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## CBBC 'Going Live' on Saturdays

Phillip Schofield '80s favourite inspires new live event as channel overhauls entertainment

BY HANNAH GANNAGÉ-STEWART

The BBC is to create a *Going Live*-style Saturday morning kids' TV block as part of a CBBC entertainment overhaul.

The channel is preparing a two-hour live event, inspired by the 1980s show fronted by Phillip Schofield and Sarah Greene, to air every weekend.

BBC Studios' *Live And Dangerous* (w/t), which will be filmed in front of an audience at CBBC's MediaCityUK studio, will feature an array of celebrity guests and musical performances.

Run by CBBC continuity and presentation boss Ian France, the show will incorporate existing formats such as Strawberry Blonde's fledgling music series *The Playlist*.

### Expanding horizons

BBC Children's director Alice Webb said she wants to air more "edge-of-the-seat" events to build on projects such as *Hacker's Cracker*, featuring anarchic puppet Hacker T Dog, and 2015's 30th anniversary celebrations of live presenter-led kids' programming, which reunited stars such as Andi Peters and Edd The Duck.

"This is us pushing the boundaries and committing to doing new things for children's audiences," she added.

Elsewhere, CBBC is also hunting for more entertainment and non-scripted comedy shows, particularly low-cost sketch shows and personality-led interactive ideas, with slots for three 12 x 30-minute projects available from 2018.

The entertainment drive was revealed as part of a BBC Children's briefing held last week in Salford by Webb, CBBC controller Cheryl Taylor and CBeebies controller Kay Benbow.

Elsewhere, the channel is to ramp up the number of series aimed at kids aged 12 to 15 and is eyeing more drama, news and current affairs programming.

The broadcaster is preparing to invest in family-friendly feature films of up to 90 minutes. The move, which is understood to be similar to the way that BBC Films backs movies, was described by one veteran kids' producer as a "pleasant surprise".

The BBC is also encouraging indies to pitch for up to 12 slots per year across its *My Life* doc strand.

*My Life*, which has aired films such as Drummer TV's refugee doc *The Boy On The Bicycle*, has budgets of around £50,000 per half hour.

During the meeting, the BBC also reiterated the increased opportunities for kids' producers in the nations and regions. This follows the hire of Julia Bond as its first children's commissioning exec for Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Webb, who took over BBC Children's in 2015, revealed that she is drawing up digital programming plans for its expanded online kids' platforms, which include iPlayer Kids.

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ALICE WEBB  
BBC CHILDREN'S

The BBC will commission original content for these digital platforms alongside its existing archive of shows. However, Webb said: "I don't want indies just to worry about the individual shows, I want them to worry about where we are collectively taking children's media. That's why I want to share with them the big picture as well as the individual opportunities."

The BBC currently accounts for well over 90% of spending on first-run kids' originations, which stood at £77m in 2015.



Hacker T Dog (bottom): Webb is on the lookout for projects similar to the anarchic puppet's *Hacker's Cracker*

