

12 July 2006

Rt Hon Tessa Jowell MP  
Secretary of State for Culture, Media & Sport  
Department for Culture Media & Sport  
2-4 Cockspur Street  
London SW1Y 5DH

Dear Ms Jowell

I write in my capacity as chair of the *Showcomotion Children's Media Conference* held in Sheffield last weekend.

An audience of over 300 people from all areas of children's media expressed great concern at the current situation involving proposed changes to television advertising to children and the subsequent effect on programme funding. They saw the demise of the production arm of CITV, Granada Kids, as symptomatic of the precarious future of ITV's commitment to children's content on ITV1 – a network with a proud record of quality programming from *Worzel Gummidge* to *My Parents Are Aliens*.

There appears to be a real and growing threat to the provision of original kids' content made in the UK for commercial channels. The BBC is a great provider but it should not be the only provider. The dedicated children's channels such as Disney and Nickelodeon are presently unable to fill the gap left by a significant reduction in terrestrial funding.

If funding children's content is no longer viable through advertising, another solution has to be found. If not, a highly creative industry, admired world-wide may wither and die and the experience our children have enjoyed for fifty years based in their own culture and traditions may be severely eroded.

The delegates at *Showcomotion* wished to raise this issue and initiate a public debate about the future and worth of media dedicated to children and young people.

They felt that, in the drive to prevent the continued advertising of high fat, salt, and sugar foods, parents and the country at large are unaware of the long-term implications for the cultural heritage of Britain's children. Whilst our industry does not wish to condone the promotion of a bad diet for the country's children, it equally cannot stand by and allow children's rich imaginative and cultural diet to be eroded. Quality indigenous children's media needs your support at this critical time.

Yours sincerely

Anna Home OBE  
Chair *Showcomotion Children's Media Conference*

cc Ofcom: Stephen Carter; Content Board; & Consumer Panel