

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS
DEPARTMENT OF ATTORNEY GENERAL
150 SOUTH MAIN STREET, PROVIDENCE, RI 02903
Patrick C. Lynch, Attorney General

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

August 9, 2007



CONTACT: Beryl Kenyon
Tel: (401) 274-4400, ext. 2359
Fax: (401) 222-2725
www.riag.state.ri.us

Eliot Mizrachi, ESRB
(718) 872-8820
emizrachi@esrb.org

AG Lynch and ESRB president Patricia Vance launch video game rating awareness campaign

At a press conference held in his office today, Attorney General Patrick C. Lynch and Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) president Patricia E. Vance unveiled a campaign designed to heighten awareness of the system used to rate the content of video games. The campaign, which explains the video game rating system and encourages parents to check a game's rating to ensure that the video game is appropriate for their children and family, employs both television and radio public service announcements (PSAs) that will begin running in Rhode Island this month. The PSAs feature Lynch, his daughter Kelsy, 12, and son Graham, 11.

Steven Furtado, president of the Rhode Island PTA, demonstrated the PTA's support of the PSA campaign initiative by participating in today's program.

"Before children and teenagers grab the controls to play a video game, we're asking parents to control the types of games their kids play by checking the game's rating," Lynch said. "Most parents routinely check the ratings of movies before taking or allowing their children to see films, and I'm honored to join with ESRB to ask parents to use that same level of vigilance concerning video games. It's up to us, as parents, to take every measure possible to increase protections for our children. Using the excellent ESRB rating system is an extremely important and positive step."

Lynch encouraged adults purchasing video games to check the rating symbols on the front of virtually every game package sold at retail. Each package bears one of the following age recommendations: EC [Early Childhood 3+], E [Everyone 6+], E10+ [Everyone 10 and up], T [Teen 13+], and M [Mature 17+]. The rating is also printed on the back of each package, along with content descriptors providing information about content that may have triggered the rating or that may be of interest or concern to parents.

"Just like movies and TV shows, video games are created for a diverse audience of all ages," ESRB president Patricia Vance stated. "That is why it's so important that parents and adults remember to check the rating when purchasing games for children. We are very proud to have the support of Attorney General Lynch in reaching out to Rhode Island's parents to raise awareness of the ratings and urge parents to use them when buying or renting games."

Since its inception in 1994, the ESRB ratings have become a trusted resource for parents when choosing computer and video games. In April of this year, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) released a report that found that nine in ten parents are aware of the ESRB ratings, 87 percent 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 purchases as a result, there is always more that can and should be done," Lynch said. "Working with ESRB, we hope that these ads will help arm parents with the information they need to make the right choices when purchasing video games."

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

#