

SANE StigmaWatch 2002 Update

20 January 2003

sane
AUSTRALIA

www.sane.org

The SANE StigmaWatch program monitors the Australian media to ensure accurate and respectful representation of mental illness. Incidents of unacceptable reporting or advertising are logged on the SANE website within hours of being verified, Together with responses from those responsible.

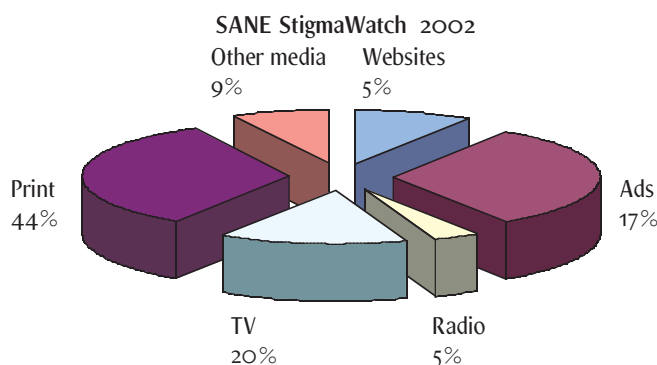
StigmaWatch is an initiative of SANE Australia, the national mental health charity.

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Fighting stigma in 2002

In April 2002, SANE Australia released the *SANE StigmaWatch Report* for the previous twelve months report (available at www.sane.org), as well as publishing and distributing the *SANE Guide to Fighting Stigma*. The verdict for the year – regularly inaccurate, often disrespectful and insulting to Australians with a mental illness, but willing to change.

In 2002 StigmaWatch investigated 139 reports, responded to 50, and took further action on 41 – across television and radio, newspapers and magazines, advertisements and websites.



Our campaign against Fudge haircare products, *Schizophrenic* and *Headcase* was widely and sympathetically reported in the media. Manufacturers, Sabre, were initially reluctant to change the promotion, and SANE initiated an international boycott of Fudge products. The company later stated they would be reviewing all marketing, advertising and point of sale material and admitted that this campaign had made them more 'aware'.

Other notable successes were withdrawal of *Schizo-Schizo* baseball caps, produced by Headcaps and available through Mobil service stations, and the recall of vehicle registration plates in Victoria with the word 'Schizo' on them, after negotiation with VicRoads.

A billboard campaign, glamourising suicide, to promote a new magazine for young women was withdrawn after protest from StigmaWatch and others. Visit www.sane.org for more details on these and other StigmaWatch reports.

Plans for SANE StigmaWatch 2003

Look out for a more detailed StigmaWatch report to the media in June 2003. SANE is also refreshing the StigmaWatch area of the website, making information even easier to find and ensuring that you are able to access the latest news on SANE StigmaWatch campaigns.

Making your StigmaWatch report

Go to the StigmaWatch website at www.sane.org, check the StigmaWatch criteria, and send in your report using the online form. For verification purposes, a copy, transcript or web address of the offending item should also be sent.

SANE StigmaWatch is supported by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing, as part of their Mindframe national strategy for promoting respectful and accurate reporting of suicide and mental illness in the media.

