

Introduction:
advertisements. the
issue is, are these
commercials



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Introduction: Reminiscing on childhood memories can be endearing, especially favorite childhood shows. In the commercials, products would be shown for the latest products the public “ just had to get”.

But exactly how appropriate are these commercials to a child’s prosperity? In the 1940s, television began to gain popularity. Advertisers used this as a new and profitable marketing system to children (O’Barr). Legislations were rooted in place to control advertisements being exposed to children.

Are these enough laws though? Despite these legislations, advertisers can still find loopholes to negatively market to children. To keep their profits up, advertisers can find a way to sell their products despite if it is good for children or not, influencing their behavior. Children’s advertising negatively impacts children.

Although learning comes in all stages of life, a child’s learning stage is very important. Kids seem to be easily influenced. Sometimes referred to as sponges, they pick up everything they see and hear. From new words to new habits to new behavior. It’s important to fill their minds with positive sights. Including positive advertisements. The issue is, are these commercials actually positive? The average child views about twenty-thousand commercials per year (csun.

edu). These commercials are composed of advertisements from fast food chains (examples being McDonalds and Wendy’s), video games (examples being Destiny 2 and Call of Duty), etc. Excessive consumption of these advertisements furthers the increasing frequency of childhood obesity

(Canadian Paediatric Society). Reasoning: Direct Impact Children's advertising exposes today's youth to unhealthy habits.

Children from ages two to seventeen see, on average, about twelve to twenty-one food product commercials daily (McManus). As stated before, it is not uncommon to see fast food chain advertisements. Marketers use appeal to convince children to buy from their restaurant frequently. This contributes to future health problems.

In a 2017 commercial for McDonald's, the fast food franchise uses characters from the children's animated film, *The Croods*. In the ad, the characters can be seen purchasing a "Happy Meal" designed for children. Marketers use these popular characters as a tactic to draw the attention of children and convince them to buy their products. Several McDonald's locations also include a built-in playground for the enjoyment of children. These playgrounds are plastered with images of the McDonald's logos and/or their characters, influencing the child to want to stay at the restaurant longer and consume more of their products (TVC Best Compilation).

Due to children's advertisements, children are more exposed to violence. The National Television Violence Study indicates violence as being as glamorized in children's programming as it is in non-children's programming (Wilson, Barbar). In August of 2017, a video game series, *Destiny*, released a commercial for their new game *Destiny 2*. In the video, you can expect to see several weapons and acts of violence (destinygame). The game is rated "Teen" which could mean as young as thirteen years old. Why would the creators display such negative images to a young audience? Simply

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marketing appeal. The overuse of weapons is a creative strategy to make a video game seem as exciting as possible, prompting children to buy it. Children's advertising can influence kids to be obsessive over material possessions.

In other words, it can influence children to be materialistic. Advertisements tend to encourage impulse buying. What exactly is that? Impulse buying is "the buying of retail merchandise prompted by a whim on seeing the product displayed" (Collins English Dictionary). Consumers, in this case children, do not attempt to evaluate their purchases and this can conflict with their better judgement. Impulse buying, although common, can reach a point that is unhealthy. They can eventually lose control of this problem (Mendenhall).

Children who experience this circumstance can carry this behavior into their adolescents and adulthood years. Reasoning: Indirect Impact Not all commercials are directed towards children, but that does not mean children cannot be persuaded by them. Kids in middle school, from ages about eleven to fourteen, see an average of about two to four alcohol advertisements daily (Wallace).

It seems as though they cannot be escaped! These advertisements can be found in between football games, on billboards, the radio, etc. The choices are professedly endless. In the past few years, the Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs issued a study. In their study, they were able to conclude that underage drinkers who had seen the most alcohol commercials also drank at least two-hundred alcoholic beverages. The more they saw these commercials, the more alcohol they consumed (Wallace). Among the youth

in the United States, the most frequently used staple is alcohol (Underage Drinking). Although it may not be an alcohol marketer's intentions to influence underage drinking, that is exactly what they do. Next to alcohol advertisement, tobacco advertisements have a large impact on youth.

Not only do they influence children to smoke, but they also make it tougher for kids already smoking to quit. Noticing the increasing power of tobacco, a tobacco settlement agreement was created in 1999 (The Tobacco Industry's Influences on the Use of Tobacco Among Youth). Components of this agreement stated the banning of "youth targeting" in their advertisements and advocacy, constructing a national fund and a public fund, altering "corporate culture" (i. e compensation leadership, organizers, and policies/standards), financial supplies, implementation of rules, and attorney compensation (Wilson, Joy). Unfortunately, despite having laws set in place like the tobacco settlement agreement and several others, children still continued to be encouraged by tobacco commercials and other forms of advertisement. In entertainment, proper representation is important. It inspires and encourages the youth to follow their dreams.

It also confirms them of their ability to be able to succeed in those dreams. In today's day in age, it is difficult to not compare ourselves to every picture of "perfection". Advertisements seen by children do not help with this cause. An Indiana University Study reported that white males in advertisements tend to live better lifestyles with more power. In contrast, black males are generally represented as offenders. The university also reported that females- both black and white- are represented sexually (Study finds TV can decrease self-esteem in children, except white boys). During <https://assignbuster.com/introduction-advertisements-the-issue-is-are-these-commercials/>

their average seven hours of television time, young females representation in film is inferior to men.

Despite women making up about half of the world's population, they are shown less in Kids Media (Geena Davis Institute). Tying into representation issues are self-esteem issues. Advertisements often promote the standards society puts on idealism.

Children, being influenced by them, obtain insecurities if they do not fit these standards. The issue of the exposition of children's products did not just recently appear. For decades, there have been a series of complaints and laws passed to regulate marketing strategies. In the 1960s, Action for Children's Television (ACT) was founded. This group dedicated their time to improving the quality of advertisements directed towards children.

ACT presented the courts with many cases connecting to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and its children's advertising regulations (O'Barr). Eventually, FCC passed an act. Under the Federal Trade Commission Act, ads cannot be misleading or unjust towards children it's directed at (O'Barr). In the 1970s, the FCC considered prohibiting all advertisements to young children.

Instead, they made a decision to limited the amount of ad time and put a restriction on specific ads (Report of the APA Task Force on Advertising and Children). In 1990, the Children's Television Act (CTA) was created. Its purpose was to increase the amount of educational and informational programs accessible to children (Children's Educational Television). Under the CTA is core programming. Core Programming is a policy stating between <https://assignbuster.com/introduction-advertisements-the-issue-is-are-these-commercials/>

the hours of seven o'clock in the morning and ten o'clock at night, educational and informational programming is required for a minimum of thirty minutes. This system is intended for the needs of children sixteen years old and under (Montgomery). One year later, in 1991, the FCC established a law to execute the CTA.

Conclusion: Children's advertisements and marketing is a very powerful field. They have Children's advertisements and marketing is a very powerful field. They have the ability to shape a child's behavior, possibly for the rest of their lives. All forms of advertisement have the effectiveness to benefit society. Although, that can only be successful if done properly. Marketers do not seem to care about the overall influence of children though.

Not unless that influence involves them earning more money. Advertisers are so determined to reach, maybe even manipulate, a group of vulnerable individuals. Today, money spent on marketing to kids is over twice as much as it was in 1992 and in 1993, when the amount was about one hundred million dollars (O'Bar). If they could take a minute to not focus on greed, they would see the damage being done to children by their advertisements. Children are developing unhealthy eating habits, being exposed to violence, participating in underage drinking and tobacco smoking, decreasing in self-esteem and much more.