

Campaigners attack MTV 'sleaze'

MTV has been criticised for "incessant sleaze" by television indecency campaigners in the US.

The Parents Television Council (PTC), which monitors violence and sex on TV, said the cable music channel offered the "cheapest form" of programming. The group is at the forefront of a vociferous campaign to clean up American television. But a spokeswoman for MTV said it was "unfair and inaccurate" to single out MTV for criticism.

The PTC monitored MTV's output for 171 hours from 20 March to 27 March 2004, during the channel's Spring Break coverage. In its report - MTV Smut Peddlers: Targeting Kids with Sex, Drugs and Alcohol - the PTC said it witnessed 3,056 flashes of nudity or sexual situations and 2,881 verbal references to sex. Brent Bozell, PTC president and conservative activist said: "MTV is blatantly selling raunchy sex to kids. "Compared to broadcast television programmes aimed at adults, MTV's programming contains substantially more sex, foul language and violence - and MTV's shows are aimed at children as young as 12. "There's no question that TV influences the attitudes and perceptions of young viewers, and MTV is deliberately marketing its raunch to millions of innocent children."

The watchdog decided to look at MTV's programmes after Janet Jackson's infamous "wardrobe malfunction" at last year's Super Bowl. The breast-baring incident generated 500,000 complaints and CBS - which is owned by the same parent company as MTV - was quick to apologise. MTV spokeswoman Jeannie Kedas said the network follows the same standards as broadcasters and reflects the culture and what its viewers are interested in. "It's unfair and inaccurate to paint MTV with that brush of irresponsibility," she said. "We think it's underestimating young people's intellect and level of sophistication." Ms Kedas also highlighted the fact MTV won an award in 2004 for the

Fight for Your Rights series that focused on issues such as sexual health and tolerance.