




# ETHICAL FRAMEWORK FOR ONTARIO DEVELOPERS






The following criteria represent a continuum of marketing ethics in the design of children's interactive media. In some cases, governments have regulated acceptable industry practices (PIPEDA, COPPA, Broadcast Code). In other cases, best practices are self-regulated by ethical discussion and consensus amongst industry practitioners.

Any discussion around the development, marketing and monetization of children's digital media should include the following key considerations:






-  Children cannot be expected to understand the intricate ways in which data collection works. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the developer to seek and obtain verifiable consent. In Canada, developers are expected to follow PIPEDA and COPPA.
-  Children's privacy needs to be safeguarded to keep them safe. Most children do not have the developmental capacity to weigh and consider all the consequences of sharing personal information in the digital sphere until they approach 13 years of age. This principle is upheld through COPPA regulations.
-  Most research agrees children's ability to critically evaluate advertising and marketing and understand attitudinal and emotional persuasion techniques is not fully developed until an adolescent approaches 12 years of age. The "cognitive defense model" argues once children can recognize and understand advertising they can defend themselves from it (Carter, Patterson et al. 2011). Unlike broadcast, digital advertising practices to children are self-regulated and governed, principally, by corporate values and ethics.

## POSITIVE INTERACTIVE EXPERIENCE - PIX INDEX






### Parent Engagement / Communication

- 1  Parent Dashboard – full parent oversight. Offers rich opportunities for parental interaction.
- 2  Dedicated parent feature. Child benefits highlighted: learning outcomes, digital mediation tips and curricular connections for parent.
- 3  Parent information on web/mobile site. Focus is on privacy/safety (i.e. disable in-app purchases on device) and company accolades vs. child benefits.
- 4  Passing reference to parents.
- 5  Child/user directed. No acknowledgement of parents.

### Privacy

- 1  Open play – no log in required. Walled garden. No outside links.
- 2  Anonymous log in: username and password only. No PII (Personally Identifiable Information) captured.
- 3  Site log in required. PII captured/verifiable parent consent required. Adhere to strict information collection, use and disclosure.
- 4  Adult targeted web/mobile experience: Apple or Google Play ID password required for download. Parental log in oversight requested on websites and/or apps.
- 5  PII captured: cookies, IP, device ID, web beacons, etc.

### User Experience (UX)

- 1  Educationally based interactive learning.
- 2  Developmentally appropriate media/interactive experience.
- 3  Fun driven interactive play with a side order of learning.
- 4  Collaborative, community based experience; taps into adolescent development, identity formation, independence and importance of peer connections.
- 5  Good times. No pretense of learning.

## Marketing

- 1  No advertising.
- 2  In-house ads/cross promotion.
- 3  Merchandising/cross-selling/up-selling/Advergaming.
- 4  Ad networks serving contextual ads. AdSense - age appropriate filtering.
- 5  Third party advertising. Social Media integration and/or gaming services. Behavioural targeting. Developmentally inappropriate data collection, aggregation and profiling.

## Monetization

- 1  None. No direct revenue stream.
- 2  Paid. One time payment for use i.e. premium game. Free demo or lite version with a link to a store page to purchase the full paid version.
- 3  Merchandising/ cross selling/iTunes, DVD's, toys.
- 4  Subscription based/up-selling/pay walls.
- 5  Freemium/micro-transactions.

## LEGEND



Parent Engagement/  
Communication



Privacy



User Experience  
(UX)



Marketing



Monetization

