

From: [Angela Street](#)
To: [Health and Community Services Committee](#)
Subject: "Outdoor advertising inquiry"
Date: Monday, 24 June 2013 4:33:19 PM

I am writing to express my concern about the current state of outdoor advertising in Queensland. As a woman who works with hundreds of teen and young adult girls each year, I am only too aware of the very real ways our sexualised culture is affecting them. It is very obviously taking an insidious toll on their emotional, psychological and physical wellbeing and we now have the most depressed, insecure generation of girls to ever walk the face of the earth. I see this constantly myself in the work I do but am also aware that while some might dismiss such worries as moral panic, recent international and Australian studies have highlighted the significant impact this sexualisation of girls and young women has and has linked it with the most common health problems suffered by them. Doctors are seeing unprecedented numbers of younger and younger girls suffering from clinical depression and anxiety often leading to impaired performance in school, eating disorders needing hospitalisation, concerns about their bodies and self-esteem issues. And boys are not far behind. We are creating insecure children who will turn into damaged young men and women. this culture is sucking the life out of our children.

Childhood is under attack by the adult world with children being bombarded by sexualised imagery all around them from the time they are born. There are some things that we are able to shield our children from but like it or not it is now an inescapable part of a child's environment. All the time. Everyday. Because as soon as they leave our homes, they enter an R-rated world. Why is it that images and messages that would not be allowed on TV before late night viewing are forced upon children in the outdoors. And why is it that if a man were to put up a picture of a naked or semi-naked woman in his office this would be considered sexual harassment but advertisers put up giant billboards in public space with people in sexually provocative poses and others that talk about brothels, condoms and sex with little to stop them. Our young children don't need to be exposed to this influence at such a young and vulnerable age. And we cannot underestimate the influence that advertising has on our children- if it wasn't known to be so effective, billions of dollars would not be spent on it. How can we know advertising cigarettes encourages kids to smoke but deny that advertising sex will affect them also. Also, by constantly sexualizing females, the media is turning women into objects which increases gender-based violence against women.

This issue is of ongoing concern in the community and these things cannot continue to go unchallenged. We should not have to sacrifice our kid's sexual innocence and even their health at the commercial altar. The current self-regulation scheme is very obviously not working and must be re-assessed. I call for public space to become more family friendly, so that our children do not have this influence in their lives. I realise that outdoor advertising is only a small part of the problem but you have to start somewhere. Legislation must be brought in to regulate all outdoor and shopfront advertising to prevent the display of material that is sexually explicit, offensive and/or inappropriate for children. I don't pretend to have all the answers but some things are obvious. No over 18 products should not be advertised in the public space- whether that is gambling, cigarettes, condoms, strip clubs, Sexpo etc. There is plenty of time for our children to be exposed to these concepts. Please consider the future of our children when making decisions in your inquiry.

Many thanks
in anticipation of change
Angela Street