This portfolio will explore the effects of today's media on young children through three sections. Section one will critically evaluate the development of media for children's electronic entertainment between 1920-2018, section two will critically analyse the influence of celebrities and social media on children's body image, social and emotional development. Section three will critically discuss the role of parents and practitioners in safeguarding children from the negative influences of media.

Section One

Electronic entertainment for children has developed over the decades (Calvert and Wilson, 2011). Starting in the 1920-30s, the two main forms of electronic entertainment were radio and movies/television (Bryant, 2012), radio went on air during the 1920s and this offered people direct access to information from their home (Singer and Singer, 2012). A variety of programmes were broadcasted such as soap operas, quizzes and comedy shows, as the popularity of television and movies grew, studios started to develop family films; the family movie genre was created when Disney released the film, Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs in 1937 (Bryant, 2012). Watching movies became a fun way for families to communicate and bond with each other which can benefit the relationship between each family member (Shail, 2016).

During the 1960-70s, colour television was developed along with cartoons such as The Fantastic Four, there was an increase in families owning a television and time slots for children's entertainment were set on a Saturday and early afternoons during the week as it was considered the time children watched the most television (Bryant, 2012: Shail, 2016). During the 1970-80s video games such as Space Invaders and arcades were created, this gave children the opportunity to leave the house and socialise with others (Ito, 2009). Within the late 1970s, game consoles became available for children to play games in their home; this grew in popularity but lead to the closure of game arcades (Singer and Singer, 2012). During the 1980-90s, children's television continued to grow and pre-school shows were created such as Teletubbies in 1997 (Davies, 2010), a variety of animation shows such as Care Bears and Thunder Cats had been placed into children's viewing times (Singer and Singer, 2012). Cable channels such as Nickelodeon which started at the beginning

of the 1980s were also introduced (Bryant, 2012). Computers were also developed during the 1980s along with educational games, which provided children with different learning experiences (Ito, 2009). The Internet was available in 1993, mobile phones and texting were developed in 1994 which enabled people to communicate with each other through digital text (Palmer, 2015).

Now in the 2000s-2018, television and radio is still present and are considered traditional forms of media due to their history (Chambers, 2016). The Internet has grown in popularity with young children, it provides them with many forms of entertainment, social media platforms such as Snapchat, Twitter, Instagram and Facebook, along with email, group chats and blogs which enables them to be socially connected with their friends and the world (Palmer, 2015: Miller et al, 2016). Other forms of entertainment include YouTube, online gaming, Netflix and virtual reality software which provide children with a different form of play (Miller et al, 2016). Children can access these through smart phones, tablets or apps, the most popular smart phones/tablets are IPhones which were developed in 2007 and IPads which were developed in 2010 (Peddie, 2013). The Internet also gives children access a wealth of information using search engines such as Google or Bing, which can support them with their learning (Hunter, 2012). Singer and Singer (2012) mention that through digital devices children are isolating themselves because they are spending time in their room using these devices instead of going outside or spending time with family. Neustaedter et al (2012) argues that children are socialising with friends online through social media and it is the parent's responsibility to monitor children's use of digital devices and encourage them to spend time as a family.

Section Two

Social and emotional development is a vital part of children's growth and development, these two areas help children to develop the abilities to express/manage their emotions and socialise with others (Neaum, 2010). It also supports childrens development of self-concept and self-image, which are closely linked to children's emotional and social development (Neaum, 2010). According to

Brown (2017: 8) ‘body image refers to the feelings, perceptions, emotions and beliefs about our bodies, the way we see and feel about our body’. Body image has big influences on people’s self-esteem, this can affect the way people feel about themselves or think other people see them, which can have an impact on their mental health and behaviour (Nemours, 2018).

Media such as magazines, television and social media can have an impact on children’s body image, these forms of media show celebrities and social influencers such as youtubers on the front cover of magazines and on television adverts which children have direct access to (Teaching Matters, 2009). The media portrays women who are considered happy, beautiful and successful as skinny and having a pretty face (Bello, 2013) and women who are overweight are portrayed as lazy, have no drive to work and have a rebellious attitude (Grogan, 2017). Men in the media are shown to be slim and muscular (Grogan, 2017), however some of the images of men in the media, cannot be achieved without controlled substances such as steroids (Flynn, 2012). Due to the growth of social media, this view is being reinforced (Bell, 2016). According to Ofcom (2017), children start having social media profiles at the age of eight years old as their survey showed that 23% of children between the ages of eight to eleven years old have social media accounts and this is higher with children between the ages of twelve to fifteen years old as it was 74%. Palmer (2015) mentions that the screen-based culture introduces children to many role models beyond the immediate circle such as models, pop singers, television/sport stars and youtubers. These celebrities and social influencers have millions of followers on their social media such as Twitter and Instagram with most of them being children and young people who are easily influenced (Strauss, 2014). Celebrities and social influencers have a large amount of power and persuasive influence (Strasburger et al, 2014). Youtuber followers are mainly young people that feel they can relate to the creator and feel equal to them due to them living an everyday life, this means that children are more likely to copy their behaviour and be influenced by any content they create (Westenberg, 2016). Palmer (2015) and Preece (2017) mention that children learn through observation and imitation which can affect their behaviour, thoughts and understanding. However, Preece (2017) believes that children are vulnerable viewers, who may imitate bad behaviour or be persuaded to do an activity to make them feel they are cool when it is dangerous and

puts them at risk of being hurt or getting into trouble. This relates to Bandura's social learning theory, Bandura believed that children learn through observing and copying adults in their life, which can have impact on their behaviour, values and beliefs (Johnston and Nahmad-Williams, 2009).

Celebrities and social influencers share advertisements, photographs and videos of their life on their social platforms which can be edited or photo-shopped to make them look flawless or skinnier (Bell, 2016). These sorts of activity can create unrealistic views of beauty and physical perfection (Teaching Matters, 2009: Strasburger et al, 2014). Children who continuously looks at these posts will think how glamorous and wonderful their life is, causing them to have the need to live that life and put a huge amount of pressure on themselves to change to live like the celebrity or social influencer (Teaching matter, 2009: Palmer, 2015). This relates to George Gerbner's (2002) Cultivation theory, Gerbner believes that heavy expose to media can alter a person's beliefs about the world, which changes their behaviour (Lau, 2014). This can leave people with a misperception of what is true in the world as the heavy exposure leads to people not knowing the different between the virtual and real world (Lau, 2014: Bell, 2016). However, this theory has been criticised, Gerbner focused on the impact of television for his theory and Strasburger et al (2014) mentions that television is not the only medium that influences people's attitudes, there are other forms of media available and communicating with other people with different viewpoints can also influence a person's decisions and attitudes.

Alongside this, these posts can have a negative effect of children's self-esteem, body image and confidence (Teaching Matters, 2009), as Preece (2017) mentioned earlier children are vulnerable viewers and seeing images of successful people can lead to body dissatisfaction. According to Rutgers University (no date) body dissatisfaction is described as 'a negative subjective evaluation of the weight and shape of one's own body'. Fardouly and Vartanian (2015) and Bell (2016) mention that due to the growth and popularity of social media this had led to the rise in body dissatisfaction and it has become normal among children and young people to suffer with it. Bell (2016) believes that body dissatisfaction is due to having a negative body image, Charles (2014) believes that people who are dissatisfied with their body, have

images stuck in their mind from continuously looking at their role models and comparing themselves to that person, leading to desiring the need to change to meet society's standards of beauty. When people compare themselves to others, this relates to Leon Festinger (1954) theory of social comparison (Fardouly et al, 2015). Festinger believed that people have a drive to compare themselves to others, whenever people are presented with information about someone they relate this to themselves (Calvert and Wilson, 2011). People have a basic need to maintain a stable and accurate self-view of themselves, this leads to them wanting to find out information about their own characteristics and abilities along with the person they are comparing themselves too (Calvert and Wilson, 2011). From this information people compare their lifestyle, body image, face and hair, if the person is comparing themselves to someone who they consider is more superior, this is known as upward comparison (Lemish, 2013). Social comparison can cause people to have a negative self-evaluation, image and mood which can cause people to make changes to their lifestyle and behaviour to attempt to reach the standards of the person they view as superior (Calvert and Wilson, 2011: Lemish, 2013: Fardouly et al, 2015). A study by Klein (2013 cited in Bell, 2016) showed this as it involved women increasing their exposure to images of thinspiration on social media, thinspiration is described as media content that promotes weight loss (Grogan, 2017). The results of Klein's study showed that 74% of women who took part felt that they needed to change their diet and spend more time in the gym to look like the people they followed on social media and had the desire to be them (Bell, 2016). Bell (2016) mentions that this shows the impact of high exposure to thinspiration images in social media and social comparison has an impact on body image and confidence. Ricciardelli and Yager (2015) also agree with this as they believe that social comparison and social media lead to body dissatisfaction and people's motivation to change.

These factors contribute to encouraging children and young people to restrict or avoid eating food, which could lead to an eating disorder, anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa and binge-eating disorder (Brown, 2017). Teaching Matters (2009) mentions that many girls think the correct way to lose weight is by starving themselves, thereby losing a large amount of weight and are at risk of becoming very ill. The weight-loss is achieved through not eating and doing excessive exercise or binge eating then purging by vomiting or taking laxatives (Mental Health Foundation,

2018). This can have a negative effect on their health, wellbeing, emotional and social development, and is life threatening as malnutrition can cause heart failure (Mental Health Foundation, 2018). It can negatively affect physical health and slow down the body changes that are associated with puberty (McDevitt et al, 2013). People withdraw themselves from social groups, hobbies and family life (Mental Health Foundation, 2018) because they feel ashamed of it; which can make them feel alone, depressed and anxious (Brown, 2017). This can affect developing social skills, friendships and lead to difficultes with expressing emotions (Lask and Bryant-Waugh, 2013) which can affect their education and have lasting effects into adulthood (Goodheart et al, 2012). People who suffer with eating disorders need to get medical and physiological help through speaking to their doctor and allowing family and friends to support them to recover from their disorder (McDevitt et al, 2013).

Section Three

Parents and practitioners have a big influence on children, Gullotta and Blau (2010) and Trodd (2016) mention that parents are the first educators because they are children's earliest and most direct influence. Taylor et al (2004) and Gullotta and Blau (2010) both emphasise that parental influences shape children's development, learning, attitudes and behaviour, once children start in an early years setting, practitioners have a role in influencing and supporting children in their care which will shape their learning and development (Neaum, 2016). This shows that both parents and practitioners have a shared responsibility to support children, Trodd (2016) and Neaum (2016) highlight that practitioners and parents much work in partnership to benefit the child, helping them become prepared for schooling and life (Taylor et al, 2004). This relates to Bandura's social learning theory, Bandura believed that children learn their behaviours, beliefs and values from observing and imitating the role models they have in their life such as parents and practitioner which has led to the idea of adults needing to be good role models to children (Shaffer, 2008: Johnston and Nahmad-Williams, 2009).

Due to the growth of digital devices, the internet and social media, parents are more concerned about their children's activities (Ofcom, 2017). According to Ofcom (2017) 39% of parents with children between the ages of five to fifteen years old, are more concerned about their children's time spent online than watching television; this is because they can monitor television programmes but not online activity. Adults have an important role in safeguarding children from the negative influences of media (Strauss, 2014: Kaye, 2017). There are many pieces of legislation that parents and practitioners must follow such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child (UNCRC) (Unicef, no date) and the Children Act 1989 (Department for Education (DfE), 2015). The Children Act 1989 mentions that the welfare of children is paramount, parents have a responsibility to take care of the child and the local authorities must provide support for the family to benefit the child (DfE, 2015). The UNCRC has many articles which state that children have the right to play (Article 31) and access information from the mass media (Article 17) while being protected from all forms of danger (Article 19) and having the right to privacy (Article 16) (Unicef, no date).

It is important for practitioners and parents to have an understanding of today's technology, online services and social media platforms that children use daily (Kaye, 2017). Parents and practitioners have a role to educate and raise children's awareness of being safe and how to act online (Strauss, 2014), along with being familiar with the possible signs of children who are at risk online and have the knowledge to solve the matter effectively before anything serious happens (McCabe, 2017). Alongside this, changes to children's education are being made due to the popularity of digital devices (Underwood and Farrington-Flint, 2015). Donaldson (2015) made report recommendations in Successful Futures which led to changes in the welsh curriculum and adding a Digital Competence framework (Welsh Government, 2017). This framework focuses on introducing and developing the skills that children need to communicate, live and adapt in a digital world safely (Learning Wales, 2017). The Foundation Phase also mentions that ICT should be a part of the curriculum and emphasises the importance of children understanding that their actions have consequences (Department for Education and Skills, 2015). Due to the curriculum changes it is essential for practitioners to develop their knowledge and understanding to benefit children's understanding of how to be safe online (Learning

Wales, 2017). Parents and practitioners can educate and develop their awareness of digital devices and online safety by doing further research on online services such as the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre, read the manuals of the devices they buy and attend training or online courses which focus on online safety (Kaye, 2017).

According to Ofcom (2017) parents and practitioners use a variety of approaches to control children's access and usage online, these include talking to the child, active supervision, blocking inappropriate sites/resources and using passcode tools. Ofcom (2017) states that 40% of parents with children between the ages of five to fifteen years old use all these approaches to monitor their children. Communication and supervision can allow children, parents and practitioners to build a trusting relationship with each other (Megele, 2018), as well as creating a safe environment to express concerns and discuss matters such as how the information online does not always reflect reality (Strauss, 2014: McCabe, 2017). However, Fitzgerald (2004) and Mandel (2008) mention that if children, parents and practitioners have a poor relationship with each other, this can affect the way they communicate and potentially lead to important matters related to media not being addressed which could be the affect the child's knowledge of online safety and put them at risk.

Palmer (2015) mentions that parents and practitioners can take control of the digital devices and electronic media in their home or setting. Preece (2017) believes that parents and practitioners should take the time to activate passcodes and place locks/age restriction on any internet enabled devices to ensure the safety of children and monitor their activity. According to Ofcom (2017) 37% of parents with children between the ages of five to fifteen years use home network filters. Lewis (2014), Galloway et al (2015) and Kaye (2017) believe that parents and practitioners can use internet protection software and the restriction setting on digital devices to block websites and place codes to prevent children accessing inappropriate content, along with flagging inappropriate content to get it removed from the site. Pamler (2015) also states that many digital devices, television and computers have a family setting to allow everyone see what the children are accessing which is considered a helpful tool when monitoring children's activity. Parental controls can prevent children from harm however, Livingstones et al (2012) and Marotz and Kupzyk (2018) questions

does this encourage children to behave badly and go behind their parent's backs, this is because children feel they are responsible enough to use the internet independently but they feel their parents do not trust them due to the blocks that are put in place; children will think of other ways to access this content such as finding out the code or viewing it from their friend's devices which can put the child at harm and affect the relationship between the child and parent.

To conclude, electronic entertainment for children has changed over the years, media has developed an unrealistic view of beauty, which celebrities and social influencers promote through their social media platforms which can have a negative effect on children's emotional/social development and body image. Parents and practitioners have a responsibility to safeguard children, using a variety of approaches to protect them from the negative influences of media.

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