



**Ad Standards** Community Panel  
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**AdStandards.com.au**

Advertising Standards Bureau Limited  
ACN 084 452 666

## Case Report

1	Case Number	0269/18
2	Advertiser	The Alannah & Madeline Foundation
3	Product	Community Awareness
4	Type of Advertisement / media	Radio
5	Date of Determination	06/06/2018
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

### ISSUES RAISED

2.3 - Violence Causes alarm and distress to Children

### DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This radio advertisement states: "By the time she was five, Maya's family was in serious financial trouble. In the depths of despair, her father tried to kill Maya and her mother. They survived, but can you imagine Maya's terror? Every two minutes there is a report of child abuse, neglect or family violence. The Alannah & Madeline Foundation works to keep kids safe from violence. Please help with a donation today, call 1300 720 747."

### THE COMPLAINT

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

*I have heard the new domestic violence ad 4 times today.*

*I am totally against violence. However if my 3 daughters aged 3,5 & 7 hear this ad they are going to think next time we tell them we can't afford to buy them something that I am going to kill them because that's what is said in the ad.*



## **THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE**

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

*The ad is designed to showcase the various realities that children face in violent situations, in this case the child in question experienced and survived an attempt on her life as well as her mother's. The reason for this occurring included growing pressures of everyday life building on the father (loss of work that then led to economic pressures and feelings of shame and guilt). This is a very real scenario that is facing household across Australia and has resulted in the deaths of family members.*

*The intent of the ad is to encourage the general public to take action by supporting the Foundation to help those children recover who experience such traumatic situations. Every 2 minutes there is a report of child abuse, neglect and violence in Australia – this is just one example. We can no longer sweep instances like this under the carpet, we need to be the voice for children like Maya in the ad and ensure that violence like that depicted is unacceptable.*

*We regret that the complainant feels that this ad will reflect poorly on him with his children, however at no point does it suggest that all men commit such violence. The ad also delivers the story in context with the name of the Foundation, the telephone number and the reason for the message.*

## **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 would cause alarm and distress to children.

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

The Panel considered whether the advertisement was in breach of Section 2.3 of the Code. Section 2.3 states: "Advertising or Marketing Communications shall not present or portray violence unless it is justifiable in the context of the product or service advertised".

The Panel noted that the radio advertisement states: "By the time she was five,



Maya's family was in serious financial trouble. In the depths of despair, her father tried to kill Maya and her mother. They survived, but can you imagine Maya's terror? Every two minutes there is a report of child abuse, neglect or family violence. The Alannah & Madeline Foundation works to keep kids safe from violence. Please help with a donation today, call 1300 720 747."

The Panel noted the complainant's concern that the advertisement implies to children that their fathers are going to kill them, next time a parent tells them they can't afford something.

The Panel considered the advertiser's response that at no point does the advertisement suggest that all men commit such violence.

The Panel noted that the tone of the advertisement is banal, there is no excitement in the speaker's voice and it would be unlikely to gain a child's attention.

The Panel considered that young children would be unlikely to understand and contextualise the words "financial trouble" in the advertisement. The Panel also noted that domestic violence is of significant community concern and that there has been a lot of media attention over the past several years, and considered that older children were likely to understand the messaging of the advertisement and not interpret the advertisement as stating their fathers would kill them if they could not afford something.

The Panel noted it had considered a domestic violence television advertisement in case 0253/17 in which:

"The Board acknowledged that some members of the community could find the content of the advertisement to be upsetting due to their own personal circumstances or experiences but considered that in the context of a community awareness advertisement seeking financial donations the actual content of the advertisement was not graphic and the suggestion of domestic violence was subtle enough to be unlikely to cause alarm and distress to most viewers including children"

In the current radio advertisement the Panel considered that the implied violence in the advertisement would be unlikely to be apparent to children, and considered that the implied violence was justifiable in the context of an important community awareness advertisement seeking donations to a foundation assisting people to escape domestic violence.

The Panel considered that the advertisement depicted a reference of violence in a manner which was justifiable in the context of the product or service advertised and determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.3 of the Code.



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

