

TV SOAPS 'ARE NOT FIT FOR FAMILY VIEWING'

TELEVISION soaps were ordered to clean up their act yesterday.

In a damning verdict on shows that were once staple family viewing, watchdogs declared that parents were no longer comfortable tuning in with their children.

The two most popular soaps, Coronation Street and EastEnders, were key targets in the report from the Broadcasting Standards Commission.

It launched its investigation,

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the biggest for 20 years, in response to a doubling of complaints within a year about plotlines deemed fit to be screened well before the 9pm watershed.

BSC chairman Lord Dubs said: 'People have certain expectations of soaps. They are part of the British way of life and if those expectations are confused, audiences get upset.'

'Parents need to have confidence that their children will

not be watching violent scenes.'

One in eight viewers thought soap operas were now 'unsuitable for children'. One in five felt they raised 'unsuitable issues' or made them feel uncomfortable watching with their children.

With EastEnders on BBC1 and Coronation Street on ITV now airing four times a week, there was an acute danger of losing sight of decency in pursuit of ratings, said the watchdogs.

Many parents felt violence was used gratuitously, said Lord Dubs. 'If people know they're going to watch a crime

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