



Troy King Alabama Attorney General

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AG KING LAUNCHES PSA CAMPAIGN ON VIDEO GAME RATINGS

*New Ads Encourage Parents to Use ESRB Ratings and Rating Summaries to
Choose Age-Appropriate Games for their Families*

(MONTGOMERY)--today Alabama Attorney General Troy King announced a new Public Service Announcement (PSA) campaign to explain and encourage parents to use video game ratings, which are assigned by the non-profit Entertainment Software Rating Board ([ESRB](http://www.esrb.org)). In the TV and radio ads, King urges parents to check the rating each time they purchase or rent a video game to ensure that it is appropriate for their children and family, as well as to take advantage of the ESRB's new "rating summaries" for greater detail about game content.

"I know parents face tough decisions these days about the media they allow into their homes," said General King. "There's simply no substitute, though, for parental involvement and responsibility, and it's important that parents play an active role in choosing games for their children. ESRB ratings are an effective and informative resource that allows parents to decide if the video game their child wants is appropriate, and rating summaries provide even more insight into exactly what a parent would want to know about in a game. I'm proud to be educating parents in our state about the tools at their disposal."

The public service announcements are being provided to radio and television stations and local cable TV operators statewide. ESRB has also prepared a brochure providing additional information about the rating system, which will be distributed at participating video game retail stores throughout the state. The TV PSA can be viewed on ESRB's website at http://www.esrb.org/about/media_library.jsp.

"Video games are no different than movies and TV shows in that they are created for a diverse audience of all ages," said ESRB president Patricia Vance. "That is why it is so important that parents remember to check the rating when purchasing games for their children. And for parents that want to dig deeper into a game's content before deciding if it's suitable for their child, rating summaries are an excellent source of additional information. I'm pleased to be joining Attorney General King in announcing his effort to reach out to Alabama's parents and educate them about these resources."

The ESRB video game ratings employ a two-part system. As seen in the illustration below, rating symbols on the front of virtually every game package sold at retail provide an age recommendation, such as EC (Early Childhood 3+), E (Everyone 6+), E10+ (Everyone 10 and up), T

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(Teen 13+) and M (Mature 17+). On the back of each package, next to the rating, are content descriptors that provide information about what's in the game that may have triggered the rating, or may be of interest or concern to parents.



Since its inception in 1994, the ESRB ratings have become a trusted resource for parents when choosing computer and video games. In April 2007, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) released a report¹ which found that nine in ten parents are aware of the ESRB ratings, 87% expressed satisfaction, and nearly three quarters use them regularly when choosing games for their children.

“While many parents are aware of the ratings, and are making sensible game purchase decisions as a result, there is always more that can be done to raise awareness,” added King. “Working with ESRB, these ads will help arm parents with the information they need to make the right choices about the video games they deem appropriate for their children and families.”

Rating summaries, which are available for all game titles rated since July 1, 2008, are a supplementary source of information that explain in objective terms the context and relevant content that factored into a game's ESRB rating assignment. A new mobile website at m.esrb.org was launched to allow parents to search for rating summaries on their cell phones right from the store when trying to make a decision about which game to buy. Parents can also find rating summaries before they go to the store by searching on ESRB's website at www.esrb.org, using ESRB's [rating search widget](#), or signing up for a free e-newsletter called [ParenTools](#), which provides a list of recently rated titles complete with rating summaries customized to their preference of rating categories and game platform.

A complete list of ratings, content descriptors and their definitions can be found on the ESRB website at www.esrb.org.

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¹ Federal Trade Commission Report to Congress on the Marketing of Violent Entertainment to Children, April 2007