

**Media Release**  
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## **AANA SETS STANDARD FOR BODY IMAGE**

**Friday, 23 November 2018** - The AANA today launched an updated Code of Ethics Practice Note, which will assist advertisers to understand how the Code of Ethics applies to the portrayal of body image in advertising. The Practice Note will be applied by the Ad Standards Community Panel in making its determinations.

The AANA said that with more advertisers increasingly using models and other influencers in the social media space, the update serves as a timely reminder to ensure advertising is not associated with an unrealistic body image.

The new guidance applies to Section 2.6 of the AANA Code of Ethics (the Code) which prohibits advertising which depicts material contrary to prevailing community standards on health and safety.

Advertising and marketing communication must not portray an unrealistic ideal body image by portraying body shapes or features that are unrealistic or unattainable through healthy practices. For example, an unrealistic ideal body image may occur where the overall theme, visuals or language used in the advertisement imply that a particular body shape is required to use the product or service.

"We know from our Advertising Sentiment Index research that body image in advertising is a community concern and the AANA is committed to ensuring that advertising does not exacerbate the problem, by setting a standard that advertising must not promote an unrealistic body image," the AANA's Director of Policy & Regulatory Affairs, Simone Brandon, said.

The Butterfly Foundation welcomed the new guidance. "Advertisers have a moral and social responsibility to educate themselves and be diverse in their portrayal of body shapes and sizes. Over-representation in popular culture, of which advertising is a part, of so called 'ideal' bodies can trigger body dissatisfaction and translate into dangerous behaviours and in some cases, eating disorders," said Christine Morgan, The Butterfly Foundation CEO.

The AANA said that the Code does not prohibit advertisers from including a diversity of images, including people who have a variety of sizes and shapes. "However, advertisers should take care to not present an unrealistic body image as a shape to conform or aspire to," Ms Brandon said.

The evolution of body image guidance by the AANA reflects brand owners' intent to continue to meet the community's expectations for responsible advertising, helping to ensure that advertising has a positive impact in terms of representing and promoting positive body image in society. It is the codes and the self-regulatory system which both promote and deliver trust between advertisers and consumers.

The updated Practice Note is available from the AANA website.

**-- ENDS --**

**For further information:**

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**About the AANA:** For 90 years the AANA has represented Australia's largest and well-known brands across all major sectors, including FMCG, automotive, banking, finance and insurance, travel, health and beauty, media and communications. The AANA works to protect the interests of those businesses that contribute to an estimated advertising spend of more than \$15 billion a year. On behalf of our members, the AANA's mandate is to maintain and evolve the advertising codes which underpin the system of self-regulation in Australia, safeguard the rights of its members to commercial free speech and protect consumers by ensuring marketing communication is conducted responsibly.

**The Butterfly Foundation:** A reminder to refer to [safe reporting guidelines](#) on body image and eating disorders. Anyone needing support with eating disorders or body image issues is encouraged to contact **Butterfly's National Helpline on 1800 33 4673** or [support@thebutterflyfoundation.org.au](mailto:support@thebutterflyfoundation.org.au) For urgent support call Lifeline 13 11 14.