

NEWS BRIEFS

CCA monkeys around with new-media literacy campaign

by Nick Krewen

When it comes to promoting its message of empowering youth with media literacy, Concerned Children's Advertisers (CCA) isn't monkeying around.

That's not entirely true: The new bilingual CCA PSA - with creative by Toronto's Bensimon Byrne, and a media partnership with Media Awareness Network (Mnet) - features Sammy the baboon in a prominent and distracting role that hammers home the message of independent thought.

"A really big focus of this campaign is empowerment, and it's really about youth speaking to youth," CCA president Bev Deeth tells MiC. "It's empowering young people to make safe, healthy and balanced choices that are right for them, and to develop the confidence to use, create and distribute media in a respectful way."

Bensimon Byrne creative director David Rosenberg says the spot, which will premiere Monday Feb. 8 on CTV, Canwest, Corus and Teletoon, is about giving children critical thinking skills so they can interpret media for themselves and make smart choices.

The 30-second PSA features a young girl who is constantly censored by a belligerent simian as she reads, watches TV and works on her computer. The more the monkey bothers the girl, the more she is forced to make choices about what she wants to see.

"The copy goes on to say that there is no such thing as a media monkey, and encourages kids to make their own, smart healthy choices in media," says Rosenberg.

Targeted at 9 to 12-year-olds, the campaign will start with TV for the first month and then roll out into a fully integrated media campaign over the next 12 months. Going outside of television to reach their target demo is now a necessity, Deeth says.

"One of the big challenges in reaching youth and teens today is the media," she explains. "Broadcast used to be their primary source of media, but there are now challenges in try to reach them. So this particular campaign will be fully integrated."

In addition to the \$3 million in donated air time, the multi-phase rollout will include the website online, transit shelter ads (donated by Astral Media), on-site advertising at health care facilities and an interactive educational micro site in partnership with Paton Publishing, a division of Metroland Publishing. All media was handled in house.

This media literacy campaign not only marks the third phase of Long Live Kids, an initiative launched by CCA in 2004, but also the 20th anniversary of CCA, which over the years has provided youth-targeted PSAs on subjects ranging from substance abuse and child abuse prevention to self esteem and life choices.

"We're celebrating 20 years of being the credible, caring, authoritative voice of Canadian children, so it's a special milestone for this organization, and also a great time to open this new chapter on media literacy," says CCA's Bev Deeth.



Hope Bagozzi, Chair of Concerned Children's Advertisers' creative committee, acknowledges agency of record Bensimon Byrne and creative committee members at media literacy campaign kick-off. (CNW Group/Concerned Children's Advertisers)

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