

# CARU® NEWS

Immediate Release

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## **SI KIDS PARTICIPATES IN CARU FORUM** *Company Modifies Website in Response to CARU Inquiry*

*New York, NY – December 14, 2006* – Sports Illustrated Kids, operator of the Battle MAX Website, has modified the site following an inquiry from the Children’s Advertising Review Unit (CARU) of the Council of Better Business Bureaus, Inc.

The Website, which featured the “Take Your Best Shot Sweepstakes” and several links to other sites for children, came to the attention of CARU through CARU’s routine monitoring of advertising directed to children. The September 2006 issue of *Sports Illustrated KIDS* magazine included a print advertisement for the sweepstakes, and an address for the Website.

CARU monitors Websites for compliance with its *Self-Regulatory Guidelines for Children’s Advertising* (the *Guidelines*) including guidelines on Interactive Electronic Media, as well as with the federal Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA).

CARU, following its review of the site, was concerned that the sweepstakes registration process allowed children to sign-up for an electronic newsletter without parental notification or an opt-out.

Further, CARU found that the site contained a link to the *Dew Action Sports Tour* Website, at [www.dewactionsportstour.com](http://www.dewactionsportstour.com) – a site that was not compliant with the *Guidelines* because it collected personally identifiable information, such as full name, street address, email address, etc, from all visitors without prior parental consent, and did not screen for age.

SI Kids, upon notification of CARU’s concerns, immediately removed the link to the electronic newsletter. SI Kids asserted that “due to an inadvertent and isolated oversight, the e-newsletter was offered to website visitors without a parental notice mechanism.” The company maintained that no e-newsletters had been sent to any children who had subscribed using the link and that no one would receive a newsletter. SI Kids also removed the link to Dew Action Sports Tour.

The company, in its advertiser’s statement, said it is “pleased to support the self-regulatory process of the Children’s Advertising Review Unit and its efforts on behalf of children’s privacy. We thank CARU for bringing this oversight to our attention and are happy to have been able to satisfactorily address its concerns.”

***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) and Children's Advertising Review Unit (CARU), as well as for the National Advertising Review Board (NARB) and Electronic Retailing Self-Regulation Program (ERSP).

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. 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/NARC/NARB's sole source of funding is derived from membership fees paid to the CBBB. Funding for ERSP is derived from membership fees paid to the Electronic Retailing Association. For more information about advertising self regulation, please visit [www.narcpartners.org](http://www.narcpartners.org).