

Speaker to Address Media's Influence on Children

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GAINESVILLE – From Sesame Street to news on the Internet, the media plays a role in children's lives. But as the media industry becomes more technologically advanced, what role will it play in child development?

Ellen Wartella, dean of the University of Texas at Austin College of Communication, will present "Growing Up Digital: How Interactive Media Influence Children's Development" on Wednesday, April 2 in the Harn Museum of Art at 7:30 p.m. as part of the Florida Frontiers Lecture Series. The lecture is free and open to the public.

Sponsored by the UF College of Journalism and Communications, Wartella was invited for the lecture series for her expertise with children and the media.

"Wartella is a leading scholar regarding media effects on children," said Terry Hynes, dean of the UF College of Journalism and Communications. "Children from very early ages learn much about the world from the media, and the short- and long-term effects of media on children are very important to know and understand for all of us who care about 'shaping the future.'"

Wartella earned her Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota in 1977 and completed post-doctoral research in development psychology in 1981 at the University of Kansas. She serves on numerous boards including the National Academies of Sciences' Board on Children, Youth and Families, the Children's Advertising Review Unit and the Center for Media Education.

Wartella is the 11th speaker in the Florida Frontiers Lecture Series celebrating UF's sesquicentennial celebration. Organized by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the series brings to campus prominent speakers and performers who lead the frontiers of modern research. Speakers are hosted at 7:30 p.m. every Wednesday.

The series commences on April 9 with Ntozake Shangé, UF visiting professor of African American studies and theatre and dance, lecturing on "Poetry: Do it With a Big Stick." For more information about the Florida Frontiers Lecture Series visit www.clas.ufl.edu/150 or call (352) 846-2032.