



Children's Television

In a resounding wave of co-operation, the television industry has come together to support the Festival of Television for Australian Children.

Television industry supports children's television festival

The major focus of the Festival is the broadcast of quality programs for children. The programs to be featured in the Festival come from Australia and many other countries.

Festival organiser, Dina Browne, said that the co-operation of all sections of the television industry had been heartening:

Television is such a significant force in children's lives. It is certainly a major influence on how children behave. In Australia, children's television production sets a very high standard. We want parents to understand the power of the medium—for good. Many parents, through fear and ignorance, write it off as being bad for children.

The Festival is designed to celebrate the role of television in children's lives. It will show what a powerful force it can be in setting positive values, illustrating reality, and giving children information they would not otherwise receive.

The Festival will be broadcast for one week, 20-24 March, across Australia on all television networks. Channels Seven, Nine and Ten have donated half an hour a day (over and above their normal children's program quota) for extra

Festival material. SBS has committed 12 hours of children's television specifically for Festival programs. The ABC will also be featuring Festival programs, as will satellite and community television.

Optus has donated time on the transponder A3/11 and A3/T5 to give coverage throughout Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria to schools and other bodies who can access their satellite. In West Australia,

schools will receive additional programs through Weslink and in South Australia, all schools will take non-network programs by their local satellite system.

The Festival follows the World Summit on Television and Children in Melbourne and has

the potential to reach more than three million school children, plus their parents and teachers.

A Teacher's Resource Kit, which advises teachers on how to use Festival programs in the classroom, has been developed by the Festival organisers and distributed to more than 10 000 schools in Australia. The Kit was launched by the Minister for Communications and the Arts, Michael Lee, in February.

The Festival has been endorsed by the Prime Minister, Paul Keating, and is funded by the Department of Communications and the Arts under the 'Distinctly Australian' program.

Student news conference

The Prime Minister will conduct a news conference on Youth Issues at the National Press Club on Wednesday 22 March. The news conference will be broadcast live on ABC television. Students, two from each state selected through a national competition, will quiz the Prime Minister on matters they see as relevant to young people.

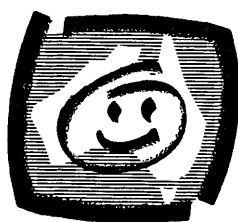
Senior members of the Press Gallery, including President, Michael World from ABC Radio, Peter Harvey of Channel Nine News, Nikki Savva from the *Herald-Sun* and Paul Bongiorno of Channel Ten News will host the winning students at the Press Club luncheon and will perform a mentoring role with the students during their day in Canberra. A student film crew from Inaburra School, NSW, will film the news conference for later showing on an SBS program.

Student video awards

An additional part of the Festival is the Student Video Awards to be broadcast on SBS on the final day of the Festival, Friday 24 March. Six winning video productions, one from each State, will be selected by local branches of the Australian Teachers of Media.

The Festival is also sponsoring 15 children's television program makers to attend the World Summit (see over page). □

Dina Browne is Head of Children's Television for the Seven Network.



Festival of Television for Australian Children