

MEDIA RELEASE

Campaign against gendered marketing of toys widens

Play Unlimited, the organisation challenging the gendered-marketing of toys in Australia, has widened its scope in the wake of talks with the original focus of the campaign, retailer Toys R Us.

The group has garnered widespread support since launching its petition appealing to Toys R Us to eliminate the practice of marketing toys as being for either boys or girls.

After the original petition was launched, Toys R Us removed the categories of 'boys' and 'girls' from its online catalogue. Since then, Play Unlimited has been consulting with the company, providing continuing feedback on marketing materials and product displays.

One of the founders, Thea Hughes, says that Play Unlimited has engaged in fruitful discussions with the toy retailer and agrees with their assertion that they should not be singled out in this campaign.

"Toys R Us is only one retailer amongst many using gendered marketing as a strategy to sell toys. We have had some open, positive and enlightening discussions with Toys R Us representatives and one of the points they were at pains to make is that they did not feel they should be singled out by this campaign" Ms Hughes said.

"They raised the point that Toys R Us has fewer outlets in Australia than other retailers of toys such as K Mart, Big W, Target and Myer among others, questioning why they were under the microscope before larger retailers."

"In the wake of those discussions and considering marketing used by other toy retailers in Australia we are creating a broader petition to include all Australian toy retailers and major department store chains."

Play Unlimited co-founder Julie Huberman said it was clear that gender-based marketing of toys was endemic in Australia and the issue needed to be brought into focus in order to hold retailers accountable.

"Working against gender stereotypes in our society is an uphill battle," she said "if they are continually reinforced and perpetuated through the marketing of our children's toys."

"This change is necessary for the benefit of our children, who should be free to choose the toys that interest them regardless of their gender."

Ms Hughes says she looks forward to working with other companies to assist them in adopting a more egalitarian approach as toy - and, more recently, book - retailers have done in other parts of the world.

More Information

Play Unlimited

www.playunlimited.org.au

www.facebook.com/playunlimited

<https://www.change.org/petitions/toys-r-us-australia-stop-limiting-our-children-s-play>