



Bye Buy Childhood Campaign

The Mothers' Union believes children should be valued as children, not consumers. Yet advertisers target children's natural inexperience in order to reach the household purse.

Giving children the message that they are what they have, rather than being valued for who they are, can negatively affect their wellbeing. Nearly three-fifths of parents believe that advertising seen by children can be harmful to them. Using sex to sell to children is particularly objectionable and 80% of parents are concerned about the impact of sexualised content in television, films, magazines and the internet on their children.

Over £350 million (in the UK alone) is spent on targeting to children each year to get them to buy the latest clothes, gadgets etc. Product placement, pester power and peer pressure all encourage children to spend, spend, spend – or to get the parent to spend, spend, spend.

As individuals, we can feel small against the power of commercialisation. But together we can, and will, make a difference. A difference that will transform the lives of children.

Your contribution is crucial so how can you make a difference?

1. Use the Bye Buy Test when shopping (in a shop or on line) to remind you who or what may be influencing your choice of goods.

- Why do I want to buy it?
- How often will I use it?
- Can I afford it?
- What will happen if I don't buy it?

2. Consider a plan of action for today and the future

- Talk to a store manager if you think their advertising strategy is inappropriate for children...
- Write to your local Member of Parliament about your concerns and ask about the government and opposition parties stance about the commercialisation of children...
- Write to the newspapers – both local and national ones...
- Bring this campaign to the attention of local schools and family groups...

- Talk to other MU groups about how they are 'tackling' this issue. In the words of the Japanese poet Ryunosuke Satoro – 'Individually we are one drop. Together, we are an ocean'.

For further information about the campaign and to order the Bye Buy Childhood Test cards please follow this link www.byebuychildhood.org