



Press release: For immediate release

**NOT GUILTY!**  
***BRITISH PARENTS LET KIDS WATCH TV***  
***'GUILT FREE'***

**New ten point plan for parents, new quality programme  
for children launched.**

Almost all parents in the UK (**93%**) let their young children watch television, according to findings of a new poll of 1,000 parents of children aged 2-6 years. Contrary to popular belief, **seven out of ten** parents **do not** feel guilty about allowing their children to watch TV. Of those parents, **42%** think TV is a great way for kids to learn but only **16%** always watch with their kids for 'bonding time', with **25%** using TV as a 'babysitter'.

The poll was carried out to mark the launch of a new programme which starts today for children of pre-school age – Raa Raa the Noisy Lion \* – and a new ten point plan for parents on TV Time, devised by experts to mark the *Hello* campaign, 2011 national year of communication.

For television to be a valuable learning opportunity, experts recommend that parents co-view with their children. This means watching programmes that are age appropriate and specifically designed for children with parents joining in and commenting on the programme to spark off conversation and introduce new words.

The findings however highlight that more than half of parents with pre-schoolers (**54%**) allow their children to watch 'adult' programmes with **Eastenders**, **The X Factor** and **Coronation Street** being voted the most common for parents to co-view with their kids. Nearly **78%** of parents' claim the two hours their children spend watching TV each day is done alone.

**66%** of parents don't know the characters or storylines from the shows their kids are watching and when parents do co-view approximately **20%** sit in silence with their children. Very few (**15%**) are using TV programmes as a 'conversation starter' when the TV is turned off.

Wendy Lee, spokesperson for the *Hello* campaign with over 25 years experience working in speech and language therapy says; “Parents play a crucial role in supporting their children’s communication development. This survey highlights they are not suffering from ‘guilt overload’ but there are areas where parents would benefit from more information and advice. Quality TV programmes like **Raa Raa the Noisy Lion** can provide a good starting point for face to face interaction, conversation and play and we encourage parents to grab the ‘communication opportunity’ to co-view with their child.

“TV can be used as a fantastic opportunity to bring children’s favourite characters and shows to life beyond the box as well. Chatting about characters, making up stories and even acting out adventures can help parents to develop their child’s language and communication. Today, we are publishing a **new ten point plan** for parents with pre-schoolers with simple and fun tips to ensure TV time becomes talk time.”

The *Hello* campaign aims to make children and young people’s communication development a national priority and is championing **Raa Raa the Noisy Lion** as a quality television programme designed for 2-4 year olds. The new series airing for the first time today explores children’s communication skills through the use of **Raa Raa’s 4 Rs** – repetition, rhyme, rhythm and retelling.

Controller of CBeebies Kay Benbow says: “We’re delighted that Raa Raa and his friends are joining us on CBeebies and will help us continue to encourage children to develop their communications skills. We were pleased to see the results of this survey which supports what we’ve always believed that, used appropriately; our programmes can aid children’s development and learning.”

The poll found that only **7%** of parents in the country actually stop their children from watching any television. Surprisingly Dads are much stricter than Mums (**12%** as compared to **4%**). The findings also suggest that parents in Scotland are much stricter than parents in Wales (**12%** as compared to **3%**).

Raa Raa’s adventures, narrated by **Lorraine Kelly**, will be shown on CBeebies every weekday at 3.30pm from Monday 9th May and on CBeebies iPlayer. For more information go to [www.raaraathenoisylion.com](http://www.raaraathenoisylion.com) and to find out about the *Hello* campaign visit [www.hello.org.uk](http://www.hello.org.uk).

## TEN POINT PLAN FOR PARENTS WITH PRE-SCHOOLERS ON TV TIME

### *2011 national year of communication*

To help parents plan their involvement;

1. If you let your child watch TV, watch it with them (as much as possible).
2. It is really important to always remember that children need quiet time where you turn off background noise and have time just to play. This is really important for listening and language development.
3. When you do watch programmes make sure they are at the right level for your child – not too complicated or for older children (CBeebies for example is good for 2-4 year olds).
4. Have fun and encourage your child to really engage with the programme. Join in with your child if there are familiar songs or rhymes– each episode of **Raa Raa The Noisy Lion** includes the 4 R's (Rhyme, Rhythm, Repetition and Retelling), which provides a good opportunity for you to participate with your child.
5. Make TV time 'communication' time. Briefly comment on what is happening in a programme to spark off a conversation or highlight something that is happening i.e. 'Look at Raa Raa – he's hiding'.
6. Be sure to answer any questions children may ask – they might have lots! And talk about the programme afterwards – which bit they liked best and why. Tell them what you think.
7. Pretend games are fantastic for children's language and communication development. Why not make believe you are in a Jungle - make a den with an old blanket across a couple of chairs, use soft toys as the animals. You could even act out one of the adventures from shows like **Raa Raa The Noisy Lion** that you have just watched with your child adding in their imagination to create a whole new story.
8. Remember not to put pressure on your children and give them the opportunity to communicate with you. Get down to their level and give them time to listen as well as talk.
9. The most important thing for children is adults who listen and talk with them, alongside stimulating experiences and materials that give them opportunities to interact and play. Too much TV can get in the way of this, so it is important to try and get the right balance.
10. For more information, visit [www.raaraathenoisylion.com](http://www.raaraathenoisylion.com). If you at all concerned about your child's communication development, log onto [www.talkingpoint.org.uk](http://www.talkingpoint.org.uk).

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#### **Notes to Editor:**

- \* The survey was conducted by OnePoll on behalf of Chapman Entertainment, the producers of Raa Raa The Noisy Lion.

### **Chapman Entertainment**

Chapman Entertainment was founded by Managing Director, Greg Lynn, Creative Director, Keith Chapman - the originator of Bob The Builder - and Commercial and Finance Director, Andrew Haydon. It is a rapidly growing company specialising in the creation, production and IP management of original, quality children's and family entertainment properties.

### **The *Hello* campaign**

The *Hello* campaign is the national year of communication. Run by The Communication Trust, a coalition of 40 leading voluntary sector organisations - in partnership with the Government's Communication Champion, Jean Gross- *Hello* aims to make 2011 the year when children's communication skills become a priority in homes and schools across the country.

[www.hello.org.uk](http://www.hello.org.uk).