

CARU® NEWS

For Immediate Release

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MCDONALD'S PARTICIPATES IN CARU FORUM

CARU Recommends Modifications to Advertising Featuring 'Bionicle' Premium

New York, NY – November 20, 2006 – The Children's Advertising Review Unit (CARU) of the Council of Better Business Bureaus, Inc., has recommended that McDonald's USA modify advertising for Happy Meals with a "Bionicle" premium.

The advertising aired on Nickelodeon during children's programming and came to the attention of CARU, the children's advertising industry's self-regulatory forum, through CARU's routine monitoring.

CARU questioned whether the advertising at issue violated the *Self-regulatory Guidelines for Children's Advertising (Guidelines)* by focusing on the premium, rather than the product.

The advertising in question featured two boys playing with the Bionicle toy in a darkened room with only vague shots of red Happy Meal boxes in the background. CARU was concerned that the advertisement violated the *Guidelines* by featuring the Bionicle toy premium with almost no depiction of the Happy Meal product.

The *Guidelines* state that "Children have difficulty distinguishing product from premium. If product advertising contains a premium message, care should be taken that the child's attention is focused primarily on the product. The premium message should be clearly secondary."

McDonald's, in its advertiser's statement, noted that the commercial has ended its flight and said the company will take CARU's concerns into consideration "for future commercial production."

CARU's inquiry was conducted under NAD/CARU/NARB Procedures for Voluntary Self-Regulation of National Advertising and resolved within 60 business days. 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 or for press inquiries, please contact Linda Bean, Director of Communications, 212-705-0129.

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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.