

## 'DON'T MOCK, CELEBRATE DADS,' HUGGIES LEARN AFTER FURY OVER AD



Huggies found out the hard way that fathers don't approve of being portrayed as reckless, incompetent and detached, inferior parents, incapable of looking after their babies in the absence of the mother. A recent ad posted by Huggies has Dads up in arms against the company. A voiceover in the ad says: *"To prove Huggies diapers and wipes can handle anything, we put them to the toughest test imaginable: dads, alone with their babies, in one house, for five days, while we gave moms some well deserved time off: How did Huggies products hold up to daddy hood?"* The ads suggested that Huggies diapers are of such quality that they could withstand the neglect of a father, signifying that dads are too dumb to use them properly. The ad even suggests that dads would prefer to watch televised sports and change soiled diapers only after the game is over. Chris Routly of Pennsylvania started an online petition, titled "We're Dads, Huggies. Not Dummies." It drew huge interest with more than a 1000 signatories attesting their consent to it. Ryan Hauck, a father of three boys, says, "This minimization and emasculation of men, mocking us as incompetent parents, is a stereotype, I take particular offense to." Following a barrage of comments, Joey Mooring, the spokesman for Kimberly-Clark, the company that owns Huggies, clarified that the unanticipated backlash has forced them to pull its ads from Facebook. Accepting that, "The intention was not to pick fun at dads, but only feature real dads, with their own babies in real life situations putting our Huggies diapers and baby wipes to the test." "We have learned that our intended message did not come through and we have made changes." Outraged dads all over are questioning how they can be the ultimate test of a diaper's quality. To claim they are done out of "love" for dads only makes the insult worse. The company also posted an apology, "I am responsible for the Huggies advertising you are seeing. I recognize that we need to do a better job communicating the campaign's message." Huggies will soon release a new ad that show that dads are as important as mothers in helping to raise and care for their children. The spate of apologies, suspension of the offending ads and replacing them with new ads that belie the stereotyping of dads as "inferior parents" has been hailed as a victory by the dads. Chris Routly, who started the online petition that drew an incredibly large number of visitors, said, "I am incredibly happy to report to you that the people at Huggies/Kimberly-Clark have heard your voices, and are responding in real, impactful ways," "Victory," he wrote. "and a happy ending to this chapter."