

# Food marketing flashcard



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Children In addition to commercials on TV, food and beverages are target-marketed to young children and teens through a wide range of marketing channels, in nearly every environment where a kid might study, play, hang out, or eat. Marketers target children and youth through packaging; giveaways and contests; product placement in movies, TV shows, and video games; through digital media such as text messaging, cell phones, email, and websites; viral marketing; and cross-promotions involving movies, popular licensed characters, and even books. In *Fast Food Nation*, Eric Closser states, the explosion in children's advertising started in the sass's (Closser). The means by which these products are marketed are limited only by the creativity of food marketers. Public health professionals are not only concerned about the quantity and types of advertising targeted at children and youth, they are also alarmed about the nutritional quality of products most heavily marketed to children. Despite some improvements in recent years, the overwhelming majority of food and beverage advertising targeted to the young still tends to be for products of poor nutritional quality.

For example, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) reported that in 2006, food and beverage companies spent \$1.6 billion to market their products to kids. Sixty-three percent of this total was spent to market just three types of products—breakfast cereals, fast foods, and carbonated drinks. Susan Line, Director of the Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood and Instructor in Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, wrote about marketing healthy food to children.

Line says, “ Researchers and advocates for children’s health agree that advertising Junk food to children is effective. One 30-second commercial can influence the food preferences of children as young as age two. For young children, branding even trumps taste. Preschool children report that Junk food in McDonald’s packaging taste better than food in plain wrapping-? even if it’s the same food. ” She also mentioned the misleading healthy food marketing. “ While the food industry claims it has a First Amendment right to advertise to children, the law says otherwise.

Free speech is not a blank check; it has limits. Current federal law actually prohibits unfair or deceptive advertising. Similarly, false or misleading advertising is not allowed under most state consumer protection statutes. Marketing to children does not get First Amendment protection because it is inherently misleading. If a young child cannot even understand the purpose of an ad, then marketing anything to that child is both unfair and deceptive. The nutritional content of the product being marketed is irrelevant” (Line).

Research of The National Center for Biotechnology Information, (NCBI) demonstrates that marketing any product to children under age 12 is inherently deceptive. Unlike adults, young children do not have the cognitive capacity to fully understand the purpose of advertising. Very young children cannot even distinguish between a TV program and a commercial. Until the age of about eight, they don’t really understand the concept of selling and they tend to believe what they see. Line also believes that children are most likely targeted because their parents have the money and they will persuade their parents. Children are the least informed and most influenced of all potential consumers. Although children usually don’t directly purchase these

products themselves, their desires strongly influence their parent's decision on what to buy and what the child will eat. Most products geared towards children are unhealthy, processed foods that are high in sugars and low in nutritional content" (Line). Studies researched in Yale University support this rise in childhood obesity and other health related problems in children. Our results provide evidence that licensed characters can influence children's eating habits negatively by increasing positive taste perceptions and preferences for junk food," writes lead author Christina Roberto, M. S. To make matters worse, consumers recklessly purchase products that they aren't always familiar with simply because of the influential advertising that leaves a lasting impression on them. The packaging techniques of companies are geared directly towards attracting kids based on a product being cool or looking fun.

Television ads are action-packed, cool, and hip to attract kids to their product based on nothing but an impression. The ethical question is whether companies should be more responsible for their role in the health of society's children, or should society be more responsible for regulating their intake of foods that have a potential negative effect. Much of the defense of Line, is that although many of these same advocates have rightly pointed out again and again, this non-system is a dismal failure. Even the federal government couldn't persuade the food industry to improve its voluntary guidelines.

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First lady, Michelle Obama is a strong advocate of healthy eating, as well as food marketing driven by healthy foods. Michelle understands the

importance of healthy eating nationwide. So much so, that she unveiled a proposal that would ban marketing junk food and sodas in schools. Michelle has said, be eliminating advertising for unhealthy foods and beverages in our schools because I think we can all agree that our classrooms should be healthy places where our kids aren't bombarded with ads for junk food.

And these guidelines are part of a broader effort to inspire food companies to rethink how they market food to kids in general" (Obama). As part of an industry-wide commitment to only advertise healthy food to children, 18 companies including Campbell Soup Co. , The Daemon Co. , General Mills, Kellogg, Pepsi and Kraft adopted category-specific uniform nutrition criteria, which went into effect at the end of 2013 and allows for comparison of food values across products and brands. The new criteria are stronger than the individual nutrition criteria used by each company.

Five companies continued their pledge not to advertise to children under 12 including The Coca-Cola Co. , Proffer USA, The Hershey Co. , Wilshire Brands Co. And Mars, Inc. According to the Children's Food and Beverage Advertising Initiative (administered by the Council of Better Business Bureaus). Mimi see, the average child watches thousands of food advertisements each year, and 86 percent of these ads are for products loaded with sugar, fat, salt. By contrast, our kids see an average of just one ad a week for healthy products like water to fruits and vegetables" (Obama).

Michelle also offers a solution to the rising problem by introducing food marketing for healthy food. In fact, her main point is this, " While limiting the marketing of unhealthy food is critical, it's not enough. We also need

companies to actually market healthy foods to kids foods that have real nutritional value, foods that are fortified with real fruits and vegetables, whole grains and low-fat dairy. Now, I say this mindful that companies exist to make a profit, and they need that in order to survive. And those profits keep our economy going every day' (Obama).