



CASE REPORT

1. Complaint reference number	101/05
2. Advertiser	Goodman Fielder Limited (Uncle Tobys OT's)
3. Product	Food
4. Type of advertisement	TV
5. Nature of complaint	Language – use of language – section 2.5
6. Date of determination	Tuesday, 10 May 2005
7. DETERMINATION	Dismissed

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This television advertisement opens with the scene of Ian Thorpe answering a phone by the poolside. A small sign that reads “Thorpie’s Advice Line” is shown within the frame. The advertisement then cuts to the scene of a mother on the phone to Ian Thorpe explaining the difficulties she is having convincing her children to eat Uncle Toby’s OT’s. Ian Thorpe then makes a number of suggestions on how to convince the children that they should eat the cereal. Thorpie’s final suggestion is for the mother to tell the children that the cereal tastes “fully sick”. Upon hearing this, the children begin eating the cereal.

THE COMPLAINT

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

“It is revolting and doubly so when it is shown during the dinner period.”

THE ADVERTISER’S RESPONSE

Comments which the advertiser made in response to the complaint/s regarding this advertisement included the following:

“We undertook independent research through Jigsaw Strategic Research with target consumers to ascertain the likeability of the communication, and the incorporation of certain phrases commonly used by today’s youth including ‘totally wicked’, ‘phat’, and ‘fully sick’. The research indicated that this was well received, and understood in its intended context by kids.”

“The commercial is a light hearted parody of an advice line which assists Mums, frustrated with trying to communicate the health benefits of Uncle Toby’s OT’s breakfast cereals by playing off commonly used ‘street speak’ to children who are clearly uninterested in the health benefits of the cereal, and are more swayed by the use of the language common to them. The advertisement is intended to recognise and play on the ‘generational gap’ in the way parents and children speak.”

“It is our belief that the general public understand that this advertisement is clearly tongue in cheek.”

THE DETERMINATION

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

The Board accepted the advertiser’s comments that the use of the quote ‘fully sick’ was well received and understood in its intended context by children.

The Board found that the depiction did not contravene the provisions of the Code relating to language.

Further finding that the advertisement did not breach the Code on any other grounds, the Board dismissed the complaint.