



International Research Forum newsletter

SYDNEY: As part of its role of coordinating the International Research Forum on Children and Media (IRFCAM), the ABA released the fifth issue of the IRFCAM newsletter in December 1997.

One of the features is a report on the Africa Summit on Children and Broadcasting by Nadia Bulbulia of the Independent Broadcasting Authority in South Africa. The summit, which was held in Accra, Ghana from 8 to 12 October 1997, brought together broadcasters, academics, policy makers, producers and children to discuss the broadcasting needs of the continent's children.

Also featured in the December issue are three articles which consider developments relating to the use of on-line services by children. Inclusion of these articles follows the recent expansion of the forum's focus beyond television to a wider range of media in line with the broad range of research interests of members.

Regular features such as upcoming conferences and film festivals, and updates on current or completed research projects, are again included. IRFCAM members are encouraged to actively participate in forum activities and the regular project updates provided by members help to facilitate the sharing of information.

The possibility of a face-to-face meeting of Australian IRFCAM members in February 1998 is canvassed in the newsletter. The ABA has offered to host the event, which is envisaged as being a one day meeting in late February 1998. One of the aims of the Forum is to put researchers who work in the area of children

and media in touch with one another, enabling them to share information on research findings and methodologies. The face-to-face meeting would be another opportunity to further this aim.

While researchers make up a significant component of IRFCAM membership, people with a wide range of interests in children and the media belong to the Forum. Current membership stands at more than 240 people from 35 countries and includes program producers, broadcast regulators, policy makers and advocates for children's programming.

Members receive the newsletter free of charge, while non-members can be sent a copy on request or can access the newsletter through the ABA's Web site. If you would like to join IRFCAM or would like more information, please contact Lori Lemon in the Research Section at the ABA on (02) 9334 7862 or by e-mail: lori.lemon@aba.gov.au.

The sixth issue of the newsletter is due for release in June 1998.

Student project

SYDNEY: During the second half of 1997 third year students from the University of New South Wales researched policy issues relating to commercial strategies used in on-line services which target children and teenagers. The ABA assisted the students in their research by providing information and comment, and the students presented the results to ABA staff in late 1997.

The research strategy involved:

- a content analysis of selected Internet sites aimed at children and teenagers;
- an examination of the policies and practices

L-R: Gillian Ramsay, ABA Research Officer; Andrea Millwood Hargrave, Broadcasting Standards Council UK; and Margaret Cupitt, ABA Research Officer, discussing attitudinal research results for Australia and the UK during Ms Millwood Hargrave's recent visit to the ABA.

