

Outdoor advertising: A space for all?

Mothers' Union has been working to end the commercialisation and sexualisation of childhood through the *Bye Buy Childhood* campaign since 2010, highlighting the commercial pressures on children and the impact it can have.

The Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) regulates outdoor advertising through the UK Code of Non-Broadcast Advertising, Sales Promotion and Direct Marketing. Outdoor advertising typically includes:

- Billboards, posters and notices
- Bus shelter adverts
- Adverts on public transport
- Adverts on the sides of buses and taxis
- Placards and boards
- Fascia, projecting, pole and canopy signs
- Flag advertisements

Following the recommendations from Reg Bailey's independent review, *Letting Children be Children*, the ASA produced a statement outlining the kinds of images that would be considered inappropriate for outdoor advertising. It identifies three general categories of sexualised imagery and where such images may or may not be displayed:

- **Not sexual or no more than mildly sexual** – likely to be acceptable in outdoor advertising if no more than mildly sexual
- **Sexually suggestive** – might be permitted in outdoor advertising but only in certain locations e.g. over 100m away from any school
- **Overtly sexual** – unlikely to be acceptable in outdoor advertising.

The ASA may consider the following characteristics in outdoor advertising as **sexually suggestive** or **overtly sexual**:

- Poses suggestive of a sexual position
- Amorous or sexually passionate facial expressions
- Exposure (including partial) of breasts
- Poses such as hands on the hips, gripping of hair in conjunction with a sexually suggestive facial expression
- Images of touching oneself in a sexual manner
- Suggestion in facial or bodily expression of an orgasm
- Images of suggestive undressing
- Adverts which draw undue attention to body parts, such as breasts or buttocks, in a sexual way
- Adverts which show people in poses emulating a sexual position or alluding to sexual activity
- Overtly sexual lingerie such as stockings, suspenders or paraphernalia such as whips and chains.

Advertisers must also give care and consideration to the location of outdoor advertising and its proximity to places where children spend time. When considering any complaint made against an advert featuring sexualised imagery, the ASA will take into account:

- The nature of the product advertised
- The context of the advert and its location
- The medium in which the advert appears, including the size of the advertisement
- The audience
- The likely response of that audience.

What can I do to help? With this survey, Mothers' Union is looking for information on how outdoor advertising guidelines are being applied in your area. For more information on our campaign, visit www.byebuychildhood.org For more details about the ASA go to www.asa.org.uk



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Survey questions

Please use one response sheet per advert.

Have you seen any sexualised imagery in outdoor advertising that you are unhappy with?

NAME OF PRODUCT: _____

NAME OF COMPANY: _____

FORMAT OF ADVERT (e.g. billboard, bus shelter): _____

LOCATION (e.g. is it near a school, park or playground?): _____

STREET AND VILLAGE/TOWN/CITY OF ADVERT: _____

OWNER OF ADVERTISING SPACE, IF KNOWN (e.g. JC Decaux, CBS): _____

Do you consider the sexualised imagery used in the advert to be: (please tick one)

Mildly sexual (perhaps some nakedness but no more than mildly sexual)

Sexually suggestive (models in suggestive poses or where clothing is more sexualised)

Overtly sexual (models in overtly sexual poses or there is overtly sexualised nudity)

Is there wording or text that is overtly sexual or with obvious innuendo?

YES/ NO TEXT: _____

Have you noticed any difference in the nature of outdoor advertising in the last 12 months?

YES / NO COMMENT: _____

FORMAT (e.g. billboard) _____

Your name: _____

Are you a member of Mothers' Union? YES / NO

If so, which diocese? _____

If not and you are interested in finding out more, please give your email address here:
