

and others in order to limit the amount of time that children spend on-line.” Banning and restrictions do not need to be the only way to establish a home version of an Internet Code of Conduct; if Internet use is a shared activity between adults and children, Web sites can be discussed together so that violent images or ideas can be understood, contextualized, or rejected according to the family’s beliefs.

Cleverly combining the benefits of both reading and watching television, regardless of the content, is Steve Johnson, contributing editor to *Wired*, writer of the “Emerging Technology” column in *Discover* magazine, and author of *Everything Bad Is Good For You: How Today’s Popular Culture Is Actually Making Us Smarter* (Penguin Books, 2005): “...violence is part of the content of

popular media... and has less of an impact than the kind of thinking the entertainment forces you to do. This is why we urge parents to instill a general love of reading in their children, without worrying as much about what they’re reading—because we believe there is a laudable cognitive benefit that comes just from the act of reading alone, irrespective of the content. The same principle applies to television or film or games.”

Today, perhaps more than ever, we need to rely more heavily on our own good judgement, based on information gathered from a wide variety of sources, rather than allowing ourselves to be influenced by media which might readily point to erroneous “cause and effect scenarios.” And also keep in mind that perception is rarely reality. ■

Ontario Coalition for School Libraries (OCSL)

Liz Kerr

The Ontario Coalition for School Libraries is a group of individuals and organizations that came together three years ago to advocate for good school libraries in Ontario. Their vision includes qualified staff, adequate and sustained funding, and collaborative teaching/learning programs that embrace the full extent of the school’s learning community.

The OCSL is co-chaired by Catherine Mitchell of Tundra Books, and Liz Kerr, who works at the Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board and the Ontario Library Association. Other members of the steering committee include Marg Anne Morrison, Executive Director of the Ontario Book Publishers of Ontario, Kathryn Blackett, writer and researcher with People for Education, Helaine Becker, Canadian author, Helena Aalto, Executive Director of

the Canadian Coalition for School Libraries, and Brenda Halliday of National Book Service.

The mission, vision and values can be viewed on the Web site: www.ontarioschoollibraries.ca.

Each year, the OCSL participates in a small number of targeted activities such as distributing literature and talking to various audiences who may be influential in building Ontario’s school libraries into vibrant centres that contribute to student achievement, as supported by international research.

Please view the Web site for current activities and information, and find out how you can contribute to the advocacy efforts of the OCSL. There have been positive signs of change in Ontario, and it is essential that we all build on each other’s efforts rather than working in isolation! ■