

Press Council review, public hearings include children's perspective

The Press Council of South Africa starts its system's review in a [series of public hearings](#) starting on 17 February 2011 and, according to Media Monitoring Africa (MMA), for the first time children will be making an oral submission to the council, with their suggestions on how to improve journalistic portrayals of children in the media.

The MMA's Children's Media Monitoring Project has child media monitors, who keep a close eye on the media and monitor daily its representation of children. This project gives children skills to critically read and analyse the media. They will present their findings on:

- How the media depicts children;
- What children would like to see more and less of, in the media;
- Changes to the Press Code suggested by the children;
- How the children feel when the media violates their rights.

MMA will also be making its submission to the Press Council directly after the children's slot and will give its views on the ongoing debates around calls for a Media Appeals Tribunal, poor and unethical reporting, accountability and regulation of the press. The issues to be addressed include:

- Why the Media Appeals Tribunal is a vindictive means to punish the crimes of the media;
- Creative ways to address media transgressions;
- How to bolster the independence of the Press Council so that it is not perceived as biased in favour of the media industry;
- Ensuring that the Press Council operates within an informal, speedy, cost-effective, open and transparent process and system.

The children's oral submission will be from 9.00-9.30am and the MMA oral submission from 9.30-10.30am on Thursday 17 February 2011 at Wits University, East Campus in the South West Engineering Building, Braamfontein.

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