

CARU Previews Changes, Calls for Diversity in Ads

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The Children's Advertising Review Unit (or "CARU") has guidelines that apply to ads directed to children who are under 12 years old. A lot has changed since the guidelines were last updated in 2006, and CARU recently announced that it's working on an update. At ACI's Advertising Claims Substantiation Forum this month, I asked Angela Tiffin about the update, and she previewed some of the upcoming changes. Here are three:

- The current guidelines are very TV-centric. The updated guidelines will focus more on digital marketing and provide tips to determine whether online ads are directed to children.
- CARU will update their endorsement guidelines. Using the FTC's Endorsement Guides as the "bare minimum," CARU will ask advertisers to take extra care when advertising to children.
- CARU will address "dark patterns." For example, advertisers will be required to clearly disclose when children need to view an ad in order to receive an advertised benefit.

CARU hopes to have the guidelines ready by the end of the year.

Separately, in a recent [blog post](#), CARU encouraged advertisers to focus on diversity and inclusion in ads that are directed to children. They should go beyond legal requirements and strive "to implement diversity and inclusion at every level in their ecosystems and in all ways that diversity and inclusion can be represented." It will be interesting to see whether future decisions address this goal.