

# IMPACT OF ADVERTISING ON A CHILD'S PERSONALITY

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## **Annotation**

This publication focuses on the issue of advertising impact on a child's personality, develops the key aspects of this impact and provides methodological recommendations for its prevention. The author emphasizes the fact that the impact of advertising on people is very strong and has both favorable and unfavorable implications but children do not have enough experience and cannot be critical of the promotional information provided.

**Keywords:** advertising, personality, child, promotional impact.

## **Introduction**

The impact of advertising messages on people is usual and rather powerful in modern life. On the one hand, advertising allows to get acquainted with new products, services, and action patterns; on the other hand, it is a powerful way to influence the mass consciousness. With the help of advertising, the human consumption of various goods is stimulated, certain stereotypes and values are imposed, the life style of middle and upper classes is demonstrated as a vital norm.

Advertising markedly affects an adult and has both favorable and unfavorable implications. An adult can use experience, formed beliefs, moral values and critical thinking in contrast to this influence. However, even this does not allow to protect oneself fully from such impact. Advertising has a slightly different impact on children and teenagers.

### **1. Some aspects of the impact of advertising on people in the modern world**

The problem is that children do not have enough experience and cannot be critical of the promotional information provided. Moreover, children spend plenty of their time in front of a TV and very often it happens in the absence of adults.

In order to resist the advertising impact on children, some countries adopt certain statutory provisions, produce new (exclusively for children) TV-channels without advertising at all.

In Ukraine, the impact of advertising on children's audience is reflected in the Law of Ukraine "On Advertising". According to this Law, the following is prohibited in advertising: to use the images of children who consume or use products intended only for adults or prohibited by law for the purchase or consumption by minors; to provide information that could undermine the authority of parents, guardians, caregivers, teachers and children's credibility to them; to push children to buy products or ask third parties to make a purchase; to use the images of real or toy weapons or explosive devices.

According to the Ukrainian Legislation, advertising must not contain the images of children in dangerous situations or in circumstances, which may do harm to children or other persons in case of their imitation; it also must not contain information which is able to initiate dismissive children's attitude to situations that are dangerous for health and life. Advertising must not inflict moral or physical damage on children, cause them to feel deficiency. Advertising must not point to the possibility of purchasing the advertised product designed primarily for children by each family without taking into account the possibility of its budget.

Advertising must not create the impression, that the possession of advertised product will give the edge over other children [1; 2].

## **2. Results of social and pedagogical research devoted to the study of the impact of advertising on a child's personality**

As part of the study of specifics of a social teacher's advertising and information activities, we have conducted a survey of first-, middle- and senior-grade students of general education institutions in the city of Kyiv and the town of Brovary. The total number of children engaged in the survey was 563 students, of which 291 live and study in Kyiv (91 students - primary school, 97 - secondary school, 103 - senior school), and 272 live and study in Brovary (99 students – primary school, 108 – secondary school, 65 – senior school). The survey was conducted in January 2017 by the senior students from the Borys Grinchenko Kyiv University majored in Social Pedagogy during their work experience internship. In the course of the survey the respondents were asked a series of questions orally and in writing. Following few general questions posed orally, the respondents were asked to briefly answer printed questions in a structured questionnaire. The primarily-school students were given a questionnaires adapted to their age. Most of the information in them was presented as illustrations. The survey showed that the vast majority of respondents knew that there is such thing as advertising and they can clearly identify it in the information process. Even all of the first-grade students gave an affirmative answer to the questions about the definition of “advertising”. 96.4% of the surveyed children and teenagers said they came under the influence of advertising messages every day, and only 3.6% said they did not notice advertising every day. 90.5% of respondents perceive TV ads, 66.3% – on-line ads, 98.2% – street ads, 60% – transit ads, 51.8% – on radio, 47.6% – in the press, 33.4% – from a variety of print media, 95.2% – in other places. It should be noted that the top-priority answers to the question “Where else have you ever seen ads, in addition to the above places?” were as follows: dishes, covers of notebooks and pages of diaries, school bags, plastic bags, stationery, clothing, books, and food packaging. And we can not say that some of the non-standard advertising options are a priority for a specific age group of respondents. As for other advertising media, we also did not manage to separate priorities for students of Kyiv schools and Kyiv regional schools on the example of Brovary based on the survey results. According to the survey results, changing of priorities in the perception of advertising media depends more on the age of children than on their geographical location. This may be explained by the fact that Kyiv and Brovary are situated close to each other.

As for questions related to determining the nature and impact degree of advertising messages on the personality of a child and/or a teenager, 84.4% of respondents said that at the time of the survey they quite clearly remembered the core meaning of advertising slogans they heard or read recently. With that, 62% of these respondents can accurately recreate the core meaning of one or two advertising slogans, 30.7% know by heart three to five slogans, 7.3% can clearly recall the core meaning of more than five slogans they heard or read recently. A quite interesting fact is that students of all ages of both the capital's schools and Brovary's schools know that there is commercial advertising and there is political advertising, but they know nearly nothing about social advertising. The vast majority of the surveyed first-grade students have never heard of this kind of advertising, less than half of the surveyed middle-grade students (47.3%) are aware of social advertising. Senior-grade students in most cases (89.3%) are aware of social advertising, but only a few senior-grade students understand its true meaning and can successfully pick up life examples.

Thus, we may observe a tendency towards changing of children's attention, depending on their age, to advertising media, but the fact of overall impact of advertising on the growing

generation remains unchanged. They perceive and remember information highlighted in advertising products very actively. Besides, the issue of social advertising is barely within their attention.

It is very important to teach children to be critical to promotional messages, which are presented in very attractive form, and develop the defense reaction against their impact. The following advices could be useful:

- Be biased. It must be remembered that advertising aim is to make people buy or use certain services.
- Cast doubt on advertising promises. In contrast to such phrases as “the best”, “the cheapest”, “most delicious” always ask the questions “Why?”, “Compared to what?”, “Who defines it and what does confirm it?” and try to find convincing answers thereto.
- Be captious. It is necessary to look at advertisements from the side. Pay attention to how the same actors perform the role of “experts”, “specialists”, “ordinary citizens”, “businessmen”, “spouses”, “persons who helped”, etc. in various commercials.
- Think. After analyzing texts or situations played, it becomes clear that people do not use these phrases and do not behave in real life as depicted in advertising.

## **Conclusion**

However, it is difficult to expect from kids that they can critically approach to advertising messages, while most adults are exposed to their influence. We often can hear, how adults enthusiastically and laughing tell that their children repeat advertising slogans. Realizing, that their parents like it, they gladly repeat such phrases for guests and friends at parents request, and sometimes self-initiated, because they understand that this makes them a spotlight of attention.

Without any criticism, children learn to wish what advertising offers them.

First of all, adults must produce the protective response and critical attitude to advertising and teach children to do this.

## **References**

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