

**STATEMENT OF
CHAIRMAN MICHAEL K. POWELL**

Re: Children's Television Obligations of Digital Television Broadcasters, MM Docket No. 00-167

This Commission is committed to serving the educational needs of our nation's youth. Not only are our children the cornerstone of our future, but they will, too, be the torch bearers that bring today's digital migration into tomorrow's digital reality.

As a parent and someone who has a passion for new technologies, I am proud that the Commission brings the benefits of the digital transition to America's children. With today's action, more children's educational and informational programming joins the growing ranks of political, sports, news and information and high-definition programming made possible by advances in digital broadcast technology. I want to give special thanks to the many children's advocates, most notably Children NOW, who have fought so hard to advance the interests of children.

In 1990, Congress passed the Children's Television Act to ensure broadcasters were serving children's educational and informational needs through their programming and to limit the amount of commercial matter that may be aired during children's programming. Today, we update Congress' requirements for the digital age. At a time where broadcasters using the public airwaves may now be able to increase their programming by as much six times the content they used to, so too should their obligations to serve our Nation's youth increase.

We substantially increase the children's educational and informational programming obligations for digital multicast broadcasters. We also put in place significant restrictions on worrisome trends of increasing commercialization of children's programming on both analog and digital broadcast and cable systems. Furthermore, our actions are designed to assist parents and children to more readily identify children's educational and informational programming by advocating uniform E/I symbol for this programming that must remain on screen throughout the program.

Parents have come to rely on children's programming as an oasis in an increasingly commercial world. Today, we ensure that parents have a clear path to this haven in the digital age.

This is just one step this Commission takes today in informing our children of the promise of their digital future. Later today, we will launch a kids-page on our website (<http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/kidszone/>) to provide parents with teaching tools and children with learning tools about the many facets of communications policy that touches our children's everyday lives.