



June 23, 2009

**Open letter to:**

Mr. John S. Hendricks,  
Chairman  
Discovery Communications

Regarding: **The Learning Channel program: Jon and Kate plus 8**

Dear Mr. Hendricks,

I am requesting that the above-mentioned show come off the air immediately. Let me explain why.

The children in this show - Cara, Madelyn, Alexis, Aaden, Collin, Leah, Hannah, Joel – are just that, children. Their lives are being broadcast to the world and a permanent record of the turmoil of their parents discord - and its effect on the children - is being made. While this may make good television ratings, it is a train wreck happening in slow motion. This train wreck, because we are dealing with developing children, could last eight individual lifetimes.

There are four types of child abuse; emotional, neglect, sexual and physical. The show is showing two of these forms of abuse – emotional and neglect.

These children are floundering between two incapable parents in the midst of a marriage breakup while trying to raise eight children and be on a reality TV show. Raising any family is hard at the best of times; harder when your family, friends and the 5 million people a week tune in to see it. This is emotional abuse at its finest; now and particularly when it is revisited in the children's future. These children are being scarred for life.

The parents are distracted by their marital problems and pending divorce. Their hostility, their lack of interaction - which is devastating for the children - is recorded and broadcast. This is simply wrong for many reasons. One in particular comes to mind; the children's emotional wellbeing is the subject of a profit motive for not only your channel but also the parents.

The Gosselin children are subject to neglect from the absence and the threat of absence of one or both parents as they fulfill their obligations to the show – book signings, appearances and so on. The move to a new house and the handing out of goodies does not make up for this abuse. Nor does the provision of assistants make up for parental presence.

You are no longer recording a normal, if unusual family, struggling to cope with multiple children. This has become a sad public spectacle with, finances aside, no good to come of it.

The parents are guilty of letting this happen and that speaks volumes about their motives and abilities, or lack thereof, as parents. However you personally are the one in ultimate control. You are aware of what is going on and yet you let it continue. You are therefore morally responsible for the welfare of these children. Take a look at your own website and the pictures of the children there – these are real children:  
<http://tlc.discovery.com/tv/jon-and-kate/gosselins.html>

Your continued production and broadcast of Jon and Kate plus eight has surpassed the boundaries of broadcast ethics and good taste. You are guilty of compounded child abuse.

Please, do the right thing and end this immediately.

Thank you,

**EVIN M DALY**

Evin M. Daly  
Founder, Executive Director  
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Copy to: Discovery Corporate Management - David M. Zaslav, Mark Hollinger, Adria Alpert Romm, Joe Abruzzese, Bruce Campbell, Bill Goodwyn, Joseph A. LaSala, Jr., Brad Singer, also  
General Media Release (NA)

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