

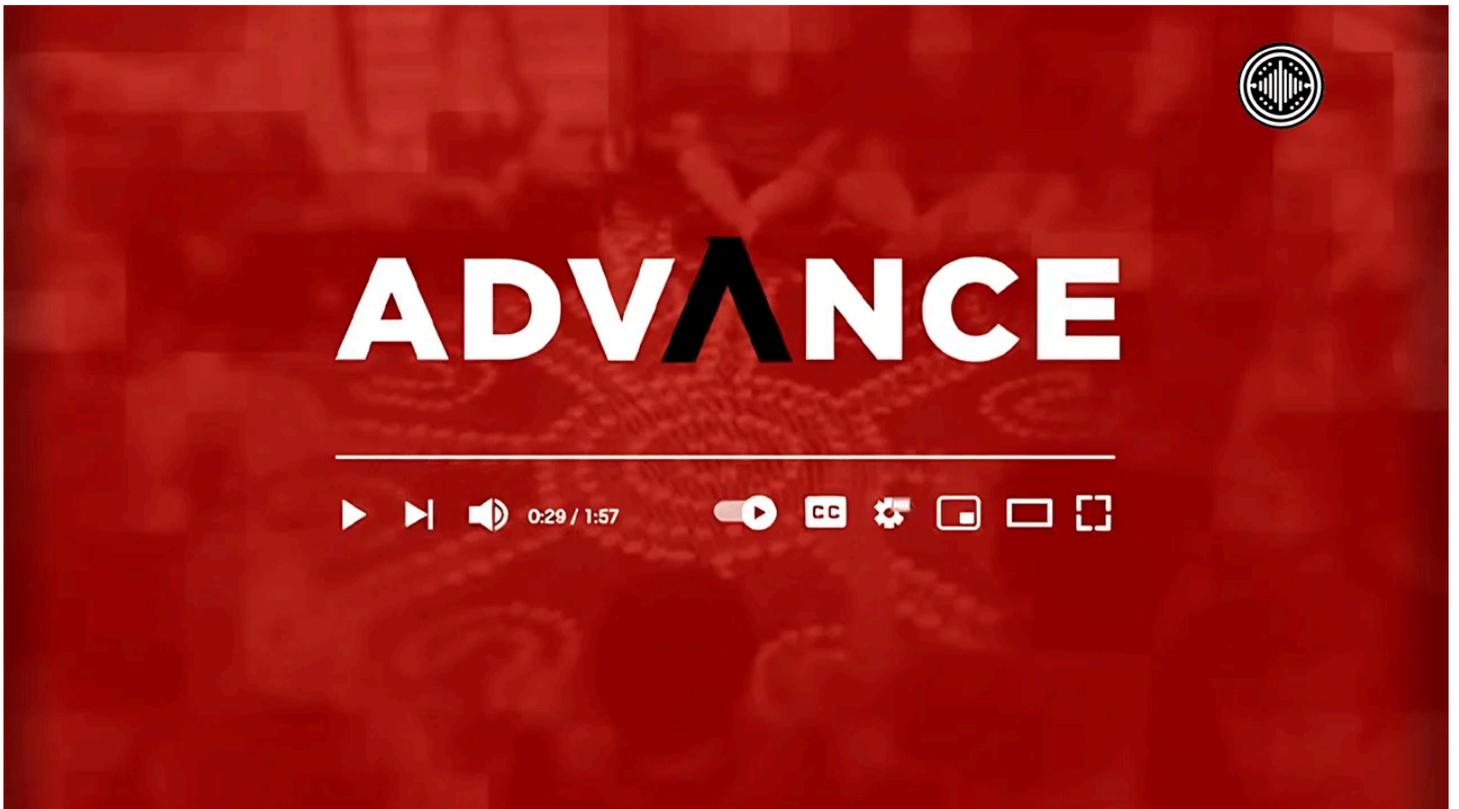
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Advance Faces Backlash for Using Unblurred Minors' Footage in Ad

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– Categories: Human Rights



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Conservative lobby group Advance is facing scrutiny over its use of unblurred footage of minors in a recent political advertisement, prompting privacy concerns and legal questions. The ad, which criticizes Welcome to Country ceremonies, includes video content from childcare centres, schools, and nonprofit group Reconciliation Australia, without parental or organizational consent.

A July 26, 2025 investigation by ABC News Verify reported that the footage had been sourced from public YouTube accounts. The Queensland Education Department confirmed it had not granted permission and is now supporting a copyright claim through

YouTube. Reconciliation Australia also stated that Advance did not seek approval to use the imagery, noting that previous parental consent applied only to their material, not for political advertising. Other organizations featured in the ad expressed concern after learning of its circulation. One primary school referred the matter to the ACT Education Directorate, which likewise denied giving consent for political use.

In response, an Advance spokesperson told ABC News that the content was obtained from publicly available sources, arguing that explicit consent was unnecessary. Privacy experts, however, contend that this approach breaches ethical standards, especially where children are involved. The Office of the Australian Information Commissioner has been contacted for comment but has yet to respond. The case has reignited debate over privacy law enforcement, with Liberal Senator James McGrath stating on Sky News, “The ALP’s failure to enforce robust privacy laws allows such reckless misuse of children’s images.”

On social media, some parents voiced their frustration. One post from @AussieParent questioned how children’s images could be repurposed for political gain without oversight. The situation has raised calls for clearer rules around the use of minors’ footage in public-facing campaigns.