

CHAPTER 146

AN ACT concerning a child's exposure to media violence and supplementing Title 18A of the Revised Statutes.

BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

C.18A:40-44 Information relative to child's exposure to violence on electronic devices.

1. a. The Department of Education shall prepare and make available on the department's Internet website, both in print and in an easily printable format, information on how a parent can limit a child's exposure to violence on television, cell phones, computers, and other electronic devices. The department shall update this information whenever new information about a child's exposure to violence on television and other electronic devices becomes available. The information shall include, but not be limited to:

(1) research and statistics on how violent behavior increases after exposure to violent films, music, television, or video games;

(2) scientific findings that show children who play violent video games are more likely to be involved in physical altercations with classmates, perform poorly on academic tasks, and are unable to relate to adults in positions of authority;

(3) factors that increase the probability a child will be at risk of violent behavior, including, but not limited to, exposure or involvement in violence at critical stages of childhood development, poor socioeconomic conditions, and poor parenting skills;

(4) symptoms of a child's overexposure to violence, including, but not limited to, sleeplessness, anxiety, depression, feelings of hopelessness, truancy, and difficulty in school;

(5) predictors of violent behavior in children, including but not limited to, dishonesty, disobedience, favorable attitude toward violence, hostility toward police, substance abuse, aggressive or antisocial behavior, and involvement in nonviolent criminal offenses; and

(6) effective strategies, based on a child's age and stage of development, that will help a parent monitor or restrict a child's exposure to violence on television and other electronic devices, including, but not limited to, the use of screening software or other technologies that prevent a child from watching television programs a parent deems inappropriate, co-viewing and commenting on television programs that depict violence, and familiarization with video game advisory labels and rating systems that make it more difficult for children to purchase and play such games.

b. The department shall prepare an informational pamphlet that contains the information posted on its website pursuant to subsection a. of this section, and shall update the pamphlet as necessary. The department shall distribute the pamphlet, at no charge, to all school districts in the State, and shall make additional copies available to nonpublic schools upon request.

c. In the 2013-2014 school year and in each school year thereafter, each school district shall distribute the pamphlet to the parents or guardians of students attending the schools of the district.

C.18A:40-45 Rules, regulations.

2. The Department of Education, pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), shall adopt rules and regulations to effectuate the purposes of this act.

3. This act shall take effect immediately.

Approved August 19, 2013.