



# K A N S A S

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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## **Governor's Column:** *Help for Parents Fighting Pop Culture*

*The following is a column by Governor Kathleen Sebelius:*

In my columns, I usually write to you about government business. But today, I'd like to talk about my most important job, being a mother to our two boys.

My sons are away at school now. John is finishing college and Ned has started law school. You can ask either one of them and they'll tell you I was a strict mom. Neither of them had a television in his room, and Gary and I monitored their TV viewing. There were shows we didn't allow them to watch. It was the same with music.

But parents today face new challenges that my husband Gary and I didn't have when our boys were younger.

Video games and music lyrics promote violence, while ever-looser standards for movies and TV shows bring inappropriate material right into our living rooms. The Internet poses safety threats I never dreamed of when my boys were little.

I don't believe moms and dads should be alone in their fight to raise children the right way, which is I want to help Kansas parents by providing access to tools to protect their children from inappropriate materials. Then you can make the decisions about what you feel is right for your child, the same way Gary and I did when our boys were younger.

Starting this week, you can visit [www.parenttools.ks.gov](http://www.parenttools.ks.gov) to find the information parents and families need to make informed decisions about what their children should watch and listen to.

You'll find links to organizations that review movies and let parents know whether those films contain foul language, violence, or other questionable content. There are similar guides for TV shows, and even for video games.

And for the times you're not at home, there are links to free Internet filtering software and instructions on how to activate the parental controls on your TV.

It's my hope parents will use these tools to stand up to popular culture and make sure their children learn the values that lead to a live of meaning, because that will lead to stronger families and a stronger Kansas.

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*Editor's Note: The Web site, [www.parenttools.ks.gov](http://www.parenttools.ks.gov), will be up and running by February 1.*