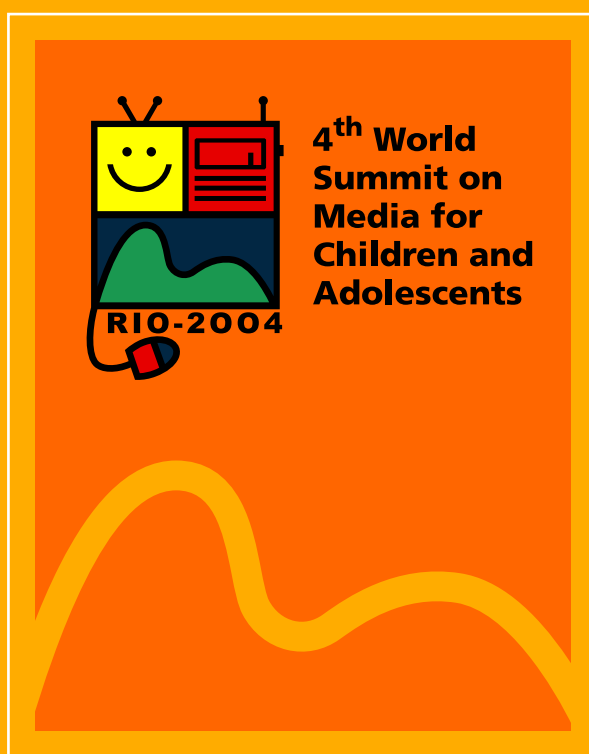


PREFEITURA DO RIO



Rio de Janeiro Charters





Declaration of the Professionals

The world – and the mass media that reflect and shape it – is at a cross-road. Wars and hatred, poverty and inequality, cast a shadow over our collective future. We ask ourselves if the media are part of the problem or part of the solution. Our answer is that they are both.

Media globalization is a reality, for better or worse. Media driven by profit alone and concentration of media ownership in fewer and fewer hands illustrate the dark side of globalization. Lack of quality and cultural diversity are the outcome.

The media can either help to perpetuate this situation, or become an instrument to transform it. We can resign ourselves to their dividing and polarizing us, or take action to ensure that they fulfill their great promise and bring us together as a human community.

The vast potential of the Information and Communication Revolution to promote diversity and social justice will only be realized through the active participation of all sectors of society. The airwaves and cyberspace do not belong to the broadcasters or to the advertisers – they belong, by law, to the people. Media companies are issued licenses with the condition that they serve the public interest.

Because the media are central to children's and adolescents' development and education – influencing not only attitudes but also behaviours and identities – we are deeply concerned about the negative values and lifestyles promoted by so much of the media today.

The media are taking on roles once played by parents and teachers, frequently without being prepared to face this awesome challenge. Children and adolescents are entitled to something better than what they are getting from the media.

The greatest investment we can make in the future is in our children and adolescents. This implies greater responsibility from both media and society, and actions that can no longer be postponed.

Adolescents' Declaration

We, the participants of the Adolescents Forum at the 4th World Summit on Media for Children and Adolescents, given our concern about the current media crisis for children and adolescents, recognize the need to discuss and re-examine the democratization of information in today's society and in mass media.

In order to discuss the democratization of production and use of the media, we must alert governments that globalization of access to information is a necessary first step. If we are to unite forces with peoples around the world in this effort, instead of changing the media, we should use it to eradicate violence, poverty and to facilitate access to education. Joining forces means uniting with the media thereby bringing quality culture, entertainment, and education to the entire population.

Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states: "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers."





Proposals

Professionals

To meet the goals listed above, we agree to the necessity of involving and engaging governments, broadcast companies, advertisers, advertising professionals, schools, universities, educators and researchers, civil society, media consumers, families, and others, to guarantee the following:

Establishment of broader alliances between these key players.

Incorporation and dissemination of the resolutions stated in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Regulation of mass media.

In service training of communications professionals by institutions of higher learning and by businesses.

Training to develop critical sensibilities in children and adolescents, as technical media production skills.

Adolescents

In light of the ideas expressed above, we, the Adolescents Forum, hereby propose:

Communication among children, teenagers and adults about quality media.

Guarantee of quality control in media starting with the creative process and including society, councils on ethics and grievance boards in all countries:

- 1 - Setting of times for, or prohibition of content that is violent, erotic, or encourages drinking alcohol, smoking cigarettes or using illegal drugs;
- 2 - Establishment of councils to receive audience suggestions and complaints about media abuses, making this information available to the general public;
- 3 - Put pressure on advertisers to refrain from sponsoring low quality programs based on audience complaints;
- 4 - Set up a media commission encompassing of children and adolescents.

Emergency establishment of ways to block pornographic content on the internet from children and adolescents.

Raise the sensitivity of producers of news and information for children and adolescents in order to:

- 1 - Avoid portraying stereotypes that associate children and teens with products outside their reach; or which associate them with crime and violence;
- 2 - Refrain from using embarrassing discriminatory images of children and adolescents.

Create spaces in schools to teach children and adolescents (especially those with physical or mental disabilities) how to receive, search for, and utilize information in a critical and productive fashion.





Proposals

Professionals

Authentic representations of children and teenagers in the media, considering cultural, social, ethnic, religious diversity, gender, et al. with special consideration to people with disabilities.

Increasing quality, quantity and diversity of media for children and adolescents at various stages of their development.

Promotion of media production with the participation children and adolescents.

Public and private financing of media for children and adolescents.

Democratization of the means of access to technology and information

Maintenance and strengthening of the public systems of communication.

Adolescents

Creation of mass communication media specifically for children and adolescents with space for local programming produced by themselves.

Guaranteed space for children and adolescents in the production and transmission of media products.

Government and private financing policies to induce in media production investment by children and adolescents.

Legally mandated free airtime TV and radio set aside for schools and organizations that promote the production of educational media for children and adolescents.

Conclusions of the Professionals

In Rio we looked at the media and the world from different perspectives. A wide range of successful experiences from all countries proves that there are viable, creative alternatives to mainstream homogeneity. This summit has renewed our commitment to build solidarity and human values through the media.

Conclusions of the Adolescents

We adolescents commit ourselves to the implementation of these proposals with the same level of passion today as when we are adults.

When adults recognize our work, prioritize quality media that is produced with the participation of children and teenagers, come to understand that we are not an expense but an investment, that we are the present building the future, then we will have won the battle we are fighting today.