

FALSE NARRATIVE

Target's 2023 Pride collection includes satanic-themed apparel for children

ENGLISH (US)

The False Narrative

Target offered satanic-themed apparel as part of its 2023 LGBTQ Pride collection geared toward children.

The Facts

Target did not sell satanic-themed LGBTQ Pride apparel for children in its 2023 Pride collection, according to a company spokesperson and a NewsGuard review of the retailer's website.

The claim was apparently sparked by the fact that Target has carried three pieces of merchandise from the brand Abprallen, a London-based company that sells some occult- and satanic-themed LGBTQ items. However, none of the brand's items sold at Target bore satanic references, a NewsGuard review found, nor were any of them marketed to children.

The three Abprallen items sold at Target locations included a sweatshirt with the phrase "Cure Transphobia, Not Trans People," a tote bag saying "Too Queer for Here," and a messenger bag reading "We Belong Everywhere." In the face of public backlash over Target's Pride collection, the company ended its partnership with Abprallen on May 24, 2023, and pulled those items from shelves.

"My work was likely pulled following false accusations of being a Satanist and of marketing my work to children, both claims have been debunked numerous times," Erik Carnell, founder of Abprallen, wrote in a May 26, 2023, statement on Instagram. In a May 24, 2023, statement, Target said that it had removed some items from its Pride collection because threats against the company were affecting the safety and wellbeing of its employees.

However, there were no known products sold at Target for children that can be construed as satanic-themed.

Despite the denials, the claim continued to spread through images, some AI-generated, showing satanic-themed Target clothing and decorations marketed to children, including a blood-red, goat-headed mannequin and a young girl wearing a black shirt with a pentagram. Another image depicts two children wearing red sweaters with a white goat's head and with eyes resembling Target's bullseye logo. (The Satanic Temple — a non-theistic religious group that does not actually believe in the existence of Satan — uses a goat's head as a symbol to represent the religion.)

Many of these images, which circulated widely on social media, were made using a generative AI program developed by Midjourney, a San Francisco-based independent research lab, according to The Associated Press. The graphics, which were created by a Pennsylvania software developer named Dan Reese, were initially posted on May 26, 2023, in the Facebook group called AI Art Universe, which members use to showcase AI-generated art, The Associated Press reported.

Reese told The Associated Press in a June 2, 2023, article that he created these images in response to the claims that Target was selling satanic-themed clothing to children in its Pride collection. "I am a Satanist myself so I thought it would be fun to use AI to explore what Satanic themed kids fashion might actually look like," Reese told The Associated Press.

Target confirmed to the AP that the items in Reese's images were not offered in any Target stores. NewsGuard reviewed Target's website, including an archived version of the site from May 20, 2023, and did not find any of the purported merchandise. "Target has never sold these items," a company spokesman told the AP.

According to the AP, Target did remove a Pride T-shirt that depicts a drag queen named Biblegirl wearing devil horns — but this product came only in adult sizes.

How the False Narrative Emerged

This false narrative began to spread on May 20, 2023, when Twitter user Scarlett Johnson, a chapter leader of a conservative group called Moms for Liberty Wisconsin, posted a Twitter thread about Target's partnership with Abprallen's Erik Carnell, who is a self-described transgender man. Johnson sarcastically wrote, "Definitely NOT trying to use designs and art to groom, manipulate and control kids." She posted screenshots of Abprallen's merchandise that included items with Satanic references (but that were never sold at Target.) Johnson's initial tweet received more than 5,000 retweets as of July 25, 2023.

Meanwhile, Dan Reese's AI-generated satanic images were spread on social media by users who treated them as real. On June 12, 2023, TikTok user liveforjesusgod, who has over 140,000 followers on the platform, posted the fake images with a voiceover saying, "Looks like Target is at it again. More of their evil agenda is trying to be pushed on our little kids." The video had approximately 1.4 million views as of July 25, 2023.

Background

Risk of Harm

Medium

First Appeared

May 20, 2023

Categories

Companies, products and brands
Business & Finance

Myth Locations

United States

Myth Spread Locations

United States

Subject Tags

Target
LGBTQ

Search Terms

"Target" AND "satanic" AND ("children" OR "kids") -factcheck -fact-check -false -debunk
"Target is now designing satanic clothing for children"

Keywords and #s

#TargetSatanic
#BoycottTarget
#TargetPride

Associated Labels

brigteon.com (en_US)
infowars.com (en_US)
naturalnews.com (en_US)
reddit.com (en_US)
rumble.com (en_US)
thepeoplesvoice.tv (en_US)
youtube.com (en_US)
bitchute.com (en_GB)

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Even before the connection was alleged between Target's Pride collection and Satanism, several prominent conservatives were calling for a boycott of Target because of false claims that the store was selling LGBTQ "tuck friendly" swimwear to children. Candace Owens, a conservative political commentator, wrote on Facebook on May 19, 2023, "I will never buy a single product from Target ever again and I am asking those that follow me to make the same commitment."

In fact, Target is not selling "tuck-friendly" swimwear for children, and it never did so, according to a company spokesperson and a NewsGuard review of the retailer's apparel on its site. Target has carried "tuck-friendly" swimsuits, but they were only available in adult sizes and were not marketed to children, a spokesperson for Target told The Associated Press in May 2023.

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Examples of this False Narrative ①

- <https://thepeoplesvoice.tv/target-hires-a-satanist-to-design-childrens-pride-clothing-line/>
"Target's recent LGBTQ+ Pride-themed clothing line for children was designed by a self-confessed Satan worshipper who claims 'Satan is hope, compassion, equality, and love.' ... Reflecting upon one of his designs for children, the designer admitted the influence of Baphomet and claimed the demon's influence and non-binary status is 'perfect' for children."
VIEW ARCHIVED
- <https://rumble.com/v2razr8-breaking-news-target-loses-12-billion-since-pushing-satanic-tranny-clothes-.html>
"BREAKING NEWS: Target Loses \$12 BILLION Since Pushing Satanic Tranny Clothes On Kids!"
rumble.com (en_US) VIEW ARCHIVED
- <https://photos.brighteon.com/file/brighteon-thumbnails/thumbnaill/6477f79b-476e-4ebe-8f2a-cae189c6fa6b>
"If you haven't seen any Satanic display at Target yet, here are some blatant ones in your face."
VIEW ARCHIVED
- <https://www.tiktok.com/@mminenc/video/7238696634610240810>
"TARGET'S NEW CLOTHING LINE SATANIC"
VIEW ARCHIVED
- <https://www.facebook.com/linda.sado/posts/pfbid0RZoiyGdAnfrYNVYk3BU4skz9sLQpCzvw5gHmPr7WojGuorqMATfmQUk1eRgnxl>
"Target has really gone over the edge."
VIEW ARCHIVED
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EgTxVKrpNC4>
"Target is SELLING Satanic Merchandise to KIDS"
youtube.com (en_US) VIEW ARCHIVED
- <https://www.infowars.com/posts/target-becomes-the-latest-target-of-anti-woke-boycott-as-it-sells-satanist-pride-lgbtq-products-for-kids/>
"Trans witches for abortion'
'Join our gay cult'
Definitely NOT trying to use designs and art to groom, manipulate and control kids!"
VIEW ARCHIVED
- <https://www.naturalnews.com/2023-05-23-target-satanist-pride-lgbtq-clothing-children-boycott.html>
"Target has unveiled a new 'Satanist Pride' line of clothing for children that, as its name suggests, aims to lure more American children to reject natural biology and embrace pride and the devil instead."
VIEW ARCHIVED
- <https://www.conservative.org/2023/05/25/cpac-calls-for-target-corporation-to-end-its-partnership-with-satanic-designer/>
"Carnell openly flaunts his anti-Christian agenda posting that "Satan respects pronouns," selling items with phrases like, "Trans Witches for Abortion," and participating in a "satanic flea market" in London called an "anti Christmas fayre." Someone like this should never be promoted by a company which purports to support families, especially not to create items geared toward children."
VIEW ARCHIVED
- <https://www.bitchute.com/video/F6ITq9TPvIMW/>
"TARGET IS NOW DESIGNING SATANIC CLOTHING FOR CHILDREN"
VIEW ARCHIVED

- <https://www.newstarget.com/2023-05-23-target-satanist-pride-lgbtq-clothing-children-boycott.html>

"...retailer Target has unveiled a new "Satanist Pride" line of clothing for children that, as its name suggests, aims to lure more American children to reject natural biology and embrace pride and the devil instead."

- <https://www.tiktok.com/@13margie31/video/7239915127498149163>

"Target's satanic children's clothing line"

- https://www.reddit.com/r/UnwokeThought/comments/13wusbx/target_satanic_displays/

"Target satanic displays"

- <https://www.tiktok.com/@userrev214/video/7239074092828085547>

"Target Displays Satan for Kids"

- <https://www.tiktok.com/@liveforjesusgod/video/7243919991974661419>

"More of their evil agenda trying to be pushed on our little kids"

Reliable Sources

<https://apnews.com/article/fact-check-target-pride-lgbtq-satanic-998363252236>

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/factcheck/2023/06/08/image-of-satanic-childrens-clothes-at-target-is-altered-fact-check/70299797007/>

<https://www.politifact.com/factchecks/2023/jun/06/facebook-posts/target-is-not-selling-childrens-clothes-with-satan/>

<https://factcheck.afp.com/doc.afp.com.33GU8J6>

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<https://leadstories.com/hoax-alert/2023/06/fact-check-target-is-not-selling-clothing-with-satanic-imagery.html>

<https://factcheck.afp.com/doc.afp.com.33GB8AK>