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See It, Be It:

What Children Are Seeing On TV

Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media
If she can see it, she can be it.™

Nielsen

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Executive Summary

Since 2004, the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media has advocated for greater inclusion and better representation in global entertainment media through research and advocacy. In our effort to continue to move the needle forward, we analyzed the inclusion and representation of six groups (women, people of color, queer people, people with disabilities,[1] people ages 50 and older, and people who are fat[2]) in two different types of media content. First, we looked at inclusion and representation in **popular** programming with children ages 2 to 11 according to Nielsen metrics, which includes the 10 most popular broadcast, cable, and streaming shows, inclusive of Spanish-language programming.[3] Second, we analyzed inclusion and representation in **current** children's programming, including shows that premiered in 2021 and shows that didn't *premiere* in 2021 but were still airing new seasons.[4] In this full report, we look at differences in representation and inclusion within each type of media content, as well as compare across these formats. We refer to them as **popular** and **current,** and split out *new* content from **current** content, occasionally.

We focus on **popular** programming because, as frequent consumers of scripted TV shows,[5] we think it is critical to understand what young people are seeing. As ample research has found, the effects of media on the social, psychological, and physical development of children is profound.[6] We focus on **current** programming to get a sense of how the entertainment industry is responding to calls for more diverse and dynamic children's content. Audiences seek out content that tells their stories, and we need more diverse storytelling and characters to meet that demand. Moreover, programs with more diverse casts yield higher audience ratings, compared with programs with less diverse casts.[7] The analysis of inclusion and representation in **current** (and new) programming will serve as a benchmark to track further change and progress in television media made for children.

Is Gender Parity in Children's TV Slipping?

In past reports, we have found gender parity among lead characters in our research about children's television. This year, we report that in the 2021 season of TV made for children, most lead characters are male (61.6%). So, what happened? There are two important factors that can help us see this issue more clearly: datasets and character types.

As just described, this year, we are examining children's television from two perspectives: what is **popular** with children and what is **current (**this includes shows made for children that are currently **on air)**. Our past reports have focused on **popular** programming.

This year, 48.8% of leads in **popular** TV shows are women — about a 4-percentage-point increase from 2019 but still below 2018, when 52.0% of leads were women. The parity we have previously observed and celebrated remains.

This year **48.8% of leads in popular TV shows are women** — about a 4-percentage-point increase from 2019 but still below 2018, when 52.0% of leads were women.

However, what is popular with kids isn't necessarily what is made for kids. With this in mind, this year we expanded this study by adding a second dataset of **current** children's TV shows -- that is, scripted television shows, made for children, that released new episodes in the 2021-2022 season. There, we find the numbers regarding gender are a little bit different. In **current** children's programming, most lead characters are male (61.6%, compared to 38.1% female). This is concerning. However, when we look more closely at the data, we find an interesting quirk: near gender parity exists among human characters (52.2% male compared to 47.6% female). But 66.5% of nonhuman characters are male compared to 33.1% who are female. In other words, animals, anthropomorphized objects, and zombies or monsters are much more likely to be male. This suggests that creators are striving for parity when they're thinking about character identity, but they're slipping when identity is less salient — when the characters aren't human. This suggests that unconscious bias may be playing a role in the disparity.

More Key Findings

POPULAR PROGRAMMING FOR CHILDREN (AGES 2 TO 11) IN 2021

In current children's programming, most lead characters are male (61.6%, compared to 38.1% female)

- **GENDER**
  - Among lead characters, 48.8% are women — about a 4-percentage-point increase from 2019 but still below 2018, when 52.0% of leads were women.
  - Among notable supporting characters, 45.6% are women. Among supporting characters, 47.2% are women. Among minor characters, 39.5% are women.
  - Male characters are more likely than female characters to be fat (6.3% compared with 1.7%).
  - Female characters are more likely than male characters to be objectified (2.4% compared with 0.3%) and be shown in revealing clothing (9.6% compared with 4.2%)
  - A higher percentage of male characters have jobs than female characters (34.9% compared with 25.4%).
- **RACE/ETHNICITY**
  - Among characters with races, 68.5% of characters are Latinx, largely due to the inclusion of Spanish-language programming[8]. About one-tenth of characters are white (10.2%). Middle Eastern and North African characters (8.1%) and Asian and Pacific Islander characters (8.0%) appear at similar rates. The least commonly shown racial groups are Native (2.8%), Black (1.9%), and Multi-Racial (0.6%) characters.
  - Among lead characters, 70.2% of characters are people of color — a sharp rise from 2019, when that share was 31.9%, and 2018, when that share was 26.1%. The increase in people of color in leading roles is largely due to the inclusion of Spanish-language programming this year.
  - Among notable supporting characters, 86.3% are people of color. Among supporting characters, 89.5% are people of color. Among minor characters, 97.9% are people of color.
  - Characters of color are more likely than white characters to be in a committed relationship (21.5% compared with 9.8%), express romantic interests or intentions (43.0% compared with 16.4%), and be shown kissing (17.3% compared with 0.0%).
  - Characters of color are more likely than white characters to be shown as a leader (24.2% compared with 16.4%).
- **LGBTQIA+**
  - Among lead characters, 1.2% are LGBTQIA+ — a 0.7-point increase from 2019, and a 1-point increase from 2018.
  - Among notable supporting characters, 0.5% are LGBTQIA+. Among supporting and minor characters, 0.3% are LGBTQIA+.

- **DISABILITY**
  - There are no leading characters with a disability. In 2019, 0.3% of leads had a disability, and in 2018, 0.5% of leads had a disability.
  - Among notable supporting characters, 0.5% have a disability. Among supporting characters, 0.3% have a disability. Among minor characters, 0.7% have a disability.

There are no lead characters with a disability.

- **FATNESS**
  - Among lead characters, 3.8% are fat. In 2019, that share was 5.9% — a decline of 2.1-points between then and 2021.
  - Among notable supporting characters, 2.8% are fat. Among supporting characters, 4.4% are fat. Among minor characters, 4.8% are fat.
  - Fat characters are over twice as likely as nonfat characters to be violent (32.0% compared with 15.5%) and to commit a crime (28.0% compared with 10.9%).
- **AGE (50+)**
  - Among lead characters, 2.5% are ages 50 and older — a 1.5-point increase from 2019.
  - Among notable supporting characters, 12.7% are ages 50 and older. Among supporting characters, 20.6% are ages 50 and older. Among minor characters, 23.3% are ages 50 and older.
  - Characters 50 and older are also almost twice as likely as characters under 50 to be shown as a leader (25.5% compared with 13.4%).

CURRENT CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMING

- **GENDER**
  - Most lead characters are male (61.6%). Male characters also outnumber female characters in notable supporting (56.2%), supporting (58.9%), and minor roles (63.2%).
  - Male characters are more likely than female characters to be fat (6.8% compared with 4.5%).
- **RACE/ETHNICITY**
  - Among lead characters, slightly more are white than people of color (52.8%). White characters outnumber characters of color in supporting (58.6%) and minor (54.6%) roles. Among notable supporting roles, half (50.7%) are characters of color.
  - Among characters with races, 55.0% are white. Just under one-fifth of characters are Black (19.5%). About one-tenth of characters are Asian and Pacific Islander (10.0%) or Latinx (11.3%). The racial groups shown the least are Native (1.7%), Multi-Racial (1.5%), and Middle Eastern and North African (1.0%) characters.
  - Characters of color are more likely than white characters to have a job (29.3% compared with 19.8%) and be a leader (24.2% compared with 16.4%).

- **LGBTQIA+**
  - Among lead characters, 1.4% are LGBTQIA+. But in **new** programming, just 0.5% of leads are LGBTQIA+.
  - Among notable supporting characters, 2.4% are LGBTQIA+, and 1.4% of supporting characters and 2.0% of minor characters are LGBTQIA+.
  - Although LGBTQIA+ characters are just a small share of all characters on screen, they are more likely than non-LGBTQIA+ characters to hold a job, have a STEM profession, and be a leader.
- **DISABILITY**
  - There are no lead characters with a disability. Characters with a disability are less than 1% of notable supporting, supporting, and minor characters.
  - Disabled characters are more likely than nondisabled characters to be violent (41.7% compared with 11.2%) and commit a crime (50.0% compared with 7.3%).
- **FATNESS**
  - Among lead characters, 4.1% are fat. In **new** programming, just 2.1% of leads are fat. About 6% of notable supporting, supporting, and minor characters are fat.
  - Fat characters are more likely than nonfat characters to be violent (32.0% compared with 15.5%) and commit a crime (28.0% compared with 10.9%).
- **AGE (50+)**
  - Just 0.3% of lead characters are ages 50 and older. In **new** programming, there are no lead characters 50 and older. Characters 50 and older are better represented in notable supporting (5.1%), supporting (9.7%), and minor (11.0%) roles.
  - Characters 50 and older are more likely than younger characters to be a leader (25.5% compared with 13.4%).

ANIMATION VERSUS LIVE ACTION

- **GENDER**
  - Animated human characters approach gender parity, with slightly more male characters than female in **popular** (50.9% compared with 49.1%) and **current** (52.2% compared with 47.6%) programming.
  - Animated nonhuman characters (such as talking animals) are much more likely to be male in **popular** (68.1% compared with 31.9%) and **current** (66.5% compared with 33.1%) programming.
  - Animated characters are less likely to be nonbinary than live-action characters in **current** programming. There are no nonbinary animated characters in **popular** programming.

- **RACE/ETHNICITY**
  - In **current** programming, Black representation is better among live-action characters than animated characters. 16.2% of animated characters are Black compared with 28.2% of live-action. There are no statistically significant differences between animated and live-action representations for Asian and Pacific Islander, Latinx, Native, Middle Eastern and North African, or multiracial characters.
  - In **popular** programming, the racial differences between animated and live-action characters are more pronounced due to the popularity of telenovelas, in which Latinx characters make up 82.0% of live-action characters, compared with 5.0% of animated characters. Middle Eastern and North African characters are also more common in live-action programming than animated (9.3% compared with 2.5%). Further, 16.4% of animated characters from **popular** programming are Native, whereas there are no Native live-action characters.
  - In **popular** programming, just 0.4% of live-action characters are Black, compared with 9.2% of animated characters. Just 0.4% of live-action characters are white, compared with 56.3% of animated characters.

16.2% of animated characters are Black— compared with 28.2% of live-action.

- **DISABILITY**
  - Because of low visibility for these types of characters in general, there were no statistically significant differences between disability representation as animated and live-action characters.
- **FATNESS**
  - Fat characters are more prominent as animated than as live-action in **popular** programming — 8.3% of animated characters were fat, compared with 1.2% of live-action characters.
- **AGE (50+)**
  - In **current** programming, characters 50 and older are more prominent as animated than as live-action (7.8% compared with 4.1%).
  - In popular programming, the reverse is true — characters 50 and older are 25.5% of live-action characters compared with 6.9% of animated characters.
- **IMPLIED RACE**
  - While many characters did not have an explicit race, plenty had characteristics or traits that implied a race, especially in animated shows. A character's race is implied when they are styled, written, and/or performed with racialized affectations, or when cultural cues are suggestive of individual races or ethnicities. In **current** children's programming, 3.1% of characters had an implied race, compared with 1.3% of characters in **popular** programming.
  - In **new** programming, 37.5% of characters with an implied race are suggested to be Black, while another 30.0% are suggested to be Asian or Pacific Islander. In **current** children's programming, over half of all characters with implied races are suggested to be as Black (54.1%).
  - In **popular** programming, most characters with an implied race are Native Mesoamerican characters (42.9%), which is due to one series.

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Data Collection and Methodology

For our data collection, we employ content analysis, a research method where researchers operationalize complex concepts into quantifiable markers and systematically identify every occurance of those markers in media. This process is carried out by a team of human expert coders, who have all met training standards to ensure consistent and reliable data collection.

This report presents findings for two types of programming: television shows that are *popular* among children (ages 2 to 11) and television shows that are *made* for children.

Programming Popular with Children: This dataset includes the shows children are watching. We include the 10 most popular series among children ages 2 to 11 on broadcast, cable, and streaming, according to data that Nielsen provided the Institute. This totaled 30 series, with a sample of two episodes each, resulting in 946 characters. Unlike past reports, this dataset is not limited to English-language programming. The 10 most popular shows among children on broadcast television were all Spanish-language telenovelas, including one Turkish telenovela dubbed in Spanish. Thus, in this dataset, we find higher percentages of Latinx and Middle Eastern characters than we have identified in previous reports.

Current Children's Programming: This dataset includes every show made for children that released a new episode in 2021 and is listed on the trade database Variety Insights.[9] These shows were identified by searching for series tagged as "childrens," "children's animation," and "preschool" on Variety Insights. The search included all broadcast and cable networks, in addition to the following streaming services: Amazon Prime, Apple TV+, Disney+, HBO Max, Hulu, Netflix, Paramount+, and Peacock.[10]

This yielded a dataset of 115 shows. We sampled two episodes from the 2021 season for each series, for a total of 2,666 characters. On occasion, we draw out analysis of **new** series that *premiered* in 2021, allowing us to identify representation and inclusion in new shows, as well as set a baseline for future comparisons. This subset of the current children's programming dataset includes 65 new series and 1,381 characters.

TABLE 1 • **Datasets for popular and current TV programming, 2021**

	POPULAR CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMING (AGES 2 TO 11)	CURRENT CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMING
Episodes	60	115
Total Characters	946	2,666
Lead Characters	80	367
Notable Supporting Characters	215	797
Supporting Characters	360	1,046
Minor Characters	291	456

We identified the prominence of every character, assigning them to one of four levels: lead (which includes coleads), notable supporting, supporting, and minor. Leads refer to the protagonist of the A story in the episode. Next, we consider "notable supporting" roles. In previous years, non-leading characters above a minor level were identified as "supporting," a designation that was based on the film industry's operationalization of "supporting actors."[11] However, in this report, "notable supporting" provides more nuance to our analysis and allows us to capture when a character is not the lead but still plays a vital role in the story. In television, notable supporting characters are usually non-lead members of the cast and can be recurring characters and noteworthy guest stars. Supporting characters are those who appear in more than one scene but are not heavily featured. Minor characters are those who have speaking roles but appear only briefly.

In popular programming for children, there were 80 leading, 215 notable supporting, 360 supporting, and 291 minor characters. In current children's programming for 2021, there were 367 leading, 797 notable supporting, 1,046 supporting, and 456 minor characters. (For shows that premiered in 2021, there were 192 leading, 428 notable supporting, 525 supporting, and 236 minor characters.) Chi-square tests were employed for data analyses to determine statistical significance, with p-values set to 0.05.

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All Findings

GENDER

Prominence and Intersections

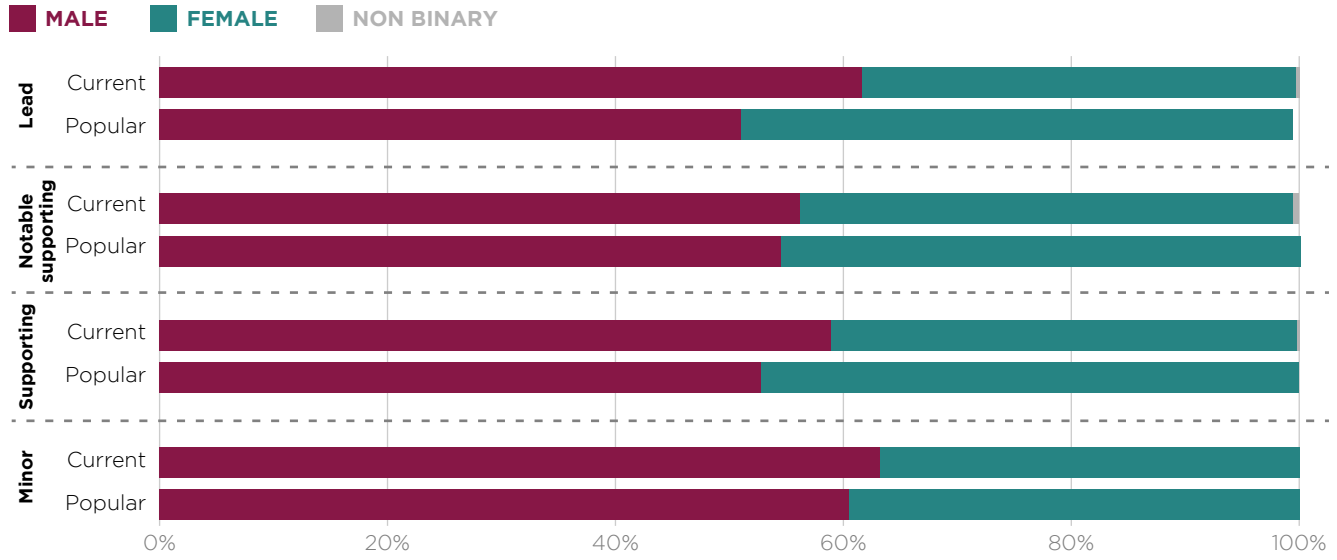
In **current** and **popular** programming for children, male characters outnumber female characters. The gap is smallest in programming that is popular with children (55.4% for male characters, 44.6% for female characters). The gap is largest in new children's programming (60.6% for male characters, 39.0% for female characters).

TABLE 2 • **Gender inclusion in current, new, and popular programming for children (all characters) in 2021**

	CURRENT	NEW	POPULAR
Male	59.2%	60.6%	55.4%
Female	40.5%	39.0%	44.6%
Nonbinary	0.3%	0.4%	0.0%

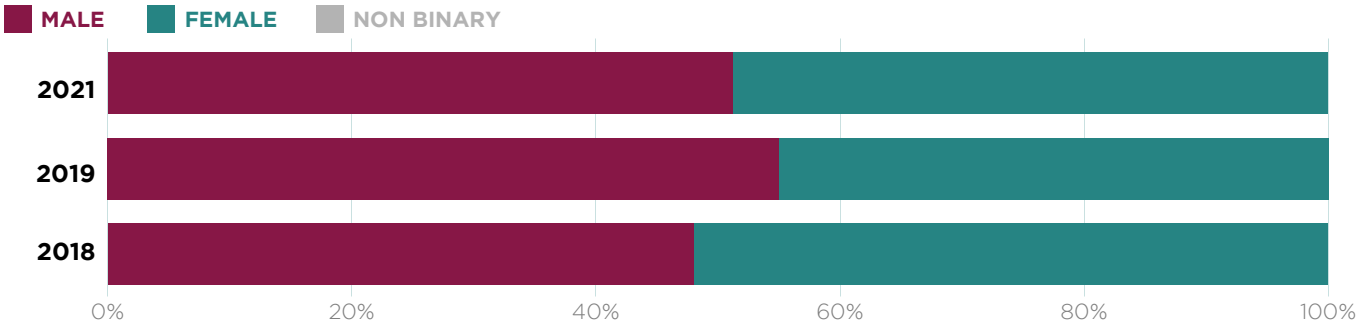
Male characters also outnumber female characters in nearly all types of roles, though these differences are not statistically significant. In **current** children's programming, male characters make up nearly two-thirds of leading roles (61.6% compared with 38.1% for female characters). In **popular** programming for children, there is more gender equality among leads and coleads. Among supporting, notable supporting, and minor roles, male characters also outnumber female characters in **current** and **popular** programming.

CHART 1 • **Gender prominence in current, new, and popular programming for children in 2021**



In **popular** programming, which we have been tracking since 2018, the proportion of male to female lead characters has fluctuated but remained closely balanced since 2018. In this latest season, female characters make up 48.8% of leads — an increase from 45.0% in 2019, but still lower than 52.0% in 2018.

CHART 2 • **Leads in popular programming for children, by gender**



Although male characters outnumber female characters, when we view gender alongside racial lines, we find that female characters outnumber male characters in all racial groups.[12] This is because male characters are more likely to be in roles that do not have a race, such as animated animals or anthropomorphized objects. Among non-raced characters, male characters significantly outnumber female characters in **current** and **popular** programming for children. (See Table 1 in Appendix A.)

All nonbinary characters in current programming were either white or did not have a race. There is a significant lack of representation of nonbinary characters of color in **current** and **popular** programming. (See Table 1 in Appendix A.)

Male characters are more likely than female characters to be fat in **current** (6.8% compared with 4.5%) and **popular** (6.3% compared with 1.7%) programming. This difference is important to

recognize because gender inequality in body-size diversity contributes to harmful double standards, with boys and men granted more latitude in their physical stature and size than girls and women. (See Table 1 in Appendix A.)

Romance and Sexualization

In **current** programming, there are very few instances of objectification, revealing clothing, or romantic or sexual activity. However, these are more common in **popular** programming, where female characters are more likely than male characters to be objectified (2.4% compared with 0.3%) and be shown in revealing clothing (9.6% compared with 4.2%). (See Table 2 in Appendix A.)

Careers and Leadership

In **current** programming, there are no statistically significant differences regarding the depictions of jobs or leadership between male and female characters. However, in **popular** programming, a higher percentage of male characters than female characters have jobs (34.9% compared with 25.4%).

TABLE 3 • **Careers, STEM, and leadership by gender in current, new, and popular programming for children, in 2021**

	CURRENT			POPULAR	
	Male	Female	Nonbinary	Male	Female
Has a Job	21.8%	21.4%	12.5%	34.9%	25.4%
STEM	4.6%	4.6%	25.0%	4.1%	3.0%
Leader	14.8%	17.1%	25.0%	16.0%	14.5%

SHADED CELLS DENOTE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MALE AND FEMALE CHARACTERS IN THE SPECIFIED ROLE

Violence and Crime

We find no statistically significant differences between genders regarding characters acting violently or committing a crime. In **current** programming, there is gender balance for violent characters and those who commit a crime. (See Table 3 in Appendix A.)

Emotional Growth

For portrayals of emotional growth, we looked only at characters ages 19 and under. We find no statistically significant differences between genders regarding child characters who discuss their feelings or learn life lessons in **current** or **popular** programming. (See Table 4 in Appendix A.)

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Race/Ethnicity

Prominence and Intersections

In **current** programming for children, the majority of characters are white (58.4%). But in **popular** programming, just 10.2% of characters are white. This is due to the sample's high number of telenovelas, which feature primarily Latinx characters but also many Middle Eastern characters.

TABLE 4 • **Race inclusion in current, new, and popular programming for children in 2021 (all characters)**

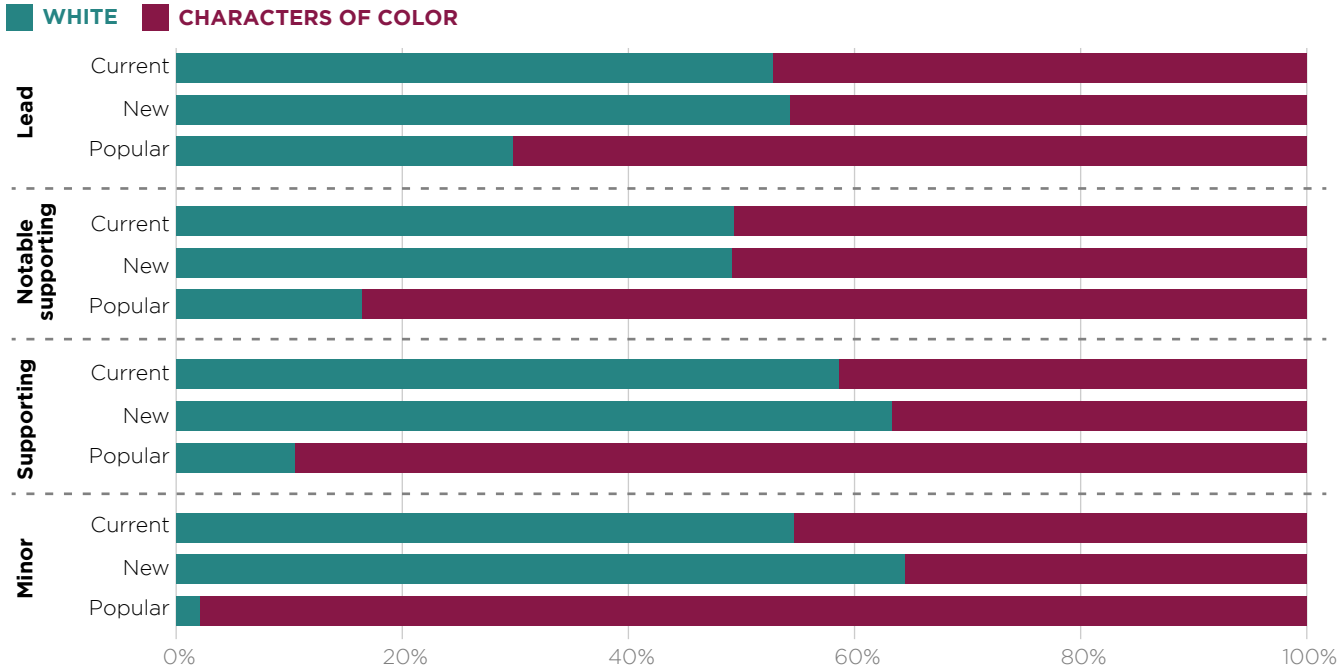
	CURRENT	POPULAR
White	55.0%	10.2%
Black	19.5%	1.9%
Asian and Pacific Islander	10.0%	8.0%
Latinx	11.3%	68.5%
Native	1.7%	2.8%
Middle Eastern/ North African	1.0%	8.1%
Multiracial	1.5%	0.6%

NOTE: PERCENTAGES ARE OUT OF ALL CHARACTERS WITH A DISCERNIBLE RACE. CHARACTERS WITHOUT A RACE (E.G., ANIMALS, ALIENS, PERSONIFIED OBJECTS, AND HUMANS WITH ATYPICAL SKIN COLORS) ARE EXCLUDED.

Looking at racial differences between role types, white leads outnumber leads of color in **current** programming (52.8% compared with 47.2%), but these differences are not statistically significant. Notable supporting characters are slightly more likely to be characters of color (50.7% compared with 49.3% for white characters), but less prominent supporting characters are more likely to be white (58.6% compared with 41.2%). In **new** programming, 63.3% of supporting characters are white.

Looking at minor characters, a higher share are white in current (54.6% compared with 45.4%) programming made for kids. In **new** programming, 64.4% of minor characters are white.

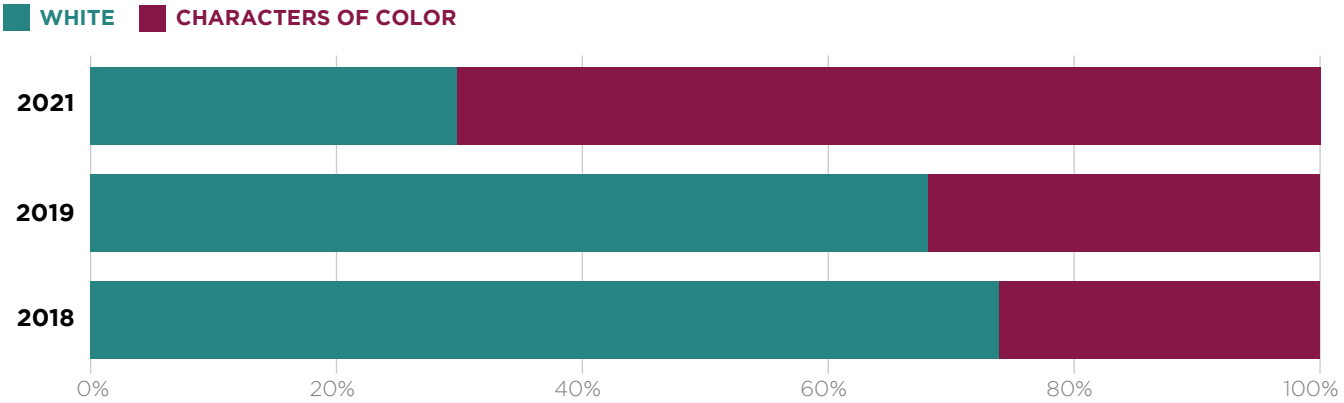
CHART 3 • **Race prominence in current, new, and popular programming for children in 2021**



NOTE: PERCENTAGES EXCLUDE CHARACTERS WITHOUT A DISCERNIBLE RACE. CHARACTERS WITHOUT RACES (E.G., ANIMALS, ALIENS, PERSONIFIED OBJECTS, AND HUMANS WITH ATYPICAL SKIN COLORS) ARE EXCLUDED.

In **popular** programming, due to the high number of telenovelas, all types of roles (lead, notable supporting, supporting, and minor) are more likely to be held by characters of color than by white characters. For the 2021 season, we expanded our definition of **popular** programming beyond only English-language television shows. Eleven[13] of the 30 popular series come from foreign programming, which dramatically changes the racial proportions of lead characters. Thus we see a major increase in leads of color from previous years (70.2% this year compared with 31.9% in 2019 and 26.1% in 2018).

CHART 4 • **Leads in popular programming for children, by race**



Looking at the intersection of race and gender, we find a few interesting differences. In **current** and **popular** programming, there are more than twice as many non-raced male characters as female. This is a difference of 33.9 points in current children's programming (66.8% for male compared with 32.9% for female), and a difference of 40.8-points in popular programming (70.4% for male compared with 29.6% for female). (See Tables 5, 6, and 7 in Appendix A.)

Romance and Sexualization

In **popular** programming, characters of color are more likely than white characters to be in a committed relationship (21.5% compared with 9.8%), express romantic interests or intentions (43.0% compared with 16.4%), and be shown kissing (17.3% compared with 0.0%). These findings are largely due to the content in telenovelas, which made up the majority of the popular-programming dataset. There were no racial differences in these portrayals for **current** programming. (See Table 8 in Appendix A.)

Careers and Leadership

In **current** and **popular** programming, characters of color are more likely than white characters to be shown with a job. In **current** children's programming, characters of color are also more likely than white characters to be shown as a leader (24.2% compared with 16.4%).

TABLE 5 • **Careers, STEM, and leadership by race in current, new, and popular programming for children, in 2021**

	CURRENT		POPULAR	
	White Characters	Characters of Color	White Characters	Characters of Color
Has a Job	19.8%	29.3%	9.4%	38.1%
STEM	3.8%	5.4%	1.6%	2.4%
Leader	16.4%	24.2%	21.9%	17.3%

SHADED CELLS DENOTE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN WHITE CHARACTERS AND CHARACTERS OF COLOR IN THE SPECIFIED ROLE.

Violence and Crime

We find no statistically significant differences between white characters and characters of color regarding violent or criminal behaviors in **current** or **popular** programming. (See Table 9 in Appendix A.)

Emotional Growth

For portrayals of emotional growth, we looked only at characters ages 19 and under. We also find no significant racial differences for children who learn a lesson or discuss their feelings in **current** or **popular** programming. (See Table 10 in Appendix A.)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LGBTQIA+

Prominence and Intersections

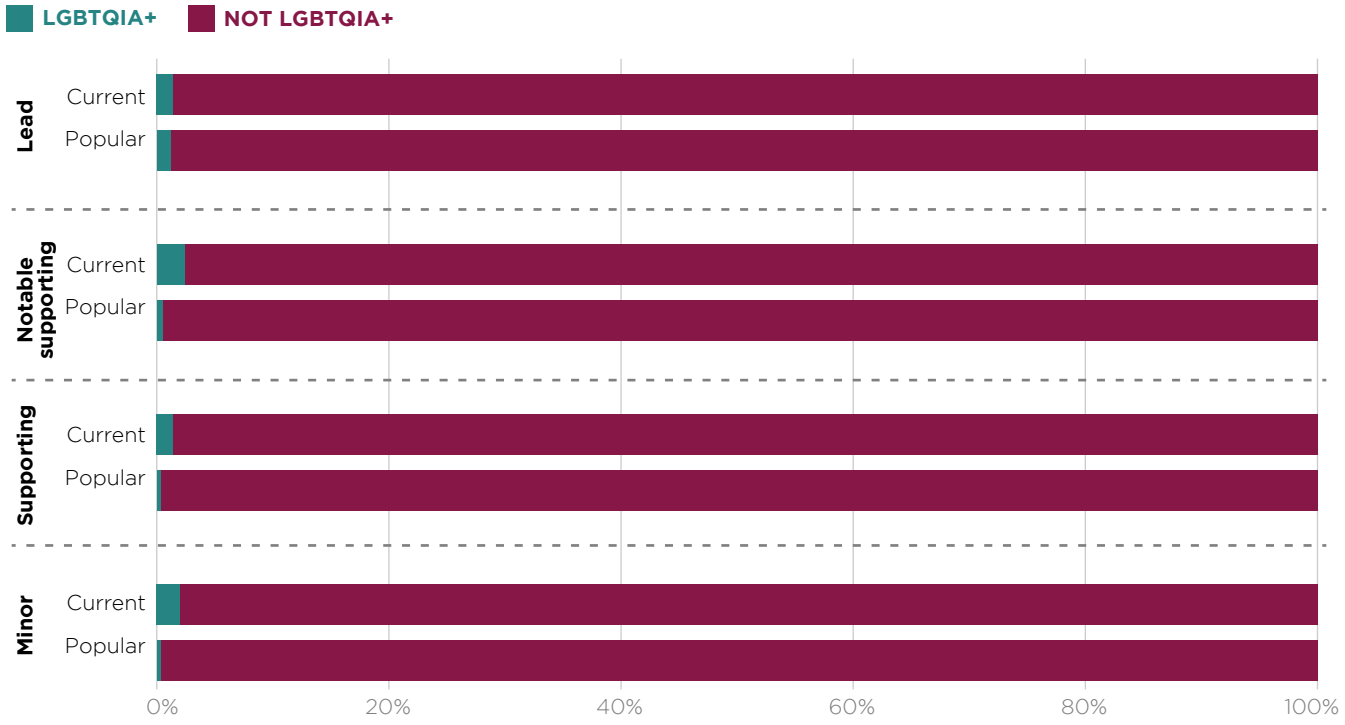
In **current** and **popular** programming, the visibility of LGBTQIA+ characters is low. LGBTQIA+ characters are 1.8% of characters in **current** children's programming (1.4% of characters in **new**) and 0.4% in **popular** programming.

TABLE 6 • **LGBTQIA+ Inclusion in current, new, and popular programming for children, in 2021 (all characters)**

	CURRENT	POPULAR
LGBTQIA+	1.8%	0.4%
Not LGBTQIA+	98.2%	99.6%

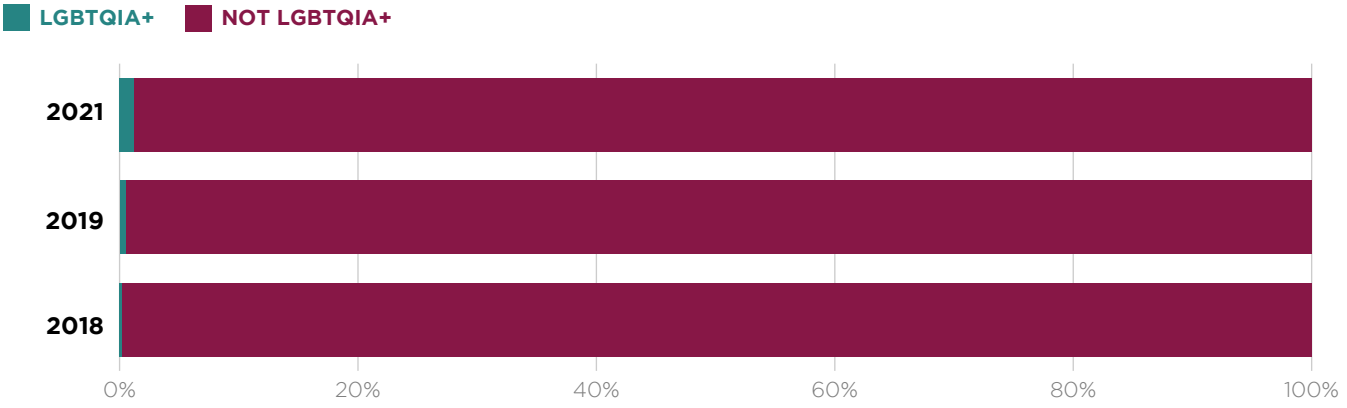
LGBTQIA+ characters are rarely leads. They are 1.4% of all leads in **current** children's programming and 1.2% in **popular** programming for children. (In **new** programming, they are just 0.5% of leads.)

CHART 5 • **LGBTQIA+ prominence in current, new, and popular programming for children, in 2021**



In 2021, we see a notable increase in LGBTQIA+ leads in popular programming for children, from 0.2% in 2018 and 0.5% in 2019 up to 1.2% last year. Queer characters who show up are predominantly white. (See Table 11 in Appendix A.)

CHART 6 • **LGBTQIA+ leads in popular programming for children**



In **current** programming, LGBTQIA+ characters are more likely to be non-raced characters (51.8% LGBTQIA+ characters compared with 32.6% of non-LGBTQIA+ characters). Further, LGBTQIA+ characters are also more likely to be Latinx (13.0% LGBTQIA+ compared to 5.0% non-LGBTQIA+). In **new** children's programming, LGBTQIA+ characters are more likely to be ages 50 and older (25.3% compared with 6.5%). (See Table 11 in Appendix A.)

Romance and Sexualization

In **current** programming, queer characters are more likely than non-LGBTQIA+ characters to be shown in a committed relationship (17.9% compared with 3.3%) and express romantic interest in another character (20.5% compared with 5.8%). However, romantic attachment is a key tactic for identifying LGBTQIA+ characters, and therefore, it should be interpreted with this context. (See Table 12 in Appendix A.)

Careers and Leadership

In **current** children's programming, LGBTQIA+ characters are more likely than non-LGBTQIA+ characters to have a job (35.9% compared with 21.3%), to be a **leader** (28.2% compared with 15.5%) and be in STEM professions (new programming: 28.6% compared with 6.7%; current programming: 15.4% compared with 4.5%).

TABLE 7 • **Queer characters' careers, STEM, and leadership in current, new, and popular programming for children, in 2021**

	CURRENT		POPULAR	
	LGBTQIA+	Not LGBTQIA+	LGBTQIA+	Not LGBTQIA+
Has a Job	35.9%	21.3%	0.0%	30.2%
STEM	15.4%	4.5%	0.0%	3.5%
Leader	28.2%	15.5%	66.7%	14.9%

SHADED CELLS DENOTE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN LGBTQIA+ AND NON-LGBTQIA+ IN THE SPECIFIED ROLE.

Violence and Crime

In **current** children's programming, LGBTQIA+ characters are more likely than non-LGBTQIA+ characters to be shown acting violently (25.6% compared with 11.1%) and committing a crime (25.6% compared with 7.2%). (See Table 13 in Appendix A.)

Emotional Growth

For portrayals of emotional growth, we looked only at characters ages 19 and under. LGBTQIA+ characters who are 19 or younger are more likely than non LGBTQIA+ characters who are 19 and younger to discuss their feelings in both **current** children's programming (33.3% compared with 7.7%) and **popular** programming (100.0% compared with 6.1%). (See Table 14 in Appendix A.)

SolStock/E+ via Getty Images

Disability

Prominence and Intersections

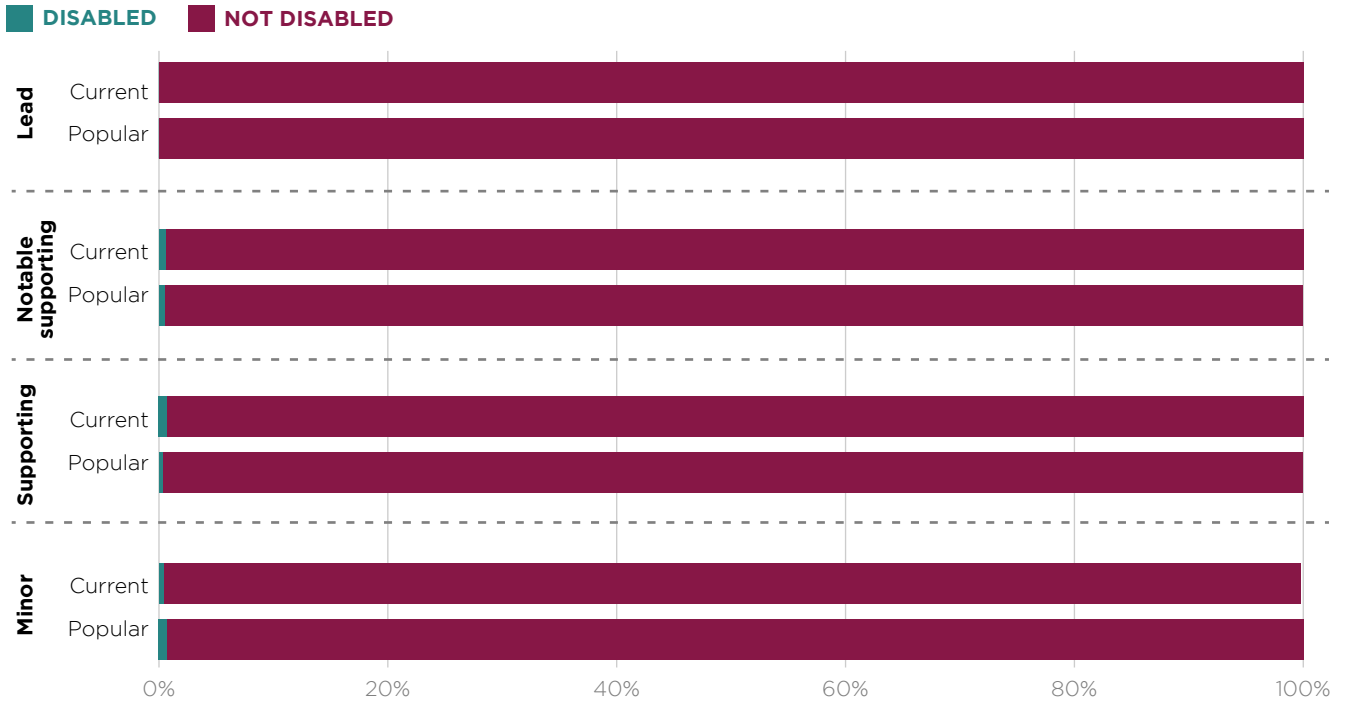
In **current** and **popular** programming for children, the visibility of characters with physical, cognitive, or communication disabilities or mental-health conditions is low. Less than 1 percent of all characters in each category have been identified as having a disability.

TABLE 8 • **Disability inclusion in current, new, and popular programming for children, in 2021 (all characters)**

	CURRENT	POPULAR
Disabled	0.5%	0.4%
Not Disabled	99.5%	99.6%

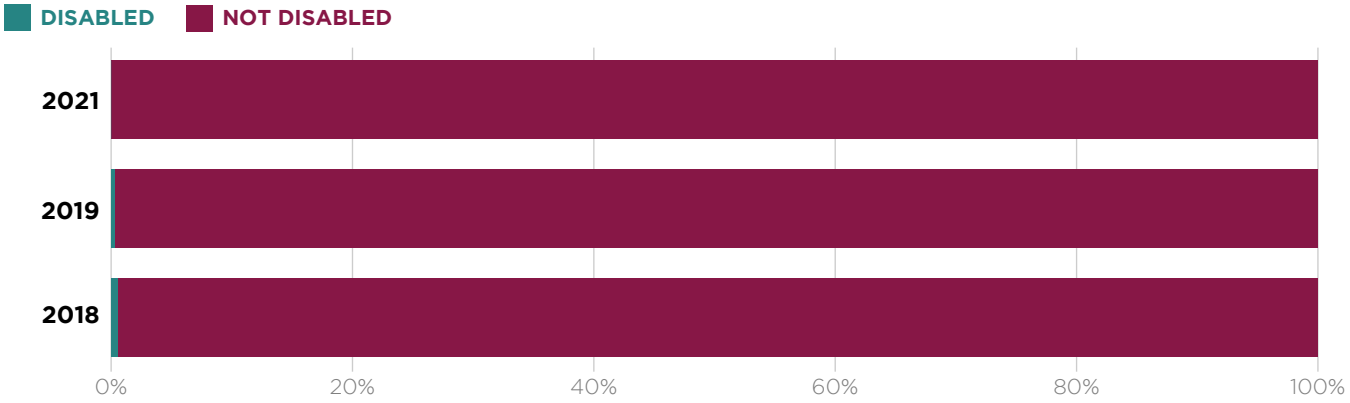
There are no disabled leading characters in **current** or **popular** programming, and no level of prominence has more than 0.7% of disabled characters.

CHART 7 • **Disability prominence in current, new, and popular programming for children, in 2021**



In popular programming, there are no disabled leads. This reflects a steady decline from 0.3% of leads in 2019, down from 0.5% of leads in 2018.

CHART 8 • **Disabled leads in popular programming for children**



There are very few characters with disabilities in kids and **popular** programming. Therefore, it is not possible to demonstrate statistically significant differences in most instances. However, in **current** children's programming, we find that disabled characters are five times more likely to be ages 50 and older (35.7% compared with 7.0%). (See Table 15 in Appendix A.)

Romance and Sexualization

No disabled characters are shown dating or kissing, nor are they objectified, shown in revealing clothing, or engaging in sexual activities in **current** or **popular** programming. In **new** and **popular** programming, there are also no disabled characters who are married or in a committed partnership, nor any who express romantic interests. This lack of romantic behaviors among disabled characters contributes to harmful stereotypes that view disabled people as inherently asexual and/or aromantic. (See Table 16 in Appendix A.)

Careers and Leadership

We find no statistically significant findings regarding the representation of disability and careers or leadership in **current** or **popular** programming. Although the difference isn't significant, in **current** and **popular** programming, disabled characters are rarely shown with a job. (See Table 17 in Appendix A.)

Violence and Crime

Disabled characters are more likely than nondisabled characters to be violent (41.7% compared with 11.2%) and commit a crime (50.0% compared with 7.3%) in **current** children's programming. (See Table 18 in Appendix A.)

Emotional Growth

For portrayals of emotional growth, we looked only at characters ages 19 and under. In **new** children's programming, there is only one disabled character who is a child, who both learns a lesson and discusses their feelings. In **current** children's programming, there are two disabled children, and one learns a lesson and shares their feelings. There are no disabled children in **popular** programming. (See Table 19 in Appendix A.)

adamkaz/E+ via Getty Images

Fatness

Prominence and Intersections

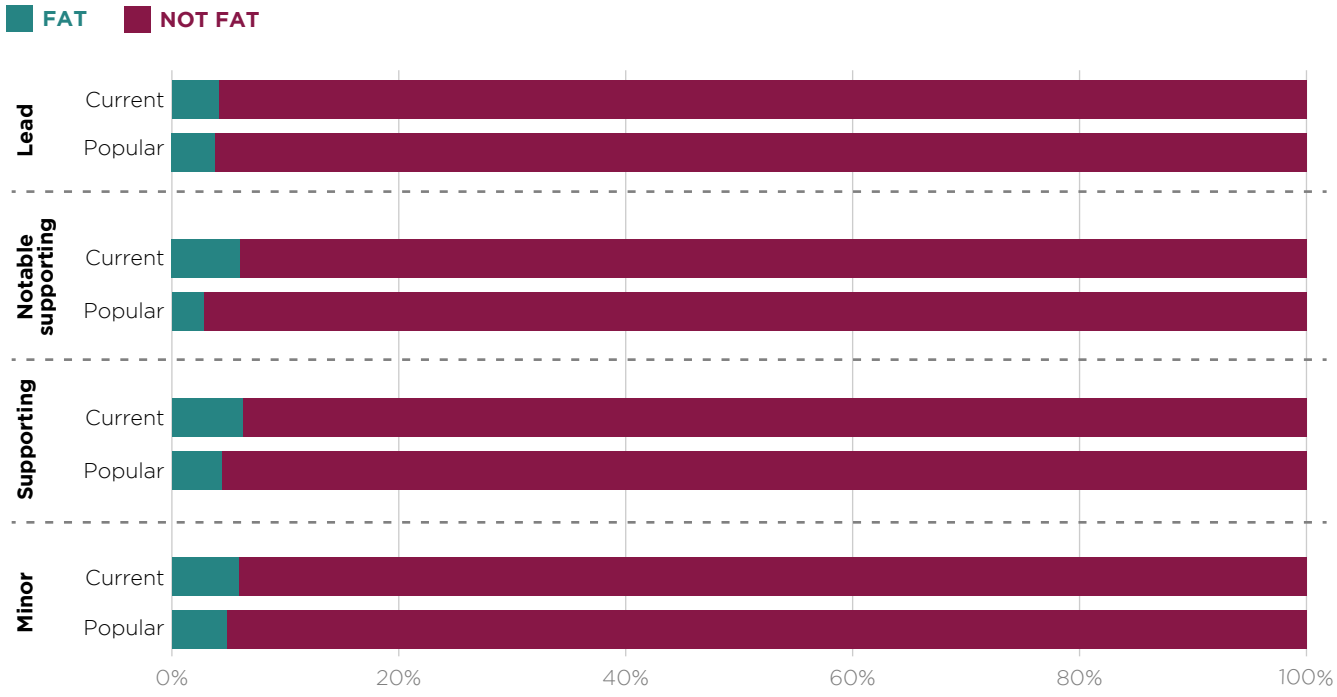
The visibility of fat characters is low in **current** and **popular** programming. In **current** children's programming, 5.8% of characters are fat, and in **popular** programming, 4.1% of characters are fat.

TABLE 9 • **Fat inclusion in current, new, and popular programming for children, in 2021 (all characters)**

	CURRENT	POPULAR
Fat	5.8%	4.1%
Not Fat	94.2%	95.9%

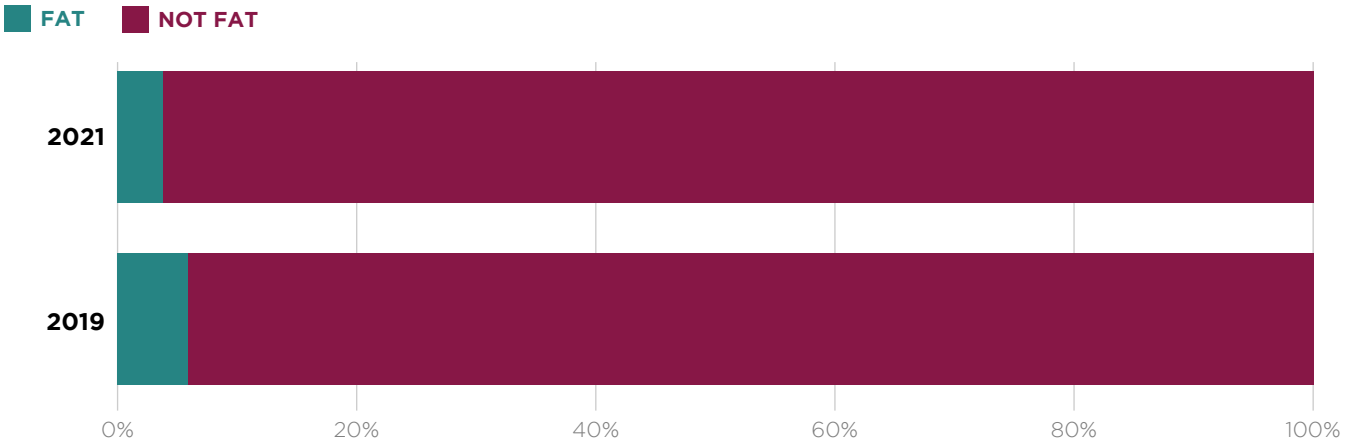
Fat characters make up a small percentage of leading roles. Just 4.1% of leads are fat in **current** programming (and only 2.1% in **new** shows). In **popular** programming 3.8% of leads are fat.

CHART 9 • **Fatness prominence in current, new, and popular programming for children, in 2021**



The percentage of fat leads in **popular** programming for children has declined since 2019 (5.9% in 2019 compared with 3.8% in 2021).

CHART 10 • **Fat leads/coleads in popular programming for children**



In **current** and **popular** programming, fat characters are much more likely to be male than female (68.8% for current programming, 82.1% for popular programming). In **current** children's programming, fat characters are more likely than nonfat characters to be Latinx (11.6% compared with 4.7%) and to have an implied race (7.1% compared with 2.8%). But fat characters are less likely than nonfat characters to be Asian or Pacific Islander (0.6% compared with 4.8%). In **popular** programming, fat

characters are more likely than nonfat characters to be a non-raced character (48.7% compared with 26.0%). (See Table 20 in Appendix A.) In **current** programming, fat characters are more likely than nonfat characters to be 50 and older (18.9% compared with 6.4%). (See Table 19 in Appendix A.) In other words, male, Latinx, non-raced, and 50-plus characters have more fat representation relative to other groups.

Romance and Sexualization

Fat characters are more likely than nonfat characters to be shown as married or in a committed partnership in **current** programming (8.6% compared with 3.3%). (See Table 21 in Appendix A.)

Careers and Leadership

Fat characters are also more likely than nonfat characters to be shown with a job in **current** children's programming (32.0% compared with 20.7%). (See Table 22 in Appendix A.)

Violence and Crime

In **popular** programming, fat characters are more than twice as likely as nonfat characters to be violent (32.0% compared with 15.5%) and commit a crime (28.0% compared with 10.9%). (See Table 23 in Appendix A.)

Emotional Growth

For portrayals of emotional growth, we looked only at characters 19 and under. We find no statistically significant differences between fat and nonfat child characters regarding learning lessons or sharing their feelings in **current** or **popular** programming. (See Table 24 in Appendix A.)

Jose Luis Pelaez Inc/DigitalVision via Getty Images

Age (Over and Under 50)

Prominence and Intersections

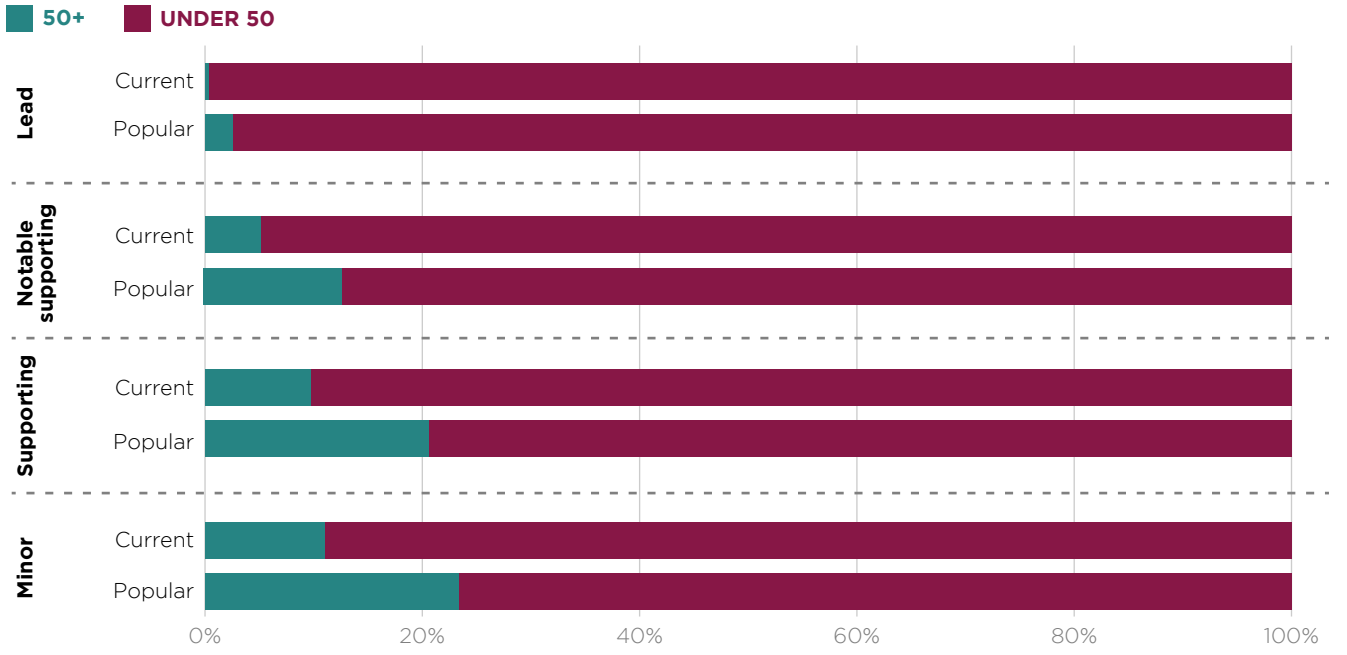
Characters who are ages 50 and older are rarely seen in **current** children's programming. However, such characters are nearly 20 percent of all characters in **popular** programming.

TABLE 10 • **Age 50-plus inclusion in current, new, and popular programming for children, in 2021 (all characters)**

	CURRENT	POPULAR
50 and Older	7.2%	18.1%
Under 50	92.8%	81.9%

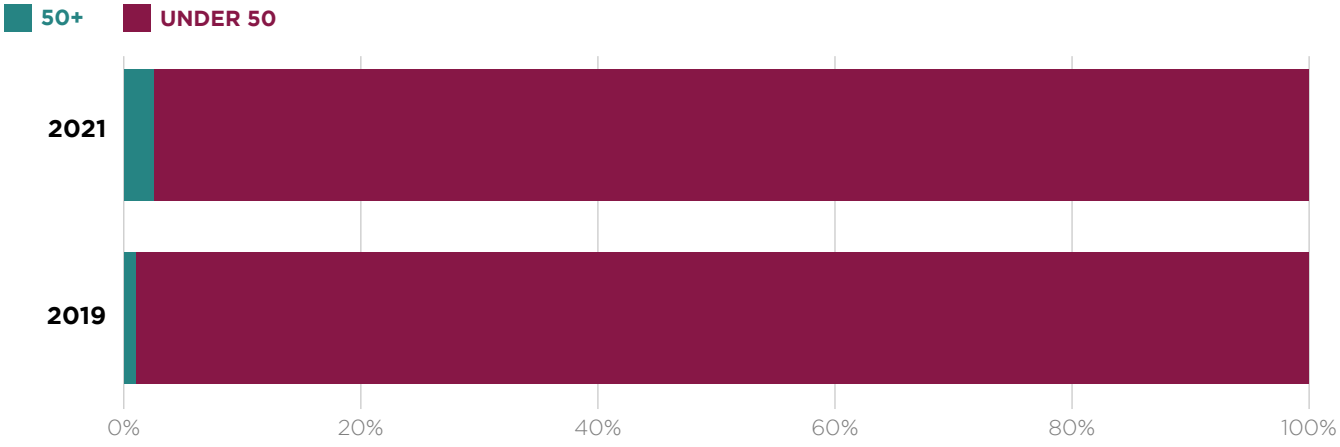
In **current** children's programming, 0.3% of leads are 50 and older (there are no 50-plus leading characters in new programming). In **popular** programming, 50-plus characters made up 2.5% of lead characters. The smaller the role, the higher the percentage of 50-plus characters. Characters ages 50 and older make up 11.0% of minor roles in **current** children's programming and 23.3% of minor roles in **popular** programming.

CHART 11 • **Age prominence in new, current, and popular programming for children, in 2021**



The percentage of leads and coleads 50 and older in **popular** programming has more than doubled since 2019 (2.5% compared with 1.0%).

CHART 12 • **Age 50-plus leads/coleads in popular programming for children**



In **current** programming, characters ages 50 and older are more likely to be white than their younger counterparts, and they are less likely to be a non-raced character than those under age 50. In **popular** programming, 50-plus characters are more likely than younger characters to be Latinx or Middle Eastern/North African, and younger characters are more likely to be white, Asian or Pacific Islander, or non-raced. In **current** programming, 50-plus characters are more likely than younger characters to be fat (15.6% compared with 5.2%). (See Table 25 in Appendix A.)

Romance and Sexualization

In **popular** programming, characters ages 50 and older were more than twice as likely as those under 50 to be married or in a committed partnership (29.4% compared with 12.8%) (See Table 26 in Appendix A.)

Careers and Leadership

In **current** and **popular** programming, characters ages 50 and older are more likely than younger characters to be shown with a job. In **popular** programming, characters 50 and older were also almost twice as likely as younger characters to be shown as a leader (25.5% compared with 13.4%). (See Table 27 in Appendix A.)

Violence and Crime

There were no statistically significant differences regarding violence or criminality for characters over and under the age of 50 in **current** or **popular** programming. (See Table 28 in Appendix A.).

Peter Cade/Stone via Getty Images

Animation Versus Live Action

Given the dominance of animation in children's programming, it is important that we evaluate the diversity of inclusion within it. By making the distinction between representations in animated and live-action characters, we can have a better sense of where scripted TV shows are making progress and where that progress might be stalled.

Demographics

In both **current** and **popular** programming, female characters are less likely than male characters to be animated. In **current** children's programming, 60.3% of animated characters are male, compared with 39.5% who are female. In **popular** programming, 63.2% of animated characters are male, compared with 36.8 who are female. However, these differences occur mostly in a specific subset of the data: nonhuman characters. Among all **current** programming, live-action male characters outnumber female characters (53.1% compared with 46.4%). But in the **new** programming, live-action characters skew female, (52.4% female compared with 46.5% male). In **popular** programming, live-action characters display near gender parity (50.2% male compared with 49.8% female).

TABLE 11 • **Gender representation for animated and live-action characters in current, new, and popular programming for children, in 2021**

	CURRENT		POPULAR	
	Animated	Live-Action	Animated	Live-Action
Male	60.3%	53.1%	63.2%	50.2%
Female	39.5%	46.4%	36.8%	49.8%
Nonbinary	0.3%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%

SHADED CELLS DENOTE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MALE AND FEMALE CHARACTERS AS ANIMATED VERSUS LIVE ACTION CHARACTERS.

Animated *human* characters approach gender parity, with slightly more male characters than female in **current** (52.2% compared with 47.6%) and **popular** (50.9% compared with 49.1%) programming. The disparities exist among nonhuman characters, where male characters far outnumber female characters in **current** (66.5% compared with 33.1%) and **popular** (68.1% compared with 31.9%) programming. Looking at gender this way, we find that the proportion of male to female characters change from approximately one-to-one in human characters to two-to-one in nonhuman characters. This may be due to creators making more deliberate choices about gender representation when the characters are human, than when they are nonhuman. Unconscious bias may play a role, given that identity is less salient when thinking about casting nonhuman characters.

TABLE 12 • **Gender inclusion for nonhuman and human roles in current, new, and popular programming for children, in 2021**

	CURRENT			POPULAR	
	Male	Female	Nonbinary	Male	Female
Human	52.2%	47.6%	0.2%	50.9%	49.1%
Nonhuman	66.5%	33.1%	0.3%	68.1%	31.9%

SHADED CELLS DENOTE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MALE AND FEMALE CHARACTERS IN HUMAN VERSUS NONHUMAN PORTRAYALS.

In **current** programming, 56.7% of animated characters are white, compared with 49.6% of live-action characters. Just 16.8% of animated characters are Black, which is lower than Black representation among live-action characters (28.2%). Historically, there has been a dearth of Black animated characters, with which these findings are consistent. The differences between the inclusion of animated and live-action characters for Asian and Pacific Islander, Latinx, Native, Middle Eastern and North African, and multiracial characters are not statistical significant. (See Table 13.)

In **popular** programming, the racial differences between animated and live-action characters is much more pronounced due to the popularity of telenovelas, where Latinx characters make up 82.0% of live-action characters compared with 5.0% of animated characters. Middle Eastern and North African

characters are also much more common as live-action characters than animated (9.3% compared with 2.5%). Further, 16.4% of animated characters from **popular** programming are Native due to the show *Maya and the Three,* which takes place in pre-colonial Mesoamerica, whereas there are no live-action characters who are Native.

TABLE 13 • **Race/ethnicity representation for animated and live-action characters in new, current, and popular programming, in 2021**

	CURRENT		POPULAR	
	Animated	Live-Action	Animated	Live-Action
White	56.7%	49.6%	56.3%	0.4%
Black	16.8%	28.2%	9.2%	0.4%
Asian and Pacific Islander	10.0%	10.2%	7.6%	8.0%
Latinx	11.6%	10.2%	5.0%	82.0%
Native	2.1%	0.4%	16.0%	0.0%
Middle Eastern/ North African	1.3%	0.0%	2.5%	9.3%
Multiracial	1.5%	1.4%	3.4%	0.0%

NOTE: PERCENTAGES EXCLUDE CHARACTERS WITHOUT A DISCERNIBLE RACE (E.G., ANIMALS, ALIENS, PERSONIFIED OBJECTS, AND HUMANS WITH ATYPICAL SKIN COLORS). SHADED CELLS DENOTE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN ANIMATED VERSUS LIVE-ACTION INCLUSION.

Animated characters are more likely than live-action characters to be fat in **popular** programming (8.3% compared with 1.2%). But animated characters are less likely than live-action characters to be LGBTQIA+ in **current** programming (1.5% compared with 3.3%).

In **current** programming, characters ages 50 and older are more likely to be animated than live-action (7.8% compared with 4.1%). In **popular** programming, 50-plus characters make up over a quarter of all live-action characters (25.5%) but just 6.9% of animated characters.

TABLE 14 • **Representation of animated and live-action characters by identity groups in current, new, and popular programming, in 2021**

	CURRENT		POPULAR	
	Animated	Live-Action	Animated	Live-Action
LGBTQIA+	1.5%	3.3%	0.5%	0.4%
Disabled	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.4%
Fat	6.1%	4.0%	8.3%	1.2%
50 and older	7.8%	4.1%	6.9%	25.5%

SHADED CELLS DENOTE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN EACH GROUP AND THEIR INCLUSION AS ANIMATED COMPARED VERSUS LIVE ACTION CHARACTERS.

Implied Race

Given the prevalence of nonhuman characters in children's programming, such as animals, anthropomorphized objects, aliens, robots, and fantasy creatures, a noteworthy proportion of characters did not have an explicitly identified race. But while many characters did not have an explicit race, plenty had characteristics or traits that *implied* a race. A character's race is implied when they are styled, written, and/or performed with racialized affectations, or when cultural cues are suggestive of individual races or ethnicities. For example, a character may be suggested to be German by wearing a lederhosen or Chinese by practicing martial arts and making bao. While race can certainly be implied with stereotypical portrayals or reductive cultural cues, it is not inherently harmful to show nonhuman characters embodying different racial, ethnic, or cultural norms. Many creators embody their characters with racial and ethnic cues to expand the representation of those groups. We refer to characters who have no implicit or explicit racial cues as non-raced characters.

These characters are especially frequent in animated content that features nonhuman characters. In **current** children's programming, over half of the characters are nonhuman (52.4%), but only about one-quarter of the characters are nonhuman in **popular** programming (29.4%). Some nonhumans, such as ghosts, gods, or mermaids, still have a race that can be determined. However, some human characters do not, such as those with atypical skin tones, like yellow, green, or blue. The majority of characters in current (54.3%) children's programming do not have an explicit race, much higher than the rate in **popular** programming (28.2%).

In **current** children's programming, 3.1% of characters have an implied race, whereas there are much fewer in **popular** programming (1.3%). Non-raced characters make up over half of **current** (51.5%) children's programming, and 28.2% of popular programming characters.

Among all **current** children's programming, over half of all characters with implied races are coded as Black (54.1%). In **popular** programming, most characters with an implied race are Native Mesoamerican characters (42.9%).[14] In **new** programming, 37.5% of characters with an implied race are suggested to be Black, while another 30.0% are suggested to be Asian or Pacific Islander.

TABLE 15 • **Implied races of animated characters in current, new, and popular programming, in 2021**

	CURRENT	NEW	POPULAR
White	14.1%	12.5%	0.0%
Black	54.1%	37.5%	0.0%
Asian and Pacific Islander	16.5%	30.0%	28.6%
Latinx	8.3%	12.5%	7.1%
Native	0.0%	0.0%	42.9%
Middle Eastern/ North African	1.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Multiracial	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Othered	5.9%	7.5%	21.4%

FG Trade Latin/E+ via Getty Images

Recommendations

Show more female characters in animated roles. Animated characters, especially those that were nonhuman, were mostly male. Adding more gender diversity to these nonhuman animated characters will provide more dynamic portrayals of female characters to audiences, and more opportunities to female actors and talent.

Increase the visibility of queer characters of color. Queer characters (especially nonbinary characters) were more likely to be white or non-raced. Historically, the intersection of racism with homophobia and transphobia has led to the erasure of LGBTQIA+ people of color in the media, which can limit acceptance of queerness in communities of color. For LGBTQIA+ roles, consider intersectional representation by increasing portrayals of queer communities of color.

Diversify racialized animated characters. Over one-third of characters with an implied race were suggested to be Black. Animation has a long history of appropriating Black culture as well as making Black characters nonhuman. It is important that young children of all races see Black characters on television, so consider roles for Black characters that are explicitly Black. And among characters with an implied-race, incorporate a broader array of cultures.

Give disabled characters dynamic and complex narratives. Characters with disabilities were rarely shown, were not in leading roles, and had almost no romantic attachments. The failure to acknowledge the complex lives of disabled people leads to portrayals that rest on their disability. Further, children with disabilities do not get to see themselves on screen. Disability representation can be increased without reducing disabled characters to their disability.

Allow characters of all genders to be unapologetically fat. Male characters were more likely than female characters to be fat. Gender inequality in body-size diversity contributes to harmful double standards, with boys and men granted more leeway than girls and women in their physical stature and size. Fatphobia is incredibly harmful, and children can benefit significantly from seeing characters of all genders who are fat and also likable, attractive, funny, athletic, and dynamic, where their size is not the source of ridicule, motivation, or shame.

REPRESENTATION PITFALLS:

Common Tropes to Avoid

While advocating for the inclusion of diverse perspectives in entertainment media is important, assessing the quality of on-screen representation is also crucial. At the Institute, we regularly analyze the quality of representations in television and film, and in so doing have identified pervasive tropes that are common in television programming. In storytelling, a trope is shorthand for a concept that the audience will recognize and understand instantly. While not all tropes are harmful, we present a list of common tropes for content creators to consider avoiding, surrounding the six identities under analysis:

GENDER

The Strong Female Character:

- ☐ A female character who
- ☐ is written to be physically strong and capable.
- ☐ She is often used so that it can seem as if the script is providing female role models, but really it just reinforces masculine ideals.

The Sensible Older Sister:

- ☐ In children's programming, a female character (usually an older sister) who
- ☐ is there to be the "straight man" to the more heroic, but also more impulsive, male character.

The Clueless Father:

- ☐ The father who
- ☐ is inept
- ☐ and does not know how to take care of his children on his own.

RACE/ETHNICITY

BLACK

The Nonhuman:

- ☐ A Black character who
- ☐ is transformed into an animal. Or, an animal with Black characteristics.

The Magical Negro:

- ☐ A Black older character who
- ☐ has magical powers and
- ☐ shows up to provide support to the white protagonist.

EAST OR SOUTH ASIAN

The IT Guy:

- ☐ An Asian character (usually male) who
- ☐ is a science nerd.

The Controlling Parent:

- ☐ An immigrant parent who
- ☐ has very strict rules for their child.
- ☐ These strict rules are typically presented as unreasonable, culturally backwards, and make it difficult for the child to navigate U.S. culture.

LATINX

The Laborer/The Help:

- ☐ A Latinx character who
- ☐ works in a job that centers around manual labor (if male)
- ☐ or domestic support (if female).

The Macho Latino:

- ☐ A hypermasculine Latino man.
- ☐ In children's programming, often an overprotective father.

RACE/ETHNICITY

NATIVE

The Magical Medicine Man/Woman:

- ☐ A native character who
- ☐ comes to the aid of white characters
- ☐ by the use of supernatural or quasi-mystical means.

The Native Allegory:

- ☐ This occurs in science fiction or fantasy stories with colonialist themes, where a fictional race is written as a Native/Indigenous metaphor. Especially harmful when written by white creators.

MIDDLE EASTERN/NORTH AFRICAN

The Oppressed Woman:

- ☐ A Middle Eastern or North African female character who
- ☐ is oppressed by her culture, her husband, and/or other family members, and
- ☐ lacks agency to make her own decisions freely.

The Royal:

- ☐ A Middle Eastern or North African character who
- ☐ is either royalty or
- ☐ exceedingly rich.

LGBTQIA+

The Buried Gay:

- ☐ A queer character who
- ☐ is killed prematurely.

DISABILITY

The Supercrip:

☐ A disabled character
☐ who "overcomes" their disability to achieve greatness, and
☐ they are "inspiration" for non-disabled people.

The Unspoken Autistic:

☐ This character is written with autistic characteristics,
☐ but often not labeled as such.
☐ Their social misunderstandings are played for laughs.

Fatness

The Brawn Hilda:

☐ A woman
☐ whose fatness is used as shorthand to suggest that she is not feminine.
☐ She is unaware of her own size, which is played for laughs.
☐ Usually foreign.

The Fat Idiot:

☐ A fat character who is
☐ especially unintelligent.

Age (50+)

The Sage Guide:

☐ An older person who
☐ is wise and provides guidance to the younger characters,
☐ but does not have any other character traits or flaws.

The Luddite:

☐ An older person who
☐ doesn't understand the "new" way of the world, and
☐ Is grumpy and/or dismissive of anything modern.

Appendix A: Tables

Table 1. Gender intersections in current, new, and popular programming for children, in 2021

	CURRENT			NEW			POPULAR	
	Male	Female	Nonbinary	Male	Female	Nonbinary	Male	Female
White	22.2%	29.3%	28.6%	21.7%	30.0%	33.3%	7.3%	7.0%
Black	7.5%	11.0%	0.0%	6.0%	11.8%	0.0%	1.3%	1.4%
Asian and Pacific Islander	4.0%	5.4%	0.0%	3.5%	3.9%	0.0%	6.2%	5.3%
Latinx	4.3%	6.4%	0.0%	3.2%	6.2%	0.0%	42.7%	58.1%
Native	0.7%	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	1.5%	2.6%
Middle Eastern/ North African	0.3%	0.7%	0.0%	0.2%	0.2%	0.0%	5.8%	6.1%
Multiracial	0.4%	1.1%	0.0%	0.7%	1.7%	0.0%	0.4%	0.5%
Other/ No Race	57.6%	41.7%	71.4%	62.2%	42.2%	66.7%	33.5%	17.5%
Implied Race	2.8%	3.6%	0.0%	2.4%	3.4%	0.0%	1.3%	1.2%
LGBTQIA+	1.4%	1.7%	100.0%	0.8%	1.1%	100.0%	0.8%	0.0%
Fat	6.8%	4.5%	0.0%	6.4%	4.5%	0.0%	6.2%	1.7%
Disabled	0.6%	0.5%	0.0%	0.2%	0.4%	0.0%	0.6%	0.2%
50 and Older	7.4%	6.9%	0.0%	6.9%	6.4%	0.0%	20.2%	15.8%

SHADED CELLS DENOTE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES.

Table 2. Romantic attachments and sexualization by gender in current, new, and popular programming for children, in 2021

	CURRENT			NEW			POPULAR	
	Male	Female	Nonbinary	Male	Female	Nonbinary	Male	Female
Objectified	0.5%	0.2%	0.0%	0.7%	0.4%	0.0%	0.3%	2.3%
Revealing Clothing	1.1%	1.9%	0.0%	1.5%	0.7%	0.0%	4.1%	9.6%
In a Relationship/ Dating	4.8%	6.0%	0.0%	4.3%	5.1%	0.0%	12.9%	16.5%
Married/ Committed Partnership	3.3%	4.2%	0.0%	3.7%	5.3%	0.0%	14.1%	17.8%
Romantic Interest	5.1%	7.4%	0.0%	6.3%	8.4%	0.0%	27.2%	33.3%
Kissing	0.7%	1.2%	0.0%	0.6%	0.7%	0.0%	10.2%	11.1%
Has Sex	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.8%	2.3%

SHADED CELLS DENOTE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES.

Table 3. Violence and criminality in current, new, and popular programming for children, in 2021, by gender

	CURRENT			NEW			POPULAR	
	Male	Female	Nonbinary	Male	Female	Nonbinary	Male	Female
Violent	11.2%	11.6%	12.5%	8.2%	7.5%	0.0%	18.3%	14.1%
Commits a Crime	7.4%	7.7%	25.0%	5.0%	4.8%	0.0%	13.8%	9.4%

SHADED CELLS DENOTE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES.

Table 4. Emotional growth among child characters by gender in current, new, and popular programming for children, in 2021

	CURRENT			NEW			POPULAR	
	Male	Female	Nonbinary	Male	Female	Nonbinary	Male	Female
Learns a Lesson	10.8%	13.0%	25.0%	13.7%	15.6%	25.0%	3.0%	2.6%
Discusses Feelings	7.8%	8.7%	0.0%	7.1%	10.8%	0.0%	6.1%	10.3%

SHADED CELLS DENOTE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES.

Table 6. Race intersections, current children's programming, in 2021

	CURRENT								
	White	Black	Asian and Pacific Islander	Latinx	Native	Middle Eastern/ North African	Multiracial	Other/ No Race	Implied Race
Male	52.6%	50.2%	52.1%	49.3%	55.0%	41.7%	33.3%	66.8%	53.7%
Female	47.1%	49.8%	47.9%	50.7%	45.0%	58.3%	66.7%	32.9%	46.3%
Nonbinary	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	0.0%
LGBTQIA+	2.6%	0.4%	2.5%	4.4%	5.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%	3.7%
Disabled	0.6%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	5.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%
Fat	4.4%	3.8%	0.8%	13.2%	10.0%	8.3%	0.0%	6.2%	13.4%
50 and Older	10.1%	3.0%	7.4%	9.6%	25.0%	8.3%	0.0%	6.1%	4.9%

SHADED CELLS DENOTE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES.

Table 5. Race intersections, in new children's programming, in 2021

	NEW								
	White	Black	Asian and Pacific Islander	Latinx	Native	Middle Eastern/ North African	Multiracial	Other/ No Race	Implied Race
Male	52.8%	44.2%	58.0%	45.0%	0.0%	66.7%	40.0%	69.4%	52.6%
Female	46.6%	55.8%	42.0%	55.0%	100.0%	33.3%	60.0%	30.1%	47.4%
Nonbinary	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%
LGBTQIA+	2.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.9%	5.3%
Disabled	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%
Fat	5.5%	3.5%	0.0%	5.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	6.4%	7.9%
50 and Older	10.2%	0.9%	4.0%	11.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	6.1%	2.6%

SHADED CELLS DENOTE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES.

Table 7. Race intersections, popular programming for children, in 2021

	POPULAR								
	White	Black	Asian and Pacific Islander	Latinx	Native	Middle Eastern/ North African	Multiracial	Other/ No Race	Implied Race
Male	55.1%	53.8%	59.3%	47.7%	42.1%	54.5%	50.0%	70.4%	58.3%
Female	44.9%	46.2%	40.7%	52.3%	57.9%	45.5%	50.0%	29.6%	41.7%
LGBTQIA+	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Disabled	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%	0.0%
Fat	8.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.9%	26.3%	5.5%	0.0%	7.5%	16.7%
50 and Older	7.4%	0.0%	7.4%	26.5%	5.3%	29.1%	0.0%	7.4%	16.7%

SHADED CELLS DENOTE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES.

Table 8. Romantic attachments and sexualization by race in current, new, and popular programming for children, in 2021

	CURRENT		NEW		POPULAR	
	White Characters	Characters of Color	White Characters	Characters of Color	White Characters	Characters of Color
Objectified	0.5%	0.4%	1.0%	0.5%	1.6%	1.8%
Revealing Clothing	1.3%	1.9%	1.0%	1.4%	4.7%	10.2%
In a Relationship/ Dating	9.0%	8.4%	7.7%	9.2%	9.4%	19.2%
Married/ Committed Partnership	5.2%	6.6%	5.9%	8.3%	9.4%	21.5%
Romantic Interest	9.2%	8.8%	10.8%	9.7%	15.6%	43.0%
Kissing	1.8%	1.5%	1.0%	0.9%	0.0%	17.3%
Has Sex	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.4%

SHADED CELLS DENOTE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES.

Table 9. Violence and criminality by race in current, new, and popular programming for children, in 2021

	CURRENT		NEW		POPULAR	
	White Characters	Characters of Color	White Characters	Characters of Color	White Characters	Characters of Color
Violent	14.2%	16.1%	13.2%	8.8%	23.4%	19.9%
Commits a Crime	10.1%	9.4%	6.3%	5.5%	7.8%	15.2%

SHADED CELLS DENOTE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES.

Table 10. Emotional growth among child characters by race in current, new, and popular programming for children, in 2021

	CURRENT		NEW		POPULAR	
	White Characters	Characters of Color	White Characters	Characters of Color	White Characters	Characters of Color
Learns a Lesson	7.6%	12.0%	13.6%	15.1%	2.7%	1.9%
Discusses Feelings	6.3%	7.1%	6.4%	7.9%	8.1%	13.0%

SHADED CELLS DENOTE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES.

Table 11. LGBTQIA+ intersections in current, new, and popular programming for children, in 2021

	CURRENT		NEW		POPULAR	
	LGBTQIA+	Not LGBTQIA+	LGBTQIA+	Not LGBTQIA+	LGBTQIA+	Not LGBTQIA+
Male	45.8%	59.5%	36.8%	60.9%	100.0%	55.2%
Female	37.5%	40.5%	31.6%	39.1%	0.0%	44.8%
Nonbinary	16.7%	0.0%	31.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
White	37.0%	24.8%	47.4%	24.6%	50.0%	7.1%
Black	2.2%	9.0%	0.0%	8.3%	0.0%	1.4%
Asian and Pacific Islander	6.5%	4.5%	0.0%	3.7%	0.0%	5.7%
Latinx	13.0%	5.0%	0.0%	4.4%	50.0%	49.2%
Native	2.2%	0.7%	5.3%	0.1%	0.0%	2.0%
Middle Eastern/ North African	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%	0.2%	0.0%	5.8%
Multiracial	0.0%	0.7%	0.0%	1.1%	0.0%	0.4%
Other / No Race	32.6%	51.8%	36.8%	54.9%	0.0%	27.1%
Implied Race	6.5%	3.0%	10.5%	2.7%	0.0%	1.3%
Fat	8.3%	5.8%	0.0%	5.7%	0.0%	4.1%
Disabled	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.4%
50 and Older	8.7%	7.1%	25.3%	6.5%	50.0%	17.9%

SHADED CELLS DENOTE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES.

Table 12. Romantic attachments and sexualization by queerness in current, new, and popular programming for children, in 2021

	CURRENT		NEW		POPULAR	
	LGBTQIA+	Not LGBTQIA+	LGBTQIA+	Not LGBTQIA+	LGBTQIA+	Not LGBTQIA+
Objectified	0.0%	0.4%	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	1.2%
Revealing Clothing	0.0%	1.4%	0.0%	1.1%	0.0%	6.6%
In a Relationship/ Dating	7.7%	5.2%	0.0%	4.6%	66.7%	13.8%
Married/ Committed Partnership	17.9%	3.4%	28.6%	4.0%	0.0%	15.3%
Romantic Interest	20.5%	5.8%	28.6%	6.8%	66.7%	29.0%
Kissing	5.1%	0.8%	0.0%	0.6%	66.7%	10.0%
Has Sex	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%

SHADED CELLS DENOTE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES.

Table 13. Violence and criminality by queerness in current, new, and popular programming for children, in 2021

	CURRENT		NEW		POPULAR	
	LGBTQIA+	Not LGBTQIA+	LGBTQIA+	Not LGBTQIA+	LGBTQIA+	Not LGBTQIA+
Violent	25.6%	11.1%	0.0%	8.0%	66.7%	15.5%
Commits a Crime	25.6%	7.2%	7.1%	5.0%	0.0%	11.3%

SHADED CELLS DENOTE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES.

Table 14. Emotional growth among children by queerness in current, new, and popular programming for children, in 2021

	CURRENT		NEW		POPULAR	
	LGBTQIA+	Not LGBTQIA+	LGBTQIA+	Not LGBTQIA+	LGBTQIA+	Not LGBTQIA+
Learns a Lesson	6.7%	11.9%	25.0%	14.6%	0.0%	3.7%
Discusses Feelings	33.3%	7.7%	0.0%	8.8%	100.0%	6.1%

SHADED CELLS DENOTE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES.

Table 15. Disability intersections in current, new, and popular programming for children, in 2021

	CURRENT		NEW		POPULAR	
	Disabled	Not Disabled	Disabled	Not Disabled	Disabled	Not Disabled
Male	64.3%	59.2%	50.0%	60.6%	75.0%	55.2%
Female	35.7%	40.5%	50.0%	39.0%	25.0%	44.8%
Nonbinary	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%
White	28.6%	25.0%	50.0%	24.8%	0.0%	7.1%
Black	7.1%	8.9%	0.0%	8.2%	0.0%	1.4%
Asian and Pacific Islander	0.0%	4.6%	0.0%	3.6%	0.0%	5.8%
Latinx	0.0%	5.2%	25.0%	4.4%	50.0%	50.1%
Native	7.1%	0.7%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	2.1%
Middle Eastern/ North African	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%	0.2%	0.0%	5.9%
Multiracial	0.0%	0.7%	0.0%	1.1%	0.0%	0.4%
Other / No Race	57.1%	51.4%	25.0%	54.7%	50.0%	25.8%
Implied Race	0.0%	3.1%	0.0%	2.8%	0.0%	1.3%
LGBTQIA+	0.0%	1.8%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.4%
Fat	14.3%	5.8%	25.0%	5.5%	25.0%	4.1%
50 and Older	35.7%	7.0%	25.0%	6.7%	50.0%	18.3%

SHADED CELLS DENOTE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES.

Table 16. Romantic attachments and sexualization by disability status in current, new, and popular programming for children, in 2021

	CURRENT		NEW		POPULAR	
	Disabled	Not Disabled	Disabled	Not Disabled	Disabled	Not Disabled
Objectified	0.0%	0.4%	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	1.2%
Revealing Clothing	0.0%	1.4%	0.0%	1.1%	0.0%	6.6%
In a Relationship/ Dating	0.0%	5.3%	0.0%	4.6%	0.0%	14.1%
Married/ Committed Partnership	16.7%	3.5%	0.0%	4.3%	0.0%	15.3%
Romantic Interest	16.7%	6.0%	0.0%	7.1%	0.0%	29.2%
Kissing	0.0%	0.9%	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	10.3%
Has Sex	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%

SHADED CELLS DENOTE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES.

Table 17. Careers, STEM, and leadership by disability status in current, new, and popular programming for children, in 2021

	CURRENT		NEW		POPULAR	
	Disabled	Not Disabled	Disabled	Not Disabled	Disabled	Not Disabled
Has a Job	25.0%	21.5%	0.0%	20.6%	0.0%	30.2%
STEM	0.0%	4.7%	0.0%	7.0%	0.0%	3.5%
Leader	16.7%	15.7%	33.3%	16.7%	0.0%	15.2%

SHADED CELLS DENOTE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES.

Table 18. Violence and criminality by disability status in current, new, and popular programming for children, in 2021

	CURRENT		NEW		POPULAR	
	Disabled	Not Disabled	Disabled	Not Disabled	Disabled	Not Disabled
Violent	41.7%	11.2%	0.0%	8.0%	50.0%	16.0%
Commits a Crime	50.0%	7.3%	33.3%	4.9%	50.0%	11.5%

SHADED CELLS DENOTE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES.

Table 19. Emotional growth among children by disability status in current, new, and popular programming for children, in 2021

	CURRENT		NEW		POPULAR	
	Disabled	Not Disabled	Disabled	Not Disabled	Disabled	Not Disabled
Learns a Lesson	50.0%	11.7%	100.0%	14.5%	-	3.6%
Discusses Feelings	50.0%	8.0%	100.0%	8.6%	-	7.3%

SHADED CELLS DENOTE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES.

Table 20. Fatness intersections in current, new, and popular programming for children, in 2021

	CURRENT		NEW		POPULAR	
	Fat	Not Fat	Fat	Not Fat	Fat	Not Fat
Male	68.8%	58.6%	68.8%	60.1%	82.1%	54.3%
Female	31.2%	41.1%	31.2%	39.5%	17.9%	45.7%
Nonbinary	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%
White	18.7%	25.4%	24.7%	24.9%	15.4%	6.9%
Black	5.8%	9.1%	5.2%	8.4%	0.0%	1.4%
Asian and Pacific Islander	0.6%	4.8%	0.0%	3.8%	0.0%	6.0%
Latinx	11.6%	4.7%	3.9%	4.4%	10.3%	50.8%
Native	1.3%	0.7%	0.0%	0.2%	12.8%	1.5%
Middle Eastern/ North African	0.6%	0.4%	0.0%	0.2%	7.7%	5.7%
Multiracial	0.0%	0.7%	0.0%	1.2%	0.0%	0.4%
Other / No Race	54.2%	51.3%	62.3%	54.2%	48.7%	26.0%
Implied Race	7.1%	2.8%	3.9%	2.7%	5.1%	1.1%
LGBTQIA+	2.6%	1.8%	0.0%	1.5%	0.0%	0.4%
Disabled	1.3%	0.5%	1.3%	0.2%	2.6%	0.3%
50 and Older	18.9%	6.4%	18.4%	6.0%	25.6%	17.7%

SHADED CELLS DENOTE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES.

Table 21. Romantic attachments and sexualization by fatness in current, new, and popular programming for children, in 2021

	CURRENT		NEW		POPULAR	
	CURRENT		NEW		POPULAR	
Objectified	0.0%	0.4%	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	1.3%
Revealing Clothing	0.8%	1.4%	1.6%	1.1%	4.0%	6.8%
In a Relationship/ Dating	3.9%	5.3%	4.8%	4.5%	16.0%	14.3%
Married/ Committed Partnership	8.6%	3.3%	11.1%	3.9%	20.0%	15.5%
Romantic Interest	7.8%	5.9%	9.5%	6.9%	32.0%	29.6%
Kissing	0.0%	1.0%	0.0%	0.6%	8.0%	10.6%
Has Sex	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.1%

SHADED CELLS DENOTE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES.

Table 22. Careers, STEM, and leadership by fatness in current, new, and popular programming for children, in 2021

	CURRENT		NEW		POPULAR	
	Fat	Not Fat	Fat	Not Fat	Fat	Not Fat
Has a Job	32.0%	20.7%	33.3%	19.8%	32.0%	30.8%
STEM	7.8%	4.5%	12.7%	6.7%	0.0%	3.7%
Leader	12.5%	15.8%	12.7%	17.0%	8.0%	15.8%

SHADED CELLS DENOTE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES.

Table 23. Violence and criminality by fatness in current, new, and popular programming for children, in 2021

	CURRENT		NEW		POPULAR	
	Fat	Not Fat	Fat	Not Fat	Fat	Not Fat
Violent	13.3%	11.2%	11.1%	7.8%	32.0%	15.5%
Commits a Crime	6.2%	7.6%	4.8%	5.0%	28.0%	10.9%

SHADED CELLS DENOTE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES.

Table 24. Emotional growth among children by fatness in current, new, and popular programming for children, in 2021

	CURRENT		NEW		POPULAR	
	Fat	Not Fat	Fat	Not Fat	Fat	Not Fat
Learns a Lesson	14.6%	11.7%	6.2%	15.0%	0.0%	3.7%
Discusses Feelings	9.8%	8.0%	12.5%	8.6%	0.0%	7.4%

SHADED CELLS DENOTE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES.

Table 25. Age (50+) intersections in current, new, and popular programming for children, in 2021

	CURRENT		NEW		POPULAR	
	50-plus	Under 50	50-plus	Under 50	50-plus	Under 50
Male	59.4%	57.3%	60.5%	58.3%	60.9%	53.8%
Female	40.6%	42.4%	39.5%	41.4%	39.1%	46.2%
Nonbinary	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%
White	37.2%	25.7%	40.7%	25.8%	3.0%	8.1%
Black	3.9%	9.8%	1.2%	9.4%	0.0%	1.7%
Asian and Pacific Islander	5.0%	4.8%	2.3%	4.0%	2.4%	6.5%
Latinx	7.2%	5.3%	8.1%	4.4%	72.8%	44.6%
Native	2.8%	0.6%	0.0%	0.3%	0.6%	2.3%
Middle Eastern/ North African	0.6%	0.5%	0.0%	0.3%	9.5%	5.1%
Multiracial	0.0%	0.8%	0.0%	1.3%	0.0%	0.5%
Other / No Race	41.1%	49.0%	46.5%	51.4%	10.7%	29.5%
Implied Race	2.2%	3.4%	1.2%	3.1%	1.2%	1.3%
LGBTQIA+	2.2%	1.8%	4.7%	1.1%	1.2%	0.3%
Fat	15.6%	5.2%	16.3%	5.2%	5.9%	3.8%
Disabled	2.8%	0.4%	1.2%	0.3%	1.2%	0.3%

SHADED CELLS DENOTE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES.

Table 26. Romantic attachments and sexualization by age (50+) in current, new, and popular programming for children, in 2021

	CURRENT		NEW		POPULAR	
	50-plus	Under 50	50-plus	Under 50	50-plus	Under 50
Objectified	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%	0.7%	0.0%	1.5%
Revealing Clothing	0.0%	1.6%	0.0%	1.3%	3.9%	7.2%
In a Relationship/ Dating	3.0%	5.7%	3.1%	4.9%	8.8%	15.2%
Married/ Committed Partnership	5.9%	3.7%	3.1%	4.6%	29.4%	12.8%
Romantic Interest	5.2%	6.4%	3.1%	7.8%	37.3%	28.1%
Kissing	0.0%	1.0%	0.0%	0.7%	10.8%	10.3%
Has Sex	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.9%	1.9%

SHADED CELLS DENOTE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES.

Table 27. Careers, STEM, and leadership by age (50+) in current, new, and popular programming for children, in 2021

	CURRENT		NEW		POPULAR	
	50-plus	Under 50	50-plus	Under 50	50-plus	Under 50
Has a Job	37.8%	20.5%	28.1%	19.4%	45.1%	27.5%
STEM	3.7%	4.6%	7.8%	6.7%	2.9%	3.7%
Leader	19.3%	15.9%	21.9%	16.8%	25.5%	13.4%

SHADED CELLS DENOTE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES.

Table 28. Violence and criminality by age (50+) in current, new, and popular programming for children, in 2021

	CURRENT		NEW		POPULAR	
	50-plus	Under 50	50-plus	Under 50	50-plus	Under 50
Violent	14.8%	11.2%	4.7%	8.2%	16.7%	15.6%
Commits a Crime	11.1%	7.3%	0.0%	5.4%	15.7%	10.6%

Appendix B: Variables

IDENTITIES

All variables are tested for reliability among our human expert coders, who undergo a rigorous training process and then run pilot tests on data outside of the sample. All variables included in the report have met standards of interrater reliability.

Gender: Character gender is determined by identification, attire, hairstyle, pronouns, and other context cues. This report assesses differences between men, women, boys, girls, and nonbinary characters.

- Nonbinary: Characters are categorized as nonbinary only when confirmed through openly identifying as such, pronouns, or through canonically verifiable character information online.
- Trans: Trans characters are coded as their appropriate gender (e.g., a trans woman would be coded as female). All trans and nonbinary characters are also coded as LGBTQIA+.

Race/Ethnicity: Character race can be determined from skin color, maxillofacial features, and context markers within the show (e.g., the race of the character's family or cultural cues). Characters are coded as multiracial only when explicitly confirmed.

- Implicit Race: A character's race is implied when they are styled, written, and/or performed with racialized affectations, or when cultural cues are suggestive of individual races or ethnicities.
- Non-Raced: Characters are categorized as non-raced when they are not human and/or do not have human skin tones and also have no implied race.

LGBTQIA+: LGBTQIA+ characters are identified through context clues such as romantic attachments, styling, props, dialogue, or through canonically verifiable character information online. Characters in drag are coded as queer. Includes: gay, lesbian, queer/ambiguous, bisexual, transgender, nonbinary, intersex, and asexual.

- Characters who are implied to be LGBTQIA+ but are not explicitly stated to be so are evaluated on an individual basis.

Disability: This research is inclusive of physical, cognitive, and communication disabilities. Disabilities that are not visible were coded only when confirmed through dialogue or visual contexts (e.g., a character visiting a support group).

Age: A character's age is estimated by facial features, maturity, and context clues. This report assesses differences between characters 50 and older and those under 50.

Fat: We prefer to use the term "fat" as a value-neutral descriptor that is not rooted in harmful medical practices (such as "obese" or "overweight"), nor is it suggestive of being outside of some sort of "norm" or "average" (such as "plus size" or "bigger").

PROMINENCE

We identify the prominence of every character, assigning them to one of four levels: lead/colead, notable supporting, supporting, and minor.

Leads and coleads: The protagonist(s) of the "A" story in the episode is designated as the lead/colead.

Notable supporting: Characters are categorized as "notable supporting" if they make significant contributions to the story and/or are prominently featured but are not the lead. In television, notable supporting actors are usually non-lead members of the cast, recurring characters, and noteworthy guest stars.

Supporting: Supporting characters are those who appear in more than one scene but are not heavily featured.

Minor: Minor characters are those who have speaking roles but appear only briefly.

Characters are not included for analysis if they appear in only one scene and visibly speak one word of dialogue or fewer.

ENDNOTES

1. This research is inclusive of physical, cognitive, and communication disabilities as well as mental-health conditions that are categorized as disabilities by the American Disabilities Act. See Appendix B for all identity definitions.

2. We prefer to use the term "fat" as a value-neutral descriptor that is not rooted in harmful medical practices (such as "obese" or "overweight"), nor is it suggestive of being outside of some sort of "norm" or "average" (such as "plus size" or "bigger").

3. In the 2019 and 2020 See Jane reports Spanish-language programming and streaming platforms were excluded.

4. These shows were identified by searching for series tagged as "childrens," "children's animation," and "preschool" on the trade database Variety Insights. The search included all broadcast and cable networks, in addition to the following streaming services: Amazon Prime, Apple TV+, Disney+, HBO Max, Hulu, Netflix, Paramount+, and Peacock.

5. Kaiser Family Foundation. 2010. "Daily Media Use Among Children and Teems Up Dramatically From Five Years Ago." January 20. Available at https://www.kff.org/racial-equity-and-health-policy/press-release/daily-media-use-among-children-and-teens-up-dramatically-from-five-years-ago/

6. Strasberger, Victor C., Amy B. Jordan, and Ed Donnerstein. 2010. "Health Effects of Media on Children and Adolescents." Pediatrics 125 (4): 756-67.

7. Nielsen. 2020. Being Seen On Screen: Diverse Representation and Inclusion on TV.

8. 33.3% of episodes in the popular programming dataset are telenovelas.

9. For programming on broadcast and cable, this refers to the 2021–2022 season. On streaming services, this refers to the 2021 calendar year.

10. AMC+ and BET+ were included in the search but did not yield results for children's programming.

11 The Golden Globes, for example, require that an actor appears in a minimum of 5% of the film's total runtime. https://www.goldenglobes.com/sites/default/files/2022-09/golden-globe-awards-eligibility-descriptions-2022-revisions-approved-9-30-22.pdf

12. The difference between male and female characters is statistically significant for white, Black, and Latinx characters.

13. Ten telenovelas for broadcast programming, as well as Squid Game for streaming programming.

14. The high instance of implied Native characters is due to the show Maya and the Three.

About the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media

Founded in 2004 by Academy Award Winning Actor Geena Davis, the Institute is the only research-based organization working collaboratively within the entertainment industry to create gender balance, foster inclusion and reduce negative stereotyping in family entertainment media.

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