way. Most PSAs run after midnight, not during primetime. I think we should make better use of the prime hours of broadcasting to educate parents about how to be more literate, effective media consumers on behalf of themselves and their children.**

9. **Media ownership has been a major concern at public hearings held across the country over the past year, with many organizations raising concerns that consolidation ends up decreasing the quality and diversity of programming. Do you think media ownership consolidation is a problem, and if so, what would you do to increase the diversity of media ownership?**

**Yes, I believe that media ownership consolidation is a problem. Local media outlets tend to be very committed to serving the specific needs of its community – and we are in danger of losing that when big media companies buy out the smaller ones. As a result, we lose local voices and have a less diverse group of viewpoints. This is particularly troubling for women and people of color, who are under-represented in the media industry.**

**That’s why I co-sponsored the Media Consolidation Prevention Bill, which would require an open and thorough review and comment process before any rule change is allowed. The bill was introduced in response to ongoing efforts at the Federal Communications Commission to push through rules that would enable large media conglomerates to concentrate their ownership of newspapers, radio, and TV stations in media market. I**

**believe it is critical that our nation's media outlets continue to reflect the needs and interests of the communities in which they are located. It is at the heart of the FCC's regulatory mission to ensure that a diverse array of views, stories, and opinions are available to the public. I was also pleased that the legislation requires the FCC to properly examine female and minority ownership of media outlets. Under this bill, the FCC must establish an Independent Panel on Ownership by Women and Minorities. The FCC must collect and provide this panel with data on the specific gender and ethnic makeup of media owners. The panel shall issue recommendations, and the FCC must act on these recommendations prior to a vote on media ownership. This is important given that women make up 51 percent of the U.S. population but own five percent of all TV stations. People of color make up 33 percent of the U.S. population but they own just 3.26 percent of all TV station owners and only 7.7 percent of all full-power commercial broadcast radio stations. When I am President, I will build on these efforts I have championed as Senator to increase diversity of media ownership.**

10. As president, you would have the power to appoint the FCC chairman and nominate commissioners. Would the FCC under your administration be more or less active on kids and media issues than the current FCC? What type of person would you nominate to lead the organization?

**When I am President, I will appoint and nominate qualified people throughout my administration who share my perspectives and values, including protecting our children from inappropriate content in the media. I believe that this is an important issue for the health and well-being of our children because there is no doubt that what our children see or hear on TV, the Internet, and the radio has an impact on their development.**