



Kijkwijzer warns parents and educators of up to what age a television programme or film can be harmful to children. Kijkwijzer does this firstly by giving an age recommendation: All Ages, 6 years, 9 years, 12 years and 16 years. In addition, pictograms are used that show the reason for the recommendation: violence, fear, sex, discrimination, drug and/or alcohol abuse and coarse language.

Age indicators:

- AL** = Not harmful/ All Ages
- 6** = Watch out with children under 6
- 9** = Watch out with children under 9
- 12** = Watch out with children under 12
- 16** = Watch out with children under 16

Content descriptors:

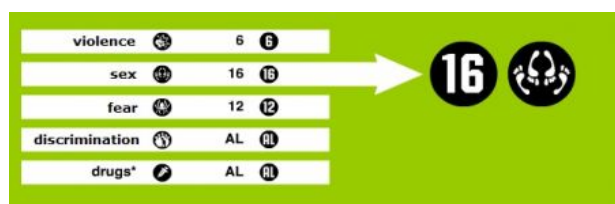
- = Violence
- = Fear
- = Sex
- = Discrimination
- = Drugs- and alcoholabuse
- = Coarse Language

The Kijkwijzer age recommendation does not simply mean that a television programme or film is suitable for children of that age and above. Kijkwijzer makes no pronouncements on this. An example: a serious documentary bears the recommendation All Ages, because it contains no images that could be harmful to children. The film may nevertheless be unsuitable for young children, for example because the content is too complex.

Coders

Using a questionnaire developed by Kijkwijzer, broadcasters and film and video distributors classify their productions themselves. The questionnaire was developed by a group of renowned experts in the field of media and youth. They made use in this of research into the harmful influence of audio-visual productions on children and young people. In addition, a great deal of consideration has been devoted to the wishes of parents and educators. The system is flexible, in the sense that it must adapt to new scientific insights and changing social mores and values.

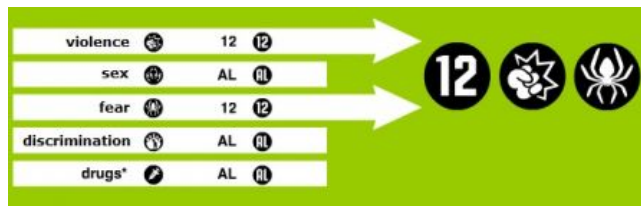
On the basis of a number of questions, the coder assesses the television programme or film in terms of violence, fear, sex, discrimination, drug and/or alcohol abuse and coarse language. An age recommendation is associated with each of these subjects. The subject with the highest age score determines the final age recommendation that Kijkwijzer gives a production.




In this case, sex is the subject with the highest score, meaning that the age limit is set at 16 years.

The Kijkwijzer recommendation is: **16**

If several subjects score equally highly, these will also be included in the Kijkwijzer recommendation, with a maximum of three. The sequence of the pictograms is as follows: violence, fear, sex, coarse language, discrimination, drugs.



In this case, violence and fear set the age limit at 12 years.

The Kijkwijzer recommendation is:   

For clarity reasons an advice contains not more than three content descriptors. The sequence of the pictograms is as follows: violence, fear, sex, coarse language, discrimination, drugs.

Broadcast times on television

In the case of television, the Kijkwijzer ages are linked to broadcast slots. Programmes with the classification All Ages, 6 and 9 years may be broadcast at any time of the day. Programmes with the classification 12 years may only be broadcast from 20.00 hours and with the classification 16 years from 22.00 hours.

Training

The questionnaire is available on the coders' website of the Kijkwijzersystem. After attending the training and finishing the Kijkwijzer College by doing an exam, every coder receives a coder handbook and personal login for the coders' site. With this login the coder can, on behalf of his or her organisation, classify productions with the online questionnaire of Kijkwijzer. A Kijkwijzer computer programme translates the answers to an age recommendation and content descriptors. The classifications will be automatically saved in a central database.

Monitoring and complaints

The government closely monitors actual compliance with the self-regulatory measures. This supervisory role is delegated to the Media Authority, which regularly investigates and evaluates the functioning of the system of self-regulation. NICAM itself also performs regular quality assessments of compliance with the rules. In addition, it regularly tests consumer perception and use of Kijkwijzer. All organisations and companies affiliated to NICAM are obliged to classify their audio-visual productions in accordance with the Kijkwijzer rules. Anyone who ascertains a possible breach of the Kijkwijzer rules, is entitled to submit a complaint. Complaints are always first processed at NICAM's office. If a possible breach of the Kijkwijzer rules is ascertained, the NICAM contacts the broadcaster or distributor. If the broadcaster or distributor does not follow this advice within three days, the complaint is then forwarded to the independent NICAM Complaints Committee. The Complaints Committee will hear the complaint in session. Both the complainant and the plaintiff are given an opportunity to make a verbal statement of their position. The Complaints Committee may order that the classification be amended or the broadcast time changed. It is also possible for sanctions to be imposed. The level of the penalty can reach a maximum of € 75,000,-.

The party found to be in the wrong will have the opportunity to institute an appeal against the judgement of the Complaints Committee with the Appeals Committee. The judgements of the Complaints Committee can also be found on the Kijkwijzer website.

NICAM

NICAM is an abbreviation for the Netherlands Institute for the Classification of Audio-visual Media. The institute enjoys broad support within the audio-visual sector in the Netherlands and is responsible for the coordination of the Kijkwijzer scheme.

NICAM's board consists of representatives of both public and commercial broadcasters, film distributors and cinema operators, distributors and retailers.