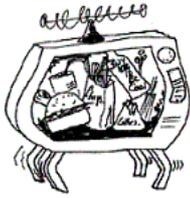


COALITION ON FOOD ADVERTISING TO CHILDREN



PO Box 408. Parkholme. SA 5043.
www.chdf.org.au/foodadstokids

Speaking out against unhealthy food advertising to children

10 June 2004

Program Manager
Seven Network Adelaide
45 Park Terrace
Gilberton. SA 5081

Dear madam/sir,

I wish to bring to your attention a potential breach of the Children's Television Standard and Draft Commercial Television Industry Code of Practice.

The relevant Children's Television Standard, (Australian Broadcasting Authority, 1999) is CTS 17. "No advertisement may mislead or deceive children, and nothing in these standards shall be taken to limit the obligation imposed by this standard.

The revised Industry Code of Practice states that "all advertising directed at children (whether or not they are broadcast during children's programs) must comply with the comprehensive Children's Television standards which have been determined by the Australian Broadcasting Authority. (CTVA Explanatory Note. Review of Commercial Television Industry Code of practice. P5. 2003)

The particular advertisement is one for Kellogg's Coco Pops screened on Better Homes show, Saturday 5 June, 6.30 -7.30pm. The advertisement features popular pre-school personality Monica Trapaga, promoting Coco Pops for its nutritional content vis a vis "no artificial coloring or preservatives, and 8 vitamins and minerals including calcium for strong bones and teeth". The advertisement fails to mention the high sugar content of Coco Pops which at 40% by weight of the product, makes Coco Pops one of the highest sugar-containing breakfast cereals on the market and **definitely not considered to be a healthy food choice by nutritional standards** (Australian Guide to

Healthy Eating, Commonwealth Department of Health & Family Services, 1998)

Coco Pops is a breakfast cereal marketed to children as evidenced by its packaging and advertising strategies. This placement of this advertisement at the particular time-slot 7pm, locates it within children's peak TV viewing time which is between 5 -9pm (ABA, 2002).

While advertisers may argue that the advertisement is directed at parents, nevertheless, (1) Coco Pops is a food product directed at the child market, (2) the advertisement was screened in children's peak viewing time and (3) the advertisement features children and a popular pre-school personality and is therefore likely to appeal to children as well as parents.

Australia is currently experiencing an epidemic of childhood obesity and excessive intakes of energy-dense foods, including high-sugar foods, are contributing to this problem. (Cook, Rutishauser, Seelig. 2001)

By omitting to inform consumers in the advertisement that Coco Pops contains high levels of sugar, this advertisement is irresponsible and is breaching CTS 17 as well as the Industry Code of Practice.

The Coalition on Food Advertising to Children, requests that this advertisement be removed immediately.

Yours sincerely,

Kaye Mehta,
Chairperson