



## MEDIA RELEASE

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# Psychiatrists Join Call to Tackle Child Sexualisation

Family First NZ is welcoming a call by the Royal Australian and NZ College of Psychiatrists for the issue of child sexualisation in our media to be confronted.

“A number of family groups including Family First and the National Council of Women have been fighting to have this issue addressed. The addition of the voice of psychiatrists shows just how serious this call is,” says Bob McCoskrie, National Director of Family First NZ.

“The recent marketing of sexualised shirts by *Cotton On Kids* to be worn by babies, the provocative Little Losers line targeted at young teenagers by clothing store *Jay Jays*, sexually charged billboard advertising in public places, and graphic sexual music videos, dolls, and tween magazines and websites which encourage young people to look older and act sexier are examples of marketers and broadcasters crossing the line of what is acceptable and appropriate for our communities and for the protection of our children.”

“Studies from behavioural psychologists have found that as the media and marketers target young people with sexualised messages, there has been a corresponding increase in young girls suffering from depression, self-harm, eating disorders, anxiety, lower academic performance, and deteriorating attitudes and behaviour towards others. The message for boys is to be sexually dominant, aggressive, and to objectify the female body.”

Family First NZ is calling for the government to review and tighten codes around television advertising and programming, billboards and outdoor advertising, including pre-vetting; review the classification of music videos and video games specifically with regard to sexualised imagery; and review the censorship standards governing magazine covers and content that may be inappropriate for children.

“It is time to confront the issue of ‘corporate pedophilia’ and the ‘raunch culture’ which is harming the self-esteem, body image and academic performance of our young people,” says Mr McCoskrie.

**Note:** Family First is sending spokesperson Bev Adair to the Australian Conference on Children and the Media being held in Sydney this Friday, where the Royal Australian and NZ College of Psychiatrists will be presenting their findings.

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**For More Information and Media Interviews, contact Family First:**

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