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Kellogg pulls Coco Pops ad after OPC complaint

Kellogg found to have breached advertising to children code

A complaint made by the Obesity Policy Coalition (OPC) about a Kellogg's TV commercial directed to children has been upheld by the Advertising Standards Board (ASB) this week and the ad has been removed from viewing.

The TV ad for Coco Pops in which the coco pops are playing 'Marco Polo' has been found to breach the Responsible Children's Marketing Initiative (RCMI). As a signatory to the RCMI, Kellogg has committed not to advertise its products to children under 12 years in media unless those products represent healthy dietary choices, consistent with established scientific or Australian government standards.

Executive Manager of the OPC, Jane Martin was delighted with the determination.

"Coco Pops contain 36.5% sugar, moderate levels of salt and are very low in dietary fibre. They are not a healthy food choice for children, so they should not be promoted to children as was clearly the intention of this ad.

"The ad was clearly directed to children – I can't imagine many adults being enticed by cartoon characters having a pool party and playing a children's game. Claims by Kellogg that the ad was directed at grocery buyers are outrageous.

"Consumption of energy dense, high-sugar products such as Coco Pops can contribute to poor diets and lead to weight gain and obesity in children. It is irresponsible to promote a high sugar cereal to children, particularly at a time when a quarter of Australian children are overweight or obese," said Ms Martin.

This is only the fourth time (out of 22 submissions) an OPC complaint about junk food marketing to children has been upheld by the ASB in the past three years.

"I hope that we are beginning to see the ASB finding its teeth on the issue of marketing to children, for a long time it has been a toothless tiger, but this is an issue that is too important to continually ignore. We know that advertising to children influences what they pester their parents for," said Ms Martin.

The OPC complaint explained how the advertisement breached the RCMI:

1. It is a communication directed primarily to children;
2. Coco Pops do not represent a healthy dietary choice consistent with established scientific or Australian government standards; and
3. It does not promote healthy dietary habits or physical activity. The advertisement is a marketing communication directed primarily to children.

You can read the determination here - <http://122.99.94.111/cases/0144-13.pdf>

Media release



About the Obesity Policy Coalition

The Obesity Policy Coalition is a group of leading public health agencies who are concerned about the escalating levels of overweight and obesity, particularly in children.

The Obesity Policy Coalition partners include Diabetes Australia - Vic, Cancer Council Victoria, Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth) and the World Health Organization Collaborating Centre for Obesity Prevention at Deakin University.



Media release

