



16<sup>th</sup> February, 2012

## Media Release

### Witchery campaign illustrates the corporate takeover of childhood

Debate has been raging in today's press about the launch of a new range of children's clothing: and Witchery's 8fourteen for 8-14 girls. (see link below).

Prof Elizabeth Handsley, President of the Australian Council on Children and the Media, has commented that we should, as a community, be very concerned about a campaign that focuses on models' faces and identities rather than on the products being sold. Much advertising these days is selling the sizzle rather than the sausage", she said.

She continued "Further, we need to be looking at how this example is just part of what seems to be a deliberate grooming of children as consumers rather than providing information about products."

"This is leading to a society that convinces its children that their happiness and their very identity, depends on what they buy and what they own. Yet, the evidence shows that consumerism doesn't make children happier or healthier".

This theme is being developed further at a conference to be run by the Australian Council on Children and the Media in Melbourne on March 9. International and local speakers will debate the topic 'The corporate takeover of childhood: Who's paying the price?' and review the question 'How can we make sure healthy child development is given due consideration in exploitative commercial environments?'

Topics covered by speakers include school sponsorship, food and toy advertising, the marketing of violence to children, the impacts of such marketing on the young, industry perspectives, and the effectiveness of existing regulatory protections.

For more information about the '**The corporate takeover of childhood: Who's paying the price?**' conference visit [http://www.childrenandmedia.org.au/mediachildren/03\\_15\\_seminar\\_melb312.htm](http://www.childrenandmedia.org.au/mediachildren/03_15_seminar_melb312.htm). To book go to <http://www.trybooking.com/BAIY>.

NOTE: link to Witchery story <http://www.smh.com.au/opinion/society-and-culture/sexed-up-tween-advertising-shows-fashion-needs-to-grow-up-20120215-1t788.html>

ACCM is a unique national community organisation, 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 contact Prof Elizabeth Handsley, mobile 0448898185, Bus 08 8201 5256, AH 08 8272 1170 or email [clare@youngmedia.org.au](mailto:clare@youngmedia.org.au) or call on 08 8376 2111 or 0434 146 096.