

*Families and Media* is a project of the English Sector Episcopal Commission for Social Communications of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCCB). The project's purpose is to help families navigate through the various forms of media found in the home, and to provide parents, teens and younger children with references to obtain valuable background information.

### Suggested bulletin insert #1

#### **Families and Advertising**

Our modern world is inundated with marketing and advertising that has one goal: to make a product so attractive that the consumer feels a need or desire to possess it in order to feel fulfilled or popular. Children and teens need to understand the powerful attraction that marketing can create; they have to learn to differentiate between what they truly need and what they want.

#### **Ten Tools to Help Families Understand Advertising**

- Explain to your children that advertising exists so people can make money, and because of that advertisers use powerful methods to convince consumers to buy their products.
- Discuss how media need paid advertising to stay on the air or to continue publishing.
- Show how advertising can make people want something, even if they don't really need it. Discuss this when confronted by advertising, whether on television, radio, in newspapers, magazines or billboards.
- Point out that when celebrities promote a product, they are being paid to do so, and their prestige or reputation is being used to sell the product.
- Explain that shopping should not be seen as a fun pastime, but rather something people do to buy items they need. Explain the difference between need and want.
- Show how advertising tries to make you feel better about yourself if you buy a certain product, or to convince you that other people will like you better or think you're "cool".
- Discuss how some products that are advertised as "cool" are manufactured in Third World countries by people who earn low wages and are made to work in unhealthy conditions. Sometimes these workers are young children.
- Help your children observe how many times a day families are exposed to advertising; for example, there are ads on the sides of buses, in arenas, on radio and television, on billboards, at the movies and on the Internet.
- When you see advertising that tries to exploit a person's needs or desires, point that out and discuss it with your family. Invite your children to do the same.
- Show that advertising tries to create an image of what a person should be, or should look like, yet often this image does not reflect reality.

## **Additional Resources on Advertising for Families**

**Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission regulations on children's advertising**

[http://www.crtc.gc.ca/Eng/INFO\\_SHT/b300.htm#ch](http://www.crtc.gc.ca/Eng/INFO_SHT/b300.htm#ch)

**Industry standards in Canada for targeting children with advertising**

<http://www.adstandards.com/en/clearance/clearanceAreas/childrensAdvertising.asp>

**Media awareness Network (Canada) – Talking to Kids about Advertising**

[http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/resources/tip\\_sheets/advert\\_tip.cfm](http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/resources/tip_sheets/advert_tip.cfm)

**American Psychological Association – Protecting Children from Advertising**

<http://www.apa.org/monitor/jun04/protecting.html>

**National Institute on Media and the Family – Children and Advertising**

[http://www.mediafamily.org/facts/facts\\_childadv.shtml](http://www.mediafamily.org/facts/facts_childadv.shtml)

**Kidnetic.com – Teaching your Kids about Food Advertising and Marketing**

<http://www.kidnetic.com/BrightPapers/?c=For+Parents&p=71>

**Young Media Australia – Advertising: an Overview**

[http://www.youngmedia.org.au/mediachildren/03\\_01\\_ads\\_overview.htm](http://www.youngmedia.org.au/mediachildren/03_01_ads_overview.htm)

**Catholic Organization for Life and Family**

*The Media: A Fascinating Challenge for the Family*

<http://www.colf.ca>

For more information, contact the English Sector Episcopal Commission for Social Communications at [cecc@cccb.ca](mailto:cecc@cccb.ca). This document is available online at [www.cccb.ca](http://www.cccb.ca).

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