



CASE REPORT

1. Complaint reference number	130/01
2. Advertiser	McDonald's Australia Ltd (Happy Meals)
3. Product	Restaurants
4. Type of advertisement	TV
5. Nature of complaint	Discrimination or vilification Other – section 2.1
6. Date of determination	Tuesday, 12 June 2001
7. DETERMINATION	Dismissed

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The television advertisement centres on a children's party scene at a McDonald's restaurant. A caption over a freeze-frame of a young girl's face reads 'Kara's best friend moved to another school.' The caption over a second freeze frame of a young boy reads 'Jason had to follow his mum to the bank, chemist, supermarket, post office ...' while a caption over a third freeze frame of another young girl reads 'Suzy found out the real reason her goldfish looks different,' that over a fourth freeze frame of another young boy reads 'Nathan caught girl germs in a the playground,' and that over a fifth freeze frame of another young girl reads 'Rachel has three younger brothers.' A caption then announces 'Now you know why we call it a Happy Meal.'

THE COMPLAINT

Comments which the complainant made about this advertisement included the following:

'...an offensive advertisement for McDonald's Happy Meals...states that some male child caught 'girl germs; in the playground. Such a suggestion will instill in children's minds the belief that females have a monopoly on certain undesirable types of germ and, by association, they are therefore not as clean as their male counterparts. Such an totally unacceptable...'

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 content of the advertisement did not constitute discrimination/vilification, and that the advertisement did not contravene the Code on these or any other grounds. The Board, accordingly, dismissed the complaint.