



commission for
children and young people
and child guardian

Level 17, 53 Albert Street, Brisbane Qld 4000
PO Box 15217, Brisbane City East Qld 4002
Ph: 07 3211 6700 Fax: 07 3035 5900
www.ccypcg.qld.gov.au

Telephone: 07 3211 6700
Reference: SPRP/DN54643

23 MAY 2013

Mr Trevor Ruthenberg MP
Chair
Health and Community Services Committee
Parliament House, George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000



Dear Mr Ruthenberg

Thank you for your letter dated 6 May 2013 inviting me to consider the terms of reference for the Inquiry into sexually explicit outdoor advertising.

The Commission supports the Inquiry and has previously advocated for the development of regulatory safeguards which will protect children from advertising material which may be injurious to their health and wellbeing.

The potential risks to children of premature sexualisation through exposure to adult-themed advertising include:

- body image problems which can lead to eating disorders, low self-esteem and depression especially among girls
- problem behaviour such as children acting out sexually with other children in a manner which is not developmentally appropriate
- an increased focus on 'appearance' at the expense of other childhood activities
- girls thinking of themselves in objectified terms, which can lead to reduced sexual assertiveness and a decrease in protective behaviours
- the objectification of girls and women
- premature sexualisation may also encourage sexual predation on children by undermining the social prohibition against seeing children as sexually interesting, and
- growing pressures on young boys' sense of body image and self-esteem to have or maintain unrealistic body images portrayed in public media.

In the Commission's view, given the potential risks to children and young people of their exposure to adult sexual themes through outdoor advertising, such exposure should be limited to the greatest extent possible.

It will be important to clearly define 'sexually explicit' to ensure that important public health messages (about breastfeeding for example) are not inadvertently categorised as sexually explicit.

Should your committee require any further information please contact Ms Susan Dwyer, Principal Advisor, on (07) 3211 6991 or Susan.Dwyer@ccypcg.qld.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



Barry Salmon
**Acting Commissioner for Children and Young People
and Child Guardian**