



Advertising: true or false?

Advertising in the media is OK for children, because ...

They can tell when they are being conned

- False**
- Under the age of seven or eight, children don't understand the selling intent of ads.
 - Children of nine or ten are still uncertain as to whether ads are telling the truth.
 - Many adults still get conned by ads!

It helps them decide what food is good for them

- False**
- Ads show children what's fun to eat, not what's good for them.
 - The majority of food ads directed at children are for sugary, fatty, salty or processed foods.
 - Many food ads provide only selective information about their products. 'Good' aspects of the product are mentioned; no mention is made of the not-so-good or unhealthy aspects.

They need to learn to deal with ads

- False**
- Research shows that children who are exposed to ads at an early age are more susceptible to them than those who have less exposure.
 - A child needs to be old enough to understand the selling intent of ads, and have a caring adult to help counter the messages before they can start to deal with ads.

They need to know what toys they can buy

- False**
- Ads show kids what the marketers want to push this month, but do children need those products?
 - Many toys that will aid children's development and imaginative play are not those advertised on TV.
 - Many toys are aggressively marketed to coincide with movie releases, often for M rated movies that are not suitable for children under the age of fifteen. Younger children who have been exposed to these merchandising campaigns, or had the toys bought for them, are more likely to put pressure on their parents to see these movies, often with disastrous results.

ACCM recommends ...

Minimise your child's exposure to commercial television. From an early age, start teaching your child about the tricks used in advertisements. Talk to older children about the selling intent of ads. Encourage them to be critical viewers. Avoid TV or movie related toys as presents and explain why foods they see advertised are not good for them. Look around for age specific toys that meet children's real play needs.