



Case Report

1	Case Number	0233/17
2	Advertiser	ABC Tissue Products Pty Ltd
3	Product	Toiletries
4	Type of Advertisement / media	TV - Free to air
5	Date of Determination	07/06/2017
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

- 2.2 - Objectification Exploitative and degrading - children
- 2.4 - Sex/sexuality/nudity S/S/N - sexualisation of children

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This TVC shows the well-known ambassador for Quilton Toilet Tissue, a cupid with wings, dancing in the clouds with toilet paper flowing around him like a ribbon. Cupid starts slowly and then as the music changes to a more modern beat, he surprises us with more modern dance moves.

The ad finishes with cupid dancing next to the Quilton pack and the famous Quilton endline "Loves your bum".

THE COMPLAINT

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

At first, I thought it was kind of cute being a baby Cupid, but then I thought this is sending the wrong message to people, as it demonstrates 1/2 naked child dancing in a provocative way.

This is sending the wrong message, as it is giving the ok to Paedophiles.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

This TVC does not “send the wrong message, as it is giving the ok to Paedophiles” as the complaint suggests.

The Quilton Cupid is a well-established identity having appeared in various guises in previous Quilton TVC’s.

Classical cupids are usually shown naked but we have always made sure than our cupid is covered up appropriately.

In this latest TVC we had him wearing pants so he could dance freely and thus completely eliminate any notion of being sexual or degrading.

His dancing is in no way provocative or suggestive (it is at first ‘classical’ then later ‘contemporary’) and we fail to see it could be misinterpreted as “giving the ok to Paedophiles”.

Section 2 overall

We do not believe this TVC contravenes any aspect of the section 2.

THE DETERMINATION

The Advertising Standards Board (the “Board”) considered whether this advertisement breaches Section 2 of the AANA Code of Ethics (the “Code”).

The Board noted the complainant’s concerns that the advertisement depicts a half-naked child dancing in a provocative manner which is not appropriate and sends the wrong message.

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

The Board considered whether the advertisement was in breach of Section 2.2 of the Code. Section 2.2 of the Code states: “Advertising or marketing communications should not employ sexual appeal: (a) where images of Minors, or people who appear to be Minors, are used; or (b) in a manner which is exploitative and degrading of any individual or group of people.”

The Board noted the AANA Practice Note which provides guidance on the meaning of the terms exploitative and degrading:

“Exploitative - means clearly appearing to purposefully debase or abuse a person, or group of persons, for the enjoyment of others, and lacking moral, artistic or other values.

Degrading – lowering in character or quality a person or group of people.”

The Board noted that in order to breach this Section of the Code the images would need to be using sexual appeal in a manner that is considered both exploitative and degrading.

The Board noted the Practice Note to Section 2.2 of the Code provides: “In advertisements where images of Minors, or people who appear to be Minors, are used, sexual appeal is not acceptable and will always be regarded as exploitative and degrading...Minors...must not be portrayed in a manner which treats them as objects of sexual appeal”

The Board noted the complainant’s concern that the cupid is shown dancing in a provocative manner.

The Board noted the advertisement features a dancing baby cupid. The Board noted that while the cupid does look like a baby wearing a nappy the Board considered that the cupid’s dancing is clearly computer-generated and in the Board’s view the dancing is humorous and designed to showcase the product. The Board considered that the complainant’s view of the cupid’s dancing as provocative is a view very unlikely to be shared by the broader community.

The Board acknowledged the high level of community concern around the sexualisation of children but considered that in this instance the advertisement does not employ sexual appeal.

The Board determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.2 of the Code.

The Board considered whether the advertisement was in breach of Section 2.4 of the Code. Section 2.4 of the Code states: “Advertising or Marketing Communications shall treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience”.

The Board noted the complainant’s concerns that the advertisement depicts a half-naked child and that this sends the wrong message and is “giving the OK to paedophiles”.

The Board noted that the cupid in the advertisement does look like a baby wearing a nappy and considered that it is not inappropriate to show a young child in this manner and the level of nudity is not excessive.

The Board noted that the cupid is shown dancing and considered that this dancing is clearly computer-generated and is humorous rather than sexualised or intended to be seen as sexual. The Board noted the advertisement’s tagline of ‘Loves your bum’ and considered that this tagline has been associated with the advertised product for many years and in the Board’s view it is clearly intended to be read in the context of the product, toilet roll, and not as a suggestion that you should love the bottom of the cupid in the advertisement, or of any young child. Overall the Board considered that the complainant’s interpretation of the advertisement sending a sexualised message is unlikely and considered that the nudity was justifiable.

The Board considered that the advertisement did treat the issue of sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience and determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.4 of the Code.

Finding that the advertisement did not breach the Code on other grounds, the Board dismissed the complaint.

