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Media Release

Bratz, Britney and Bralettes: growing up too fast, too soon.

“The marketing and media environment that our children are growing up in is full of sexualised images and this environment is placing pressure on children to act out adult roles for which they are unready” cautions child psychologist, Dr C Glenn Cupit.

Dr Cupit, senior lecturer in child development at the University of South Australia, says “Early exposure to sexualised media and the message that girls need to be hot, thin and sexy, and boys hyper-masculine and dominant over girls, can have a range of negative physical and psychological health outcomes for children. There are many issues parents should be concerned about when it comes to children and the media, and erotic images should be high on their agenda.” Dr Cupit continued.

Julie Gale, director of Kids Free 2B Kids action group, says “Despite ongoing expressions of public concern about harm to children, and complaints to the Advertising Standards Board, commercial enterprises continue to target children from an early age. Children are involuntarily exposed to highly sexualised images in the public space. The Advertising Standards Board continues to ignore the harmful impacts on children. I encourage strong action to pressure the industry to change its ways”.

Dr Cupit and Ms Gale will be speaking on these issues at the *Bratz, Britney and Bralettes: The sexualisation of children in the media* seminar to be held in Melbourne on May 19. Parents teachers and health professionals who want to be informed and take action, including gaining strategies to help children cope with the sexualised media environment are invited to attend.

The seminar will be chaired by Prof Elizabeth Handsley of Flinders University. Other speakers include Steve Biddulph - Author and Family Psychologist (via video presentation) and Archbishop Dr Philip Freier, Anglican Diocese of Melbourne. Co-presented by the Australian Council on Children and the Media and Kids Free 2B Kids this important seminar will be held on Thursday 19 May 2011 at 7:30pm at the Performing Arts Centre of Ivanhoe Girls' Grammar School, Ivanhoe, Melbourne.

For more information or to register please call (08) 8376 2111, email admin@youngmedia.org.au or visit childrenandmedia.org.au.

ACCM is a unique national community which strives for a media environment that supports the health, safety and wellbeing of Australian children. It is committed to promoting healthy choices and stronger voices in children's media.

For more information or to arrange an interview, please call Elizabeth Handsley on 08 8272 1170 or 0448 898 185, Glenn Cupit on 08 8302 4580 OR 08 8177 1990 or Julie Gale on 0412 922 253