

CARU[®] NEWS

For Immediate Release

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TOPPS PARTICIPATES IN CARU SELF-REGULATORY FORUM

New York, NY – November 28, 2005 - The Children's Advertising Review Unit (CARU) of the Council of Better Business Bureaus, Inc., the children's advertising industry's self-regulatory forum, is pleased to announce that The Topps Company, Inc. (Topps) has agreed to address CARU's concerns raised by its commercial for *Wacky Packages* stickers. The advertisement, which aired during children's programming on Cartoon Network, came to CARU's attention through its routine monitoring.

Wacky Packages stickers are "parody stickers" which poke fun at existing products. The commercial featured children placing *Wacky Packages* stickers all over a car while its business-suited occupant expressed outrage that the kids were making fun of his products.. CARU was concerned that the commercial was not appropriate for audiences watching child-directed shows, because it appeared to condone defacing the property of others.

CARU's *Self-Regulatory Guidelines for Children's Advertising* (the *Guidelines*) state, "Advertisers are urged to capitalize on the potential of advertising to influence behavior by developing advertising that, wherever possible, addresses itself to positive and beneficial social behavior such as ... respect for others."

Topps stated that it respectfully disagreed with CARU's assessment and that the commercial was never intended to promote inappropriate behavior. Topps further stated that since the commercial campaign had ended it had not "engaged CARU to discuss the merits of its position" but that "[i]f Topps ever decides to re-air the commercial in question, we will approach CARU beforehand and resolve the matter."

CARU's inquiry was conducted under NAD/NARB/CARU Procedures for Voluntary Self-Regulation of National Advertising. Details of the inquiry, CARU's decision and the advertiser's response will be included in the next NAD/CARU Case Report.

For a copy of the decision, please contact Linda Bean at 212-705-0129 or lbean@narc.bbb.org.

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The National Advertising Review Council (NARC) was formed in 1971 by the Association of National Advertisers, Inc. (ANA), the American Association of Advertising Agencies, Inc. (AAAA), the American Advertising Federation, Inc. (AAF), and the Council of Better Business Bureaus, Inc. (CBBB). Its purpose is to foster truth and accuracy in national advertising through voluntary self-regulation. NARC is the body that establishes the policies and procedures for the CBBB's National Advertising Division (NAD), the Children's Advertising Review Unit (CARU), and the National Advertising Review Board (NARB).

NAD and CARU are the investigative arms of the advertising industry's voluntary self-regulation program. Their casework results from competitive challenges from other advertisers, and also from self-monitoring traditional and new media, including the Internet. The National Advertising Review Board (NARB), the appeals body, is a peer group from which ad-hoc panels are selected to adjudicate those cases that are not resolved at the NAD/CARU level. This unique, self-regulatory system is funded entirely by the business community; CARU is financed by the children's advertising industry, while NAD/NARB's sole source of funding is derived from membership fees paid to the Council of Better Business Bureaus.