

Super Bowl Safety Ad Gets Negative Response



Last Sunday, the NFL's Super Bowl was held in Arizona. Many people watch the game not for the action on the field but for the commercials shown between plays. In fact, ranking the best and worst Super Bowl ads the day after the big game has become very popular.

This year, there doesn't seem to be any contest as to which ad was the worst, at least in terms of public response. The 'winner': [Nationwide Insurance's ad](#) featuring a young boy talking about all the things he won't be able to do because he died in an accident.

Viewers took social media by storming, complaining about the dark ad. They described it as depressing, inappropriate, sad, in poor taste and upsetting to kids who saw it.

And safety professionals will love the fact that some people complained about the commercial 'because you can't prevent accidents because accidents happen!'

In response to the controversy, Nationwide released a statement saying the grim ad was intended 'to build awareness of an issue that is near and dear to all of us' the safety and wellbeing of our children.'

The ad directs viewers to MakeSafeHappen.com, a new website that provides parents and caregivers with information and resources they can use to make their homes safer and avoid a

potential injury or death.

I understand that people watch the Super Bowl for pleasure, to cheer on their team or just enjoy great athletes competing against each other. And they expect the ads shown during the game to be funny or touching, such as the very popular [Budweiser puppy ad](#). Fine.

But given how many viewers watch this event and not just in the US, I also understand why Nationwide thought this was the perfect venue to air an ad aimed at protecting children. So the outcry that showing this ad during this event was inappropriate or in poor taste strikes me as misguided. (I also doubt that those who complained would've liked the ad any better had it been shown at another time.)

Children dying is a depressing topic period. But the fact is that preventable accidents are one of the leading causes of childhood injuries and deaths. And parents shouldn't bury their heads in the sand and ignore this reality. They need to make sure that they take appropriate steps to avoid accidents and keep their kids safe in the home, on the road, at the playground, etc.

The comments about accidents just happening and being unpreventable is also troubling. I can't help but wonder if the people who made such comments have that same attitude when it comes to safety in the workplace.

Bottom line: Being confronted with dead children, the families of workers who've died on the job, workers who've lost limbs in industrial accidents and the like is depressing. But sometimes the only way to get people to wake up and take safety seriously is to shock them or make them confront the reality of what happens when safety is given short shrift, whether at home or in the workplace.