



Ad Standards Community Panel
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Ad Standards Limited
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Case Report

1. Case Number :	0231-22
2. Advertiser :	Drakes Supermarkets
3. Product :	Other
4. Type of Advertisement/Media :	TV - Free to Air
5. Date of Determination	12-Oct-2022
6. DETERMINATION :	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

AANA Code of Ethics\2.1 Discrimination or Vilification

DESCRIPTION OF ADVERTISEMENT

This television advertisement depicts a teenage girl and two little girls waving goodbye at a door. They are then shown reading a book together, and the teenager walks in on the two children playing with with make-up and making a mess. She takes them to the supermarket and buys products to clean the children and the house. The advertisement ends with the parents coming home and the babysitter smiling.

THE COMPLAINT

Comments which the complainant/s made regarding this advertisement included the following:

The children are portrayed as females, making a mess playing with make up. 'Little girls' should NOT be stereotypes as playing with pink make up to make a mess when, for example, they could be doing a science experiment to make a mess. Furthermore, the babysitter is portrayed as an older girl. This further perpetuates gender stereotyping placing females in a caregiving role and performing domestic duties (such as cleaning and shopping for the cleaning products), when it could easily have been a male performing those duties and that role.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE



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

Description of the Advertisement

The Advertisement is part of a series of television commercials communicating everyday domestic scenarios experienced by families requiring them to consider purchasing ingredients from a Drakes Supermarket to solve the problems. Demonstrating that Drakes has the ingredients to feed or solve everyday situation no matter what the day or situation.

The TVC scenario involves a babysitter looking after 2 girls. The scene begins with them reading a book together then cuts to the kids playing around. It then cuts to the babysitter alone on the couch who then looks around for the kids and discovers they have found makeup and are drawing on themselves and the mirror. The babysitter then rushes to Drakes to get cleaning products to clean up the mess and kids before the parents get home. The scene ends with the bathroom and kids cleaned up and in bed when the parents arrive home.

The Advertisement in question communicates a scenario where children are being looked after by a babysitter and they get up to some mischief requiring the purchase of cleaning products to fix the problem. Something that would be considered normal for most households with children at some stage.

Response in relation to the Complaint

We do not believe the advertisement breaches any of the parts of Section 2 of the AANA Code of Ethics or any other parts of the code. It specifically does not display any discrimination or vilification, is not exploitative or degrading, does not show any violence, does not use sex, sexuality or nudity, nor any language that would be offensive, does not contravene and health and safety standards or distinguishable as advertising.

The specific complaint refers to gender stereotyping young girls and a babysitter. There is no reference or intention to stereotype any of the talent in the commercial. It is simply demonstrating a typical event in a grocery buyer household of children getting up to some mischief, and the person responsible for them deciding to go to the supermarket to solve the problem. It could quite easily have been boys in the exact same situation with crayons or makeup.

In the series we've tried to include a diverse range of people and scenarios that consumers can relate to. We've tried to steer clear of gender stereotyping by having a male cooking a roast dinner for his family and a Dad making school lunches for his daughter. However, there are some scenarios such as the babysitting where it is far more common and therefore relatable to the audience to have a female babysitter (According to research only 2.9% of babysitters are male <https://kidsit.com/babysitting-statistics>). The makeup isn't being used as



feminine makeup by the kids they are using it as a creative device to draw on themselves and the mirror to create a mess.

The ads in the series demonstrate everyday scenarios around:

Family Roast night

Movie Night

Picnic

School Lunch Preparation

BBQ for Friends

Baby Sitting

The campaign uses only drakes staff or family as talent and all equally gender balanced as much as possible.

Every precaution has been taken to demonstrate and communicate everyday situations with gender neutrality.

Drakes Supermarkets is the largest independent family owned supermarket business in Australia and has been in operation since 1974. They demonstrate impeccable family values as a business, supermarket and advertiser. Using the positioning statement of “Ingredients for Everyday” underpinned by “Aussie family Owned” with all their commercials demonstrating those every day scenarios.

The business only use staff and family members as talent in their commercials to portray authenticity and family values that are well received and endorsed by their customers and staff.

The commercial in question actually features the children and grandchildren of the Drakes family.

We feel that the complaint has no foundation or relevance and should be dismissed. If not every commercial on air featuring either a male or female could be accused of gender stereotyping.

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 uses gender stereotypes.

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

Section 2.1: Advertising shall not portray people or depict material in a way which discriminates against or vilifies a person or section of the community on account of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion, disability, mental illness or political belief.



The Panel noted the AANA Practice Note which provides guidance on the meaning of:

- Discrimination - unfair or less favourable treatment
- Vilification - humiliates, intimidates, incites hatred, contempt or ridicule
- Gender – refer to the attributes, roles, behaviours, activities, opportunities or restrictions that society considers appropriate for girls or boys, women or men. Gender is distinct from ‘sex’, which refers to biological differences

The Panel noted that the Practice Note also includes:

“Harmful gender stereotypes are unacceptable because they perpetuate unconscious bias and rigid norms of femininity and masculinity that shape what it means to be a girl, woman, boy or man...”

Advertisements should take care to avoid suggesting that skills, interests, roles or characteristics are:

- *always uniquely associated with one gender (eg. family members creating a mess while a woman has sole responsibility for cleaning it up);*
- *the only options available to one gender; or*
- *never carried out or displayed by another gender, as this may amount to discrimination on the basis of gender.”*

Does the advertisement portray material in a way which discriminates against or vilifies a person on account of gender?

The Panel considered that there is a growing desire for diversity in advertisements, and that advertiser should take care that their advertising reflects the community and does not rely on outdated stereotypes.

The Panel considered that while the babysitter and girls in the advertisement are depicted in gender stereotypical roles, there is no suggestion that female roles are restricted to using makeup, looking after children or cleaning, or that these roles could not be undertaken by men. The Panel considered that the babysitter was shown to be empowered and in control of the situation. The Panel considered that the advertisement was not perpetuating rigid norms of femininity, rather was depicting an everyday circumstance in which the babysitter took control and handled a situation.

The Panel considered that the advertisement did not depict material in a manner that was discriminatory or vilifying on the basis of gender.

Section 2.1 conclusion

Finding that the advertisement did not portray material in a way which discriminates against or vilifies a person or section of the community on account of gender, the Panel determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.1 of the Code.



Conclusion

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