



16 May 2011

Media Release

Mums and media study: 'dealing with impacts of sexualisation on children more difficult than food ads'

Kids free 2B Kids Director Julie Gale today drew attention to recent social trends studies conducted by Sydney-based Korn Group. She said The Korn Group has found that:

The one area parents are most concerned about when it comes to the media and popular culture is the sexualisation of children. At the most basic level they do not believe their children need to be exposed to such elements of life. It's contrary to their desire to let them be kids, and to mature at their own pace rather than accelerate their process of growing up.

Ms Gale said, 'these observations are supported by surveys conducted by Kids Free 2B Kids and its partner the Australian Council on Children and the Media at its series of *Bratz, Britney and Bralettes* seminars around Australia'. She added,

Respondents in Korn's "The New Women Clutter Buster Study" of women aged 30-45 years have said 'it's becoming a serious problem with very young girls who want to look a certain way and they'll jeopardise their health and lots of things in order to look [that] way'.

Ms Gale continued,

Korn observes 'fashion lines which push the boundaries too far, along with media that is sexually suggestive is derided as a social ill. Music videos are a classic case in the area of sexualisation and body imagehere mums would actually welcome advertising regulation and a nanny state approach'.

Ms Gale noted that in contrast, while respondents in Korn's "The New Women health and wellbeing study" recognised that junk food plays a role in their kids' emotional wellbeing, they felt that 'kids were facing enough pressure ... so to deny them junk food is to deny them a pressure release and a bit of fun. There is no kudos in being a strict mum'. Many felt they had control in this area, and were less inclined to support regulation.

Child psychologist Dr Glenn Cupit said that 'many parents feel powerless to deal with the early sexualisation of their children, and rightly want the government to support them in their concerns. However, the *Bratz, Britney and Bralettes* seminars provide some effective strategies and information".

The next of these is in Melbourne on May 19, with Ms Gale and Dr Cupit as speakers. For more information or to register visit www.childrenandmedia.org.au or call (08) 8376 2111.

For media interviews contact Julie Gale (in Melbourne) on 0412 922 253, or Dr Glenn Cupit (child psychologist) 08 8302 4580 (day) or 08 8177 1990 (evening)

Source: www.thekorngroup.com.au

Promoting healthy choices and stronger voices in children's media

Australian Council on Children and the Media (incorporating Young Media Australia)
Patrons: Steve Biddulph Baroness Susan Greenfield
Pres: Elizabeth Handsley; Vice-Pres: Jane Roberts; Hon CEO: Barbara Biggins, OAM