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Women betrayed by Dove adverts

Jane Hansen

AN advertising campaign aimed at addressing low self esteem in girls exposed to sexualised images of women has been strongly criticised by child health experts.

The advertisement, for Dove, shows a girl watching television and being bombarded by images of models and sexualised messages like "HOT" with the caption "girls are under more pressure than ever, so Dove created self-esteem workshops".

But the same company, Unilever, is responsible for the Lynx Deodorant advertisements whose television campaigns consistently attract numerous complaints to the Ad-

vertising Standards Board for objectifying women.

The latest advertisement shows a woman in a wet shirt with the caption "girls look hot wet". A Lynx "Jet" advertisement also showed seven stewardesses in tight yellow uniforms pandering to male members of the "mile-high club".

Dr Joe Tucci, a psychologist from the Australian Childhood Foundation, accused the company of gross hypocrisy.

"It's an exercise in corporate spin and it's like a cigarette company setting up a health research institute," Dr Tucci said. "If they were truly serious about the issue, they would

review their own advertising and the impact of it."

Dove has a financial partnership with The Butterfly Foundation, an eating-disorder support group. Foundation CEO Christine Morgan said the foundation was very careful about its alignment but wanted to focus on the positive.

A Unilever spokeswoman defended its ad campaigns.

"Lynx strives to create ads that make women laugh as much as men, and the women featured in our advertising are always in on the joke," the spokeswoman said.

"The campaigns for Dove and Lynx both ... aim to build people's confidence."