



Campaign Guide

We believe that children should be valued as children and not targeted as adult consumers. Childhood has become a marketing opportunity worth £99 billion in the UK and £350 million is spent in the UK each year on persuading children to consume. Manipulative techniques exploit children's natural credulity and use them as a conduit to the household purse. The materialism this encourages has negative effects on children's physical health, mental and emotional wellbeing, on their values, educational development and relationships with families and peers. The use of sexualised content to sell to children and the imposition of sexuality on children to market goods is particularly abhorrent.

How can you make a difference? This campaign guide outlines three ways in which you can make a difference.

1. Whether you are a child, young person or adult, analyse your consumer habits.

Use the *Bye Buy Test* when shopping – in a shop or online - to help you think about what or who is influencing your choices:

- Why do I want to buy it?
- How often will I use it?
- Can I afford it?
- What will happen if I don't buy it?

Our *Bye Buy Test* is available in a handy wallet sized card, from Mothers' Union.

2. Challenge retailers and advertisers who sell or advertise inappropriately to children.


When shopping, if you see an *item* aimed at children that you believe is inappropriate for their age, raise your concern with the shop manager or company head office. You could also ask them to:


- Not take advantage of children's natural inexperience to sell to them
- Not market or sell goods of a sexualised nature to children under 16
- Ensure that children under 16 are not exposed to the marketing and display of sexualised products

If you are concerned about the appropriateness of an *advert* aimed at children, contact the relevant regulator with your concern.

- For print, press, posters, television, radio, cinema, internet (banners and pop-ups etc), email and text, sales promotions and direct marketing **in the UK**, contact the Advertising Standards Authority. You can log your complaint:

 Online: <http://www.asa.org.uk/Complaints-and-ASA-action/How-to-complain.aspx>

 In writing: Mid City Place, 71 High Holborn, London WC1V 6QT

 By phone: 020 7492 2222

- For radio and television advertising in the **Republic of Ireland** contact The Broadcasting Authority of Ireland by filling in a complaints form. This is available at:
 http://www.bai.ie/broadcasting_complaints.html
 Alternatively you can make contact:
 - In writing: 2 - 5 Warrington Place, Dublin 2
 - By phone: 01 644 1280
 - By email: complaints@bai.ie
- For direct marketing in the **Republic of Ireland** contact the Irish Direct Marketing Association:
 - In writing: 8 Upper Fitzwilliam Street, Dublin 2
 - By email: services@idma.ie

3. Contact your political representative

Many political representatives are concerned about the commercialisation of childhood. Why not contact yours and ask them to address the issue?

Guidance on writing a letter or email:

- Ensure that you use your representative's correct title.
 - For UK MPs you can find details at <http://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/mps/>
 - For Rep. Ireland TDs go to <http://www.oireachtas.ie/parliament/tdssenators/tds/>
- Use a polite and positive tone.
- Make it personal. Outline how the issue affects the children in your family and yourself.
- State what action you would like your representative to take. You could use the following points, asking your representative to consider:
 - Raising awareness of the issue within their parliament
 - Working with society, industry and regulators to ensure that children are valued as children, not consumers
 - Taking action to prohibit the use of sexualised content to sell to children under 16
 - Encouraging marketers and retailers to ensure that children are not exposed to the marketing and display of sexualised products.

You can also use these points if you visit your representative in person.

- Send your letters to:
 - UK:** House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA
 - Rep. Ireland:** Dáil Éireann, Leinster House, Dublin 2

To find email addresses and phone numbers for your representative go to the websites above.

Mothers' Union has produced pledge cards* for industry and political representatives. You may wish to give these **in addition** to your letter or visit. You can obtain these by contacting us:

- In writing: Mary Sumner House, 24 Tufton Street, London SW1P 3RB
- By phone: +44 (0)20 7222 5533
- By email: policy@themothersunion.org

For further information about the campaign please go to www.byebuychildhood.org

*Cards are free but there may be a small postage charge for large orders.