



Ad Standards Community Panel
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AdStandards.com.au

Advertising Standards Bureau Limited
ACN 084 452 666

Case Report

1	Case Number	0097/19
2	Advertiser	The Good Foundation
3	Product	Community Awareness
4	Type of Advertisement / media	Billboard
5	Date of Determination	03/04/2019
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

- 2.6 - Health and Safety Body Image
- 2.6 - Health and Safety Bullying (non violent)
- 2.6 - Health and Safety Within prevailing Community Standards

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This billboard advertisement features the text "It is not okay. 1 in 4 Australian children are obese. We need you. Now seeking partners."

THE COMPLAINT

A sample of comments which the complainant/s made regarding this advertisement included the following:

This is sending children an unhelpful message about their bodies and reinforcing weight stigma. It is not about behaviours "eg children aren't getting enough exercise or vegetables" or even talking about health risks, but simply presents the message that certain body sizes are "not ok".

This will impact larger children receiving the message as well as children learning that some sizes are "not ok" which could lead to increased bullying.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE





Comments which the advertiser made in response to the complainant/s regarding this advertisement include the following:

The intention of our ad isn't to fat shame, but to highlight a very important issue that needs awareness. Children are the future of the country and to create behaviour change we need support so that we can educate and empower our future generations so that we can change this statistic. It's very scary that this generation have a lower life expectancy than their parents and as a foundation we deliver a solution through our wonderful programs.

THE DETERMINATION

The Ad Standards Community Panel (the Panel) considered whether this advertisement breaches Section 2 of the AANA Code of Ethics (the Code).

The Panel noted the complainant's concern that the advertisement promotes bullying.

The Panel viewed the advertisement and noted the advertiser's response.

The Panel considered then Section 2.6 of the Code. Section 2.6 of the Code states: "Advertising or Marketing Communications shall not depict material contrary to Prevailing Community Standards on health and safety".

The Panel noted the complainant's concern that the advertisement implies that some body sizes are not okay, and that this implication will lead to increased bullying towards children that are obese.

The Panel noted the Practice Note for the Code provides:

"The age of the people depicted in an advertisement, their relationship to each other and the nature of the communication are relevant in determining whether an advertisement constitutes bullying and is contrary to Prevailing Community Standards. More care must be taken when the people depicted in an advertisement are Minors or if there is an unequal relationship between the people in the advertisement, e.g. student and teacher, manager and worker."

The Panel considered that the message of the advertisement is not that certain body sizes are not okay, but rather that the high number of children who are obese at such an age is a national wellbeing situation that needs to be addressed.

The Panel considered that there is no language in the advertisement that implies or suggests that bullying is acceptable, or a call to action for bullying. The Panel noted the advertiser's response that the intent of the advertisement is not to 'fat-shame'



but to highlight an important issue.

The Panel considered that it is unlikely this advertisement would be seen to encourage or condone bullying of children and that it did not depict material which would be contrary to community standards on health and safety. The Panel considered the advertisement did not breach Section 2.6 of the Code.

The Panel noted the statistic “1 in 4 children are obese” and considered that this is not quite accurate. The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare advises that “1 in 4 Australian children (aged 2-17) were overweight or obese in 2014-15”. The Panel noted that the accuracy of the advertisement is not a matter which the Panel can consider.

Finding that the advertisement did not breach any other section of the Code the Panel dismissed the complaint.

