



CASE REPORT

1. Complaint reference number	382/00
2. Advertiser	Macquarie University - Sydney
3. Product	Education
4. Type of advertisement	Print
5. Nature of complaint	Health and safety – section 2.6
6. Date of determination	Tuesday, 13 February 2001
7. DETERMINATION	Dismissed

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The print advertisement, captioned ‘Macquarie University Advising Day’, depicts on the left hand side a photograph of a smiling schoolboy in front of a graffiti marked brick wall. His hair is side-parted and slicked, his upper teeth are prominent and he wears shirt, tie and horn-rimmed spectacles with adhesive between the frames. The photograph is captioned ‘At school you flushed his head down the toilet. Now he’s earning over \$200,000 a year’ and, underneath, are the words, ‘Life’s unfair until you get a Macquarie degree’, and the advertiser’s logo. The right hand side of the advertisement carries text announcing the date and time of the event, transport arrangements and contact details.

THE COMPLAINT

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

‘I find it quite remarkable when in this day and age when (sic) we are being made very aware of “school bullying”, that a University would condone such an advertisement!’

THE DETERMINATION

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

The Board, while acknowledging that the serious issue of bullying should not be trivialised, was of the view that the overall message reflected in the advertisement did not do so. The Board determined that the advertisement did not contravene prevailing community standards on Health & Safety, that it did not breach the Code on this or any other ground and, accordingly, dismissed the complaint.