

CARU Announces Changes to Guidelines for 2022

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In February, we [posted](#) that the Children’s Advertising Review Unit (or “CARU”) was in the process of updating its Guidelines for ads directed to children. The Guidelines had last been updated in 2006, and advertisers often struggled to figure out how to apply them in an advertising landscape that had dramatically changed since then.

The [new Guidelines](#), announced last week, should help. Although the core principles underlying the Guidelines are the same, there are some important updates. Here are some of the key changes:

- The new Guidelines apply to children under 13 years old across all platforms. (Previously, the Guidelines applied primarily to children under 12.)
- Whereas the previous Guidelines focused television, the new version better reflects today’s digital advertising landscape.
- The new Guidelines include a section dedicated to in-app and in-game advertising and purchases.
- The new Guidelines include new factors to help determine when an ad is primarily directed to children under 13. (The factors in the previous version were more TV-centric.)
- The new Guidelines incorporate updated FTC guidance on influencers, endorsements, and native advertising.
- The new Guidelines require that ads not portray or encourage negative social stereotyping, prejudice, or discrimination. (Recall that in a February [blog post](#), CARU had encouraged advertisers to focus on diversity and inclusion in their ads.)

These revised Guidelines will go into effect on January 1, 2022. At that time, CARU will begin actively investigating cases of non-compliance. Unless you take advantage of [CARU’s pre-screening services](#), we’ll need to wait until CARU issues some decisions to determine how it will interpret some of the new provisions.