

# Read about influence of advertising on children assignment

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Advertising affects children and commercials influence children which can be seen in their constant demands for products advertised on television. There can be many negative effects of advertising on children if parents are not careful. Although advertisements help us to become aware of the products in the market, they have their negative effects also. Children today are exposed to all types of advertisements on the various media like the television, print media and internet as well. In fact, everyone is bombarded by advertisements everywhere nowadays.

Children in general are more susceptible and get easily influenced by advertisements. Children are Defenseless Children are innocent and not so mature. When a marketer advertises a product on television, they do not understand that it is a business and their main aim is to sell. They do not understand that advertisers try to push their products and market in such a way that children want to buy it. Children take everything at face value and believe without a doubt the messages in the advertisements.

Advertisements are made in such a way as to attract the attention of children. Children do not understand it to be marketing strategy.

Children are an extremely vulnerable target audience and get easily carried away. Junk Food Advertising and Children Research has shown that Junk food advertisements influence children greatly leading to an increased demand for Junk food by children. When children watch young adults in good shape eating Junk foods in the advertisements they assume that it is good for the health. They do not know that Junk food is not good for health. They are unaware of the fact that Junk food does not contain nutritional value. They

may even think that by eating these Junk foods they might become like the thin and fit models in the advertisements.

A research conducted has shown that children increased their consumption of Junk foods after seeing these advertisements. They are seen to be so influenced by these ads that they almost doubled their consumption of these unhealthy snacks and foods. In a study conducted they exposed children to candy commercials. It was seen that those children who were exposed to the candy commercials were highly influenced. In fact, these children chose candy over fruits as snacks. They preferred candy rather than a healthy food like fruits. When the commercials were eliminated and the children watched them less it had a positive effect.

It encouraged them to pick the fruits over the candy. Recent statistics show that obesity of children under the age of five is increasing at a high rate. Childhood obesity is on the rise and one of the main reasons for this has been seen as excessive consumption of fast foods and Junk foods. Not surprisingly, it has been seen that childhood diabetes is also on the rise. Resulting in the Nag Factor Children may pester their parents for the products advertised. They may insist on a particular pair of branded Jeans only and be against the other brands of clothing in the store. They may also insist on living a life as portrayed in advertisements.

Children may make excessive demands on their parents for the products they see in the advertisements. At times, they cry, pinch, pull and will not keep quiet till the parents purchase the product. Some parents who cannot control their children may give in to the tantrums of children left with no

choice. When children see these advertisements it gives a wrong impression on their young minds and they start giving a lot of importance to materialistic Joys. What Parents Can Do? Nowadays, with so much openness and exposure in media and commercials parents are often worried about what all their children are watching.

It has been noticed that children are often able to remember messages targeted towards adults also. Kids remember the content in advertisements aimed at adults. A few countries have banned marketing and advertising targeted at children below the age of twelve. One country has banned advertising of toys before 10 p. M. As it is at this time that children are mostly awake. Previously advertisers marketed children's products towards parents. Parents were their target audience for these products. But nowadays, marketers aim their messages directly at children.

Advertisements are made specifically in such a way that they draw the attention of children. The marketing messages are aimed directly at the children. Parents should teach their children of how to be critical of ads and how to become less influenced by the messages in the ads. Parents need to teach their children the importance and value of money. The advertising industry spends \$12 billion per year on ads targeted to children, bombarding young audiences with persuasive messages through media such as television and the Internet. The average child is exposed to more than 40,000 TV commercials a year, according to studies.

And ads are reaching children through new media technologies and even in schools—with corporate-sponsored educational materials and product

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placements in students' textbooks. But the buck stops here, if PAP and its Task Force on Advertising and Children have it their way. In February, Papa's Council of Representatives adopted the task force's policy and research recommendations to help counter the potential harmful effects of advertising on children, particularly children ages 8 and younger who lack the cognitive ability to recognize advertising's persuasive intent.

With this latest move, PAP joins the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Kaiser Family Foundation and several other organizations that have recently suggested similar policies. And, PAP has been making strides in getting some of the task force's recommendations put into action. Among its recommendations, the task force calls for advocacy efforts for legislation to restrict advertising targeted to children 8 years old and younger and for conducting more research showing the influence advertising has on young children (see sidebar for the full list of recommendations).

So far, Papa's Public Policy office has met with members of Congress, the Federal Trade Commission and the Federal Communications Commission to address advertising's effects on children. PAP also plans to co-sponsor a briefing in Washington, D. C. , this month with Children Now and the American Academy of Pediatrics about child-oriented ads delivered through digital media and multicasting technologies.

The task force report, with its empirically based recommendations, is helping to guide such advocacy efforts and to do the same for research—both major goals, says PAP Board of Directors member Barry Anton, PhD, who is also a member of Papa's Council of Representatives. We can use it to advocate to

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state legislators, organizations and foundations, and we can use the task force report as a way to request funding for research,” says Anton, who chaired a subsequent task force on children and adolescents.

Ultimately, such efforts aim to spotlight the question of fairness in child-directed advertising, says Dale Sunken, PhD, senior author of the task force’s report and professor of communication at the University of California, Santa Barbara. “ Is it fair to allow advertising to an audience that is too young to recognize commercial messages are biased and have a persuasive intent? Advertising effects Certainly the messages’ power of persuasion is compelling, the task force found. Studies cited in the report have shown that after just one exposure to a commercial, children can recall the ad’s content and have a desire for the product.

Some messages may influence children’s behavior too, says Brian Wilcox, PhD, chair of the task force, which formed in 2000 to conduct an extensive literature review of advertising’s effects on children. For example, research has shown that child-directed ads for healthy foods can lose their effectiveness when children view ads for snack foods in the same sitting. Indeed, some researchers speculate that advertising geared to children—which largely consists of ads for sugary cereals, candy and fast-food restaurants—may be contributing to the increase in childhood obesity by promoting unhealthy foods.

Plus, studies suggest that eating habits formed during childhood can persist throughout life, according to the report. Also of concern is the “ appropriation” in children’s media consumption, with a growing number of

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young children using the Internet and watching televisions in their bedrooms, where no one is present to explain what they are viewing or reading, according to the report. That lack of adult interpretation is a concern because young children tend to accept ads as fair, accurate, balanced and truthful, Sunken says. " They don't see the exaggeration or the bias that underlies the claims," he says. To young children, advertising is just as credible as Dan Rather reading the evening news is to an adult. " For children to critically process ads, they must be able to discriminate between commercial and noncommercial content and identify advertising's persuasive intent, the report notes. Particularly alarming to the task force is that commercials also often use psychological research to make their messages more powerful. For example, they draw from developmental psychology principles to build campaigns that persuade children they need a product and to nag their parents to buy it.

In addition, advertisers often use characters and celebrities—such as from shows like " Sponge Squarest" or " Blues Clues"—or premium gimmicks to reel in children. Increasing efforts Psychologists can help parents and their children get wise to such advertiser strategies—particularly in the schools, says task force member Edward Palmer, PhD, who has been studying advertising's effects on children for the past 30 years. In fact, even as schools themselves have become a venue for advertisers, little research has explored whether school-based ads distract students from learning or intensify pressure on them to buy, he adds. Psychologists are also needed to help educate educators about this problem," says Palmer, a professor of psychology at Davidson College in Davidson, N. C. For example, he says,

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psychologists can create media literacy interventions to help children understand the persuasive intent of ads. “ I hope psychologists mount a public-information campaign so that the various takeovers understand these issues—especially parents, teachers and legislators,” adds task force member Joanne Cantor, PhD, professor emeriti at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Advertising has changed tremendously in the past few decades as it has increasingly turned to younger audiences, Wilcox notes, such as using the Internet to reach children in subtle ways like through the games they play. “ The user is sometimes not even aware of the marketing effort and advertising undertaking,” Wilcox says. “ Advertisers and marketers are very sophisticated in using advertising to reach children. However, virtually no research exists on the use of Internet interactivity to reach children, he says.

He notes that a growing number of parents support psychology’s involvement in filling that gap—in exploring the effects of such ads and curbing them. “ When I talk to parents they are quite concerned about advertising’s effects on their children, says Wilcox, professor of psychology and director of the Center on Children, Families and the Law at the University of Nebraska. “ They have to live with children making unreasonable purchasing requests from the advertisements they see—toys they want, food that is not good for them.

This can be difficult for parents to manage. ” Child psychologist Allen D. Canner, PhD, who consulted with the task force and played a part in its formation, agrees. Canner says he has noticed more of his young clients

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interested in money and asking parents for products they see advertised. “ The materialistic shift happening in our society is having an enormous impact and major influence on children’s lives that is highly psychological in nature,” Canner says. “ It needs to be a focus of our profession right now. Advertising is hardly a recent human endeavor; archaeologists have uncovered signs advertising property for rent dating back to ancient Rome and Pompeii. Town criers were another early form of advertising. As an industry, advertising did not take off until the arrival of the various mass media: printing, radio, and television. Nevertheless, concerns over advertising targeting children preceded both radio and television. The British Parliament passed legislation in 1874 intended to protect children from the efforts of merchants to induce them to buy products and assume debt.

Commercial appeals to children, however, did not become commonplace until the advent and widespread adoption of television and grew exponentially with the advent of cable television, which allowed programmers to develop entire channels of child-oriented programming and advertising. Opportunities to advertise to children further expanded with the explosive growth of the Internet, and thousands of child-oriented Web sites with advertising content have appeared in the past few years. Compounding the growth in channels for advertising targeting children has been another development: the appropriation of children’s media use.

A recent study found that a majority of all U. S. children have televisions in their bedrooms. Many children also have unsupervised access to computers, meaning that much of the media (and advertising) content that children view

is in contexts absent parental monitoring and supervision. These two trends-- the growth in advertising channels reaching children and the appropriation of children's media use-- have resulted in a dramatic increase in advertising directly intended for the eyes and ears of children.

It is estimated that advertisers spend more than \$12 billion per year to reach the youth market and that children view more than 40,000 commercials each year. These figures represent dramatic increases over those from the past. The Task Force on Advertising and Children, responding to its charge, began by reviewing research on the impact of advertising on children, with particular attention given both to the implications of children's cognitive development for understanding the potential effects of exposure to advertising and to specific harms that might result from exposure to advertising.

There is a substantial body of scientific evidence addressing all of these basic issues. In contrast, concerns about advertising that have emerged as a result of new and changing technological capabilities, such as interactive forms of advertising and commercial Web sites targeting children, have yet to attract almost any empirical study. Consequently, our research review and conclusions are largely confined to more traditional advertising approaches, although we identify the issues in need of further research investigation within our final recommendations.

The task force reviewed research addressing two important types of questions regarding the effects of advertising on children. First, does advertising affect children's commercial recall and product preferences? If

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not, the \$12 billion spent annually by advertisers in commercial appeals to children would represent a surprisingly poor investment. Second, does exposure to advertising result in consumption of products that are inimical to the health and well-being of children? For example, does advertising play a role in the overcompensation of candy and sugared cereals or in underage drinking of alcoholic beverages?

Research on children's commercial recall and product preferences confirms that advertising typically achieves its intended effects. A variety of studies using differing methodologies find that children recall content from the ads to which they've been exposed. Product preference has been shown to occur with as little as a single commercial exposure and to strengthen with repeated exposures. Most importantly, studies have shown that product preferences affect children's product purchase requests and that these requests do influence parents' purchasing decisions.

The more fundamental concern regarding the effects of advertising on children relates to questions of potential harm resulting from exposure. A variety of research findings are relevant to this issue. Several studies, for example, have found that parent-child conflicts occur commonly when parents deny their children's product purchase requests that were precipitated by advertising. Considerable research has examined advertising's cumulative effect on children's eating habits.

Studies have documented that a high percentage of advertisements targeting children feature candy, fast foods, and snacks and that exposure to such advertising increases consumption of these products. While

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consumption of nutritious foods per SE may not be harmful, overcompensation of these products, particularly to the exclusion of healthier food, is linked to obesity and poorer health. Several studies have found strong associations between increases in advertising for nutritious foods and rates of childhood obesity.

A variety of studies have found a substantial relationship between children's viewing of tobacco and alcohol ads and positive attitudes toward consumption of such products. Children find many such commercials attractive (e. G. , Joe Camel, the Budweiser frogs) and consequently have high brand awareness of such products and positive attitudes toward them. These products and their spokes-characters have often been featured in programming and publications frequently viewed by minors, and reviews of this research (including the Surgeon General's analysis) conclude that advertising of them contributes to youth smoking and drinking.

Critics have also expressed concern regarding the prevalence of advertising of violent media, such as movies and video games, targeting children. Three reports by the Federal Trade Commission found considerable support for such charges, and while studies have not directly assessed the impact of such advertising, it is highly likely that such ads do affect children's media preferences.