



CASE REPORT

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Complaint reference number | 1/99 |
| 2. Advertiser | Officeworks Superstores Pty Ltd |
| 3. Product | Officegoods/services |
| 4. Type of advertisement | Radio |
| 5. Nature of complaint | Violence Other – section 2.2 |
| 6. Date of determination | Tuesday, 9 February 1999 |
| 7. DETERMINATION | Upheld – discontinued or modified |

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The radio advertisement includes the following script:

Child One : ‘Hey Weenie, did your mum get your back to school gear from Officeworks?’

Child Two : ‘Um no Biff.’ (Sound of a child getting pushed away).

Child One : ‘Did your mum get your back to school stuff from Officeworks?’

Child Three : ‘No, she got it from...ugh (Sound of child getting pushed away)

Child One : ‘Hey Four eyes! Did your Mum...?’

Child Four : ‘...Yes she did why?’

Child One : Well, with all the money she saved I’d reckon you’ve got lunch money then.

Child Four : ‘Yes...’

Child One : ‘So hand it over.’

Male Voice Over : ‘Hurry in to Officeworks for savings on everything you need...’

THE COMPLAINT

Comments the complainants made regarding this advertisement included the following:

‘As a parent, I feel that this form of advertising sends the wrong message to children, who are currently home for the school holidays, by condoning violence.’

‘Surely there is enough bullying going on in society already without advertisers putting ideas of this kind into the minds of young people who may think that this type of behaviour is funny or, at least, acceptable.’

‘There is no place for name calling or bullying.’

THE DETERMINATION

The Advertising Standards Board (‘the Board’) considered whether this advertisement breaches Section 2 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics (‘the Code’).

The Board determined that the advertisement breaches Section 2.2 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics in that it presents or portrays violence that is not justifiable in the context of the product advertised.

Board members were of the view that the advertisement's use of a 'school bully' and the fact that the bully seems to 'get away with it' is particularly unfortunate given the current level of concern about bullying in schools.

Section 2.2 of the Code states as follows:

2.2 'Advertisements shall not present or portray violence except unless it is justifiable in the context of the product or service advertised.'