



Streets stung by ad board

CLARE KERMOND

AN AD for Paddle Pop has become the first to get the thumbs down from the advertising regulator — for not pushing the message of healthy physical activity.

In a sharp warning for other foods aimed at children, the Paddle Pop ad was withdrawn after the Advertising Standards Board found that, despite the popular ice cream being healthy enough for kids, the ad did not positively encourage good eating habits or physical activity.

Unilever, the owners of Streets, appealed against the decision, but lost following an independent review. The ad screened in mid-December, during an episode of Junior MasterChef set in Disneyland.

Chief executive of the Advertising Standards Board, Fiona Jolly, said this was the first time an ad had been rejected under this provision of the responsible children's marketing initiative. It was also one of very few ads to go to independent review, following an appeal.

Ms Jolly said the decision had clear implications for other advertisers and the manufacturers of foods aimed at children. She said it was significant that while the product was acceptable as a healthier choice, the marketing was unacceptable as it had failed to promote good dietary habits and physical activity.

The original complaint was made by the Obesity Policy Coalition, who welcomed the result, saying it applied to all food advertisers who have signed up to the responsible marketing initiative, which is voluntary but has been adopted by most major advertisers.

Jane Martin, the coalition's senior policy adviser, said while this was certainly a positive change, there was still huge concern over the amount of unhealthy food being marketed at children.

"It is a substantial decision. A lot of times decisions just tinker at the edges, but our main concern is still the amount of unhealthy food being marketed at children."