



Snack facts.

Food Advertising to Children and Teens Score

2015



Evaluating snack food nutrition and marketing to youth



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Frequency of snacking on high-calorie foods by youth has increased over the past 40 years, contributing to poor diet and excess calories. Extensive marketing of unhealthy snack foods aimed at children and teens likely contributes to this problem.

Snack food ads make up more than 40% of all food and beverage TV ads viewed by children and teens and primarily promote candy, sweet snacks (including cookies, snack bars, and fruit snacks), and savory snacks (including chips and crackers). Although companies have begun to develop and market some healthier snack foods, independent research is needed to determine whether companies have begun to advertise these healthier snacks to young people.

Snack FACTS presents a comprehensive analysis of snack food marketing in the United States that:

- Examines the current status of the nutritional quality of snack foods marketed to children and teens on TV, the internet, and in schools;
- Documents the amount of snack food advertising in all media by brand, company, and category in 2014, including comparisons from five years earlier; and
- Measures young people's exposure to snack food advertising on TV and the internet.

Scope and methods

We defined snack foods as any portable food that is customarily consumed on its own outside of main meals and requires minimal preparation. We evaluated the nutrition and marketing of 90 snack food brands that spent at least \$1 million in all types of measured media in 2014. They were offered by 43 different companies in seven snack food categories: yogurt, sweet snacks (e.g., cookies, snack bars, fruit snacks), savory snacks (e.g., chips, crackers), nuts, fruit, cheese, and multiple-category products. We excluded chocolate and other candy and cereal products as they have been evaluated previously.

Nutritional analyses

We analyzed the nutritional quality of all products from brands that spent more than \$200,000 on TV advertising in 2014, totaling 604 individual snack products. Nutrition data were collected May through July 2015.

Three sets of nutrition standards that have been used to determine appropriate snacks for youth were applied:

- *USDA Smart Snacks* standards were developed to identify foods and beverages that can be sold in schools outside of the school meal programs (otherwise known as "competitive foods"). They set limits on calories, sodium, total fat, saturated fat, trans fat, and total sugar per serving.

- *The Nutrition Profiling Index (NPI)* is a scoring system (1-100) based on the nutrition-profiling model used by the U.K. Office of Communications to identify nutritious foods that can be advertised to children. Only foods with a score of 64 or more are permitted to be advertised to children under age 16 on TV in the UK.

- *Interagency Working Group (IWG)* nutrition standards were developed by federal agencies in the United States as proposed voluntary standards for foods advertised to children. They set limits on saturated fat, added sugar, and sodium, and require that foods contain ingredients that make a meaningful contribution to a healthy diet (i.e., fruit, vegetable, whole grain, skim or 1% milk, extra lean meat, fish, nuts or seeds).

In 2006, the Council of Better Business Bureaus introduced the Children's Food & Beverage Advertising Initiative (CFBAI), a voluntary industry self-regulatory program. Participating companies pledge to advertise only "healthy dietary choices" in "child-directed" media, and the CFBAI regularly publishes lists of "foods that participants have indicated may be the subject of child-directed advertising."ⁱ We examined the nutritional quality of CFBAI-approved products according to the Smart Snacks, NPI, and IWG nutrition standards and compared them to other advertised products offered by the same companies and brands. Finally, we compared the nutritional quality of Smart Snacks offered for sale in schools to other advertised products offered by the same companies and brands.

Marketing analyses

Marketing data were analyzed at the category, company, and brand levels to identify the following:

- *Total advertising spending.* Nielsen syndicated data provided advertising spending by category, company, and brand in all measured media (including TV, magazines, Sunday supplements, and internet) to all age groups in 2010 and 2014.
- *Youth exposure to TV advertising.* Using Nielsen syndicated data, we calculated exposure to TV advertising by preschoolers (2-5 years), children (6-11 years), and teens (12-17 years) in 2010 and 2014. Exposure rates are compared across age groups and to adult exposure.ⁱⁱ
- *Digital media marketing.* We used comScore syndicated data to identify child and teen visitors to snack food

i. All products on the list of CFBAI-approved products meet the CFBAI's uniform category-specific nutrition standards, but not all products that meet these standards are included on companies' lists of CFBAI-approved products that may be advertised to children.

11. Our analyses examined children's exposure to all snack food advertising on TV, whereas CFBAI companies pledges only address advertising in child-directed media, which include primarily children's TV programming.

websites and snack food advertising viewed on websites popular with children and teens in 2014.

- *Targeted marketing to black and Hispanic youth.* We used syndicated data from Nielsen and comScore to identify cases of disproportionate exposure to advertising on TV (2010 and 2014) and the internet (2014) for black and Hispanic youth.

Results

These analyses identified wide variation in the nutritional quality and marketing of snack foods by company, brand, and category, as well as significant changes in snack food advertising from 2010 to 2014.

Snack food nutrition

Advertised snacks ranged from brands with healthy products that met all nutrition standards to brands comprised solely of very unhealthy products.

- The yogurt category offered the most products ($n=230$), and the majority met all three nutrition standards. Nearly all (95%) of the yogurts contained added sugar, and 33% also contained non-nutritive sweeteners.
- Savory ($n=160$) and sweet ($n=157$) snacks were the two next largest categories of products. Approximately one-quarter of sweet and savory snacks met Smart Snacks nutrition standards. However, the highest median NPI score for a sweet or savory snack brand was 58, which is below the healthy cut-off of 64; therefore, none of these brands could be advertised to children under age 16 on TV in the United Kingdom. Furthermore, none of the sweet snacks and just three savory snack products (two varieties of Triscuits and one Wheat Thins variety) met the proposed IWG nutrition standards.
- Products in the nut ($n=22$) and fruit ($n=12$) categories were more nutritious. All advertised fruit products met all three nutrition standards. The majority of advertised nuts had healthy NPI scores and met Smart Snack nutrition standards, but not IWG standards.

There were 93 CFBAI-approved products offered by 12 brands. CFBAI participating companies specifically identified these products as products that may be included in child-directed advertising.

- On a positive note, products offered by eight CFBAI-approved brands had median NPI scores at or above the healthy cut-off of 64, including Activia, Danimals, Light & Fit, and Oikos yogurts from Dannon, and Yoplait Minion Made, Trix, and GoGurt yogurts from General Mills.
- However, median NPI scores for all other CFBAI-approved brands ranged from a low of 36 (Betty Crocker Fruit Snacks/Roll-Ups) to 51 (Honey Maid Teddy Grahams), and many of these brands did not offer any advertised products that

met Smart Snacks standards (including Betty Crocker Fruit Snacks, Honey Maid Grahamfuls, and Pepperidge Farm Goldfish/Flavor Blasted).

- Notably, there were no CFBAI-approved products in the fruit or nut categories.
- Median NPI scores for CFBAI-approved brands were virtually identical to scores for other advertised products in the same categories. Therefore, the products companies selected as appropriate to advertise to children were no more nutritious than products advertised to older audiences.

We evaluated 270 *Smart Snacks* products that were offered for sale in schools by nine of the companies in our analyses.

- Smart Snacks yogurt products were nutritionally similar to companies' advertised yogurt products (both sets of products tended to meet most nutrition standards), while Smart Snacks products in the sweet and savory snack categories often had significantly higher median NPI scores than sweet and savory snacks that the same companies and brands advertised on TV.
- Further examination of the Smart Snacks versions of some sweet and savory snack brands (e.g., Doritos, Cheetos, Cheez-It, PopTarts) revealed that companies had reformulated some products and/or offered them in smaller-sized package to meet the Smart Snacks nutrition standards. However, packaging for these products looked similar to advertised versions of the brands. In some cases, Smart Snacks versions were not available in stores outside of schools (i.e., look-alike or copycat products).

Advertising spending

In 2014, \$1.28 billion was spent to advertise all snack foods in all measured media to consumers of all ages. The 43 companies in our analysis were responsible for 99% of this snack food advertising.

- Almost 60% of advertising spending promoted sweet and savory snacks. Yogurt also accounted for a considerable 26% of advertising spending. However, just 11% of total advertising went to fruit and nut brands.
- Four companies dominated snack food advertising in 2014: General Mills, PepsiCo, Kellogg Company, and Mondelez Global were responsible for 62% of advertising spending totaling \$784 million.
- Approximately 40% of General Mills advertising promoted its yogurt brands (\$133 million), while the remaining advertising by the top-four companies promoted sweet and savory snacks. Two yogurt companies (The Dannon Company and Chobani) together contributed another 10% of total advertising spending.

Overall, 43% of snack food advertising spending promoted brands that met Smart Snacks standards and could be sold in schools, although this proportion varied widely by company.

- General Mills and Mondelez Global devoted approximately two-thirds of their snack food advertising budgets to brands that met these standards, compared with just 12% of advertising for Kellogg Company brands.
- Not one of PepsiCo's advertised brands met Smart Snacks standards.
- One-half of advertising spending for all other companies promoted brands that met Smart Snacks standards.

From 2010 to 2014, total snack food advertising spending increased by just 4%; however, changes in spending varied by company and category.

- General Mills and PepsiCo both increased their snack food spending (by 26% and 17%, respectively), while Kellogg and Dannon reduced their spending considerably (by 34% and 51%, respectively).
- There were notable increases in spending on yogurt, nuts, and fruit. Some smaller companies offering products in these healthier categories began advertising or substantially increased their advertising in 2014, including Chobani and FAGE Greek yogurt companies and The Wonderful Company, which ranked seventh in snack food advertising in 2014 for its fruit and nut brands.

TV advertising to children and teens

Of the 90 brands with advertising in any media in 2014, 72 brands offered by 29 different companies advertised on TV in 2014.

- On average, preschoolers (2-5 years) viewed 1.6 of these ads every day, and children (6-11 years) and teens (12-17 years) viewed 1.7 ads daily.
- From 2010 to 2014, exposure to snack food advertising increased across all youth age groups, ranging from an increase of 10% for children to 29% for teens. Notably, these increases were higher than the 4% increase in total snack food advertising spending.
- In 2014, nine out of ten ads viewed by children and teens on TV promoted sweet and savory snacks or yogurt, while fruit and nuts represented less than 6% of snack food ads viewed.
- Positively, from 2010 to 2014, youth exposure to nut advertising almost doubled and exposure to fruit advertising increased 3.5 to almost 6 times.
- However, youth exposure to yogurt advertising remained flat. Savory snack advertising to all youth also increased by 23% for children and by 60% for teens. Sweet snack advertising to children did not change, but advertising to teens increased by 17%.

A few companies and brands dominated snack food advertising to youth on TV in 2014.

- General Mills was responsible for more than one-half of the snack food ads that preschoolers and children saw on TV

in 2014. Two of the company's brands – Betty Crocker Fruit Snacks and Yoplait GoGurt – represented 29% of all snack food ads viewed by children. Of note, GoGurt advertising increased by 60% from 2010 to 2014.

- From 2010 to 2014, PepsiCo advertising to teens almost tripled, while advertising to children more than doubled. This growth was largely due to increased advertising for four brands: Doritos, Cheetos, Tostitos, and Lay's Potato Chips. PepsiCo brands were responsible for 20% of TV ads viewed by teens and 10% of ads viewed by preschoolers and children in 2014.
- Six of the 10 snack food brands advertised most to children on TV in 2014 were CFBAI-approved for advertising to children: Betty Crocker Fruit Snacks, Yoplait GoGurt, Pepperidge Farm Goldfish, Yoplait, Dannon Danimals, Yoplait, and Yoplait Trix.
- However, four additional brands from CFBAI companies also ranked among the top-10 in TV advertising to children: Nature Valley Snack Bar, Yoplait Greek yogurt, PopTarts, and Tostitos. Although companies did not advertise these products during children's programming – therefore companies did not directly violate their pledges – advertisements for these products appeared during other types of programming with large child audiences.
- Two healthy fruit and nut brands ranked in the top-20 for TV advertising to children: Wonderful Halos and Wonderful Nuts.
- PopTarts, Doritos, Tostitos, and Cheetos appeared to target teens directly, evidenced by high ratios of ads viewed by teens compared with adults. Notably, none of the top teen-targeted brands met Smart Snacks standards for foods that can be sold to children or teens in schools.
- Dole Fruit Bowls appeared to target its advertising to teens, although the brand ranked 42nd in number of ads viewed by this age group.

Digital media marketing

Snack food marketing on the internet was much less prevalent than advertising on TV. Just 30 snack food websites had enough youth visitors in 2014 to provide data for analysis.

- Campbell Soup Company's GoldfishFun.com had the most youth visitors in total, averaging 53,000 children and 10,500 teens each month.
- KelloggsFamilyRewards.com – the site visited most often by teens (30,000 per month) – promoted the company's rewards program for all its brands.
- Kellogg's SpecialK.com and PepsiCo's DoUsAFlavor.com (a site to vote for new flavors of Lay's Potato Chips) and FritoLay.com also ranked among the top-five sites visited by all youth (averaging 16,000 to 27,000 children and teens per month).

- The two child-targeted websites identified in this analysis (Danimals.com and GoldfishFun.com) both featured only CFBAI-approved products.
- Teens were more likely than adults to visit three of the snack food websites analyzed: PopTarts.com, Chobani.com, and DoUsAFlavor.com. PopTarts.com featured the most clearly youth-targeted content, such as promotions with musical artists Jessie J, Rixton, and Jhené Aiko, and a Rock the Flavor promotion to “vote for your new favorite flavor” and win “cool stuff.”

In 2014, 12.7 million display ads promoting snack foods were viewed monthly on third-party (i.e., not food company) websites visited relatively more often by youth under 18.

- Positively, 37% of snack food ads placed on youth websites promoted yogurt (approximately one-half of these ads were for Yoplait yogurt), compared to approximately 20% of ads each devoted to sweet and savory snacks.
- Mott's applesauce ranked second in advertising on youth websites.
- Children's websites with the most advertising included Nickelodeon sites, WeeWorld.com, and Roblox.com
- Advertising for several snack food brands that were not approved for advertising to children by CFBAI companies also appeared on children's websites in 2014, including Fiber One, Nature Valley, and Chex Mix from General Mills; Planters Nuts from Kraft Foods; Doritos and Lay's Potato Chips from PepsiCo; and Keebler from Kellogg Company.

An additional 163 million display ads were placed on Facebook and YouTube monthly in 2014, accounting for 35% of all snack food ads viewed online. Over 11 million youth ages 2 to 17 visited Facebook monthly and 15 million visited YouTube in 2014, although large numbers of adults also visited these sites.

- 80% of snack food ads on Facebook promoted PepsiCo's savory snacks, while three-quarters of ads on YouTube promoted various savory and sweet snack brands.
- Doritos and Lay's Potato Chips each accounted for more than 50 million ads viewed on Facebook per month, followed by Cheetos and Fiber One Snack Bars with more than 10 million ad views monthly.
- On YouTube, Lay's Potato Chips placed the most ads, followed by PopTarts; each averaged more than 2 million ads viewed per month. Pringles and Cheetos also averaged more than 1 million ads viewed per month on YouTube.
- In contrast to advertising on youth websites, ads for yogurt, fruit, and nuts rarely appeared on Facebook or YouTube.

Marketing to Hispanic youth

In 2014, five companies spent \$45 million to advertise 13 snack food brands on Spanish-language TV.

- Sweet and savory snack brands dominated, representing almost 90% of Spanish-language advertising. There were no ads for fruit brands on Spanish-language TV in 2014.
- Although total snack food advertising spending on Spanish-language TV declined by 6% from 2010 to 2014, advertising for sweet snacks increased by 30% and advertising for savory snacks increased 551%. Notably, Spanish-language advertising for yogurt declined by 93% from \$29 million (the most advertised category in 2010) to approximately \$2 million in 2014.
- General Mills was the number-one snack food advertiser on Spanish-language TV in both 2010 and 2014, devoting the majority of its 2014 advertising spending to Nature Valley and Fiber One Snack Bars. The company reduced Spanish-language advertising for Yoplait yogurt by 78% from 2010 to 2014 and discontinued Spanish-language advertising for Yoplait Light and Yoplait GoGurt.
- In 2014, Kellogg Company spent \$12.9 million to advertise its PopTarts, Sunshine Cheez-It, and Pringles brands to Hispanic consumers. The company's Spanish-language snack food advertising increased 253% from 2010 to 2014.
- Cheetos from PepsiCo was the most highly advertised brand on Spanish-language TV, spending \$8.7 million in 2014. Of note, the brand had not advertised on Spanish-language TV in 2010.
- Among Hispanic youth, preschoolers viewed the most snack food advertising on Spanish-language TV, averaging 87 ads viewed in 2014, compared with 53 and 59 ads viewed by Hispanic children and teens, respectively. From 2010 to 2014, savory snack ads to Hispanic youth increased approximately three-fold and sweet snack ads viewed by children increased by 28%.
- On the internet, Hispanic youth were, on average, 30% more likely to visit the most popular snack food company websites compared to all youth visitors. Hispanic youth were approximately twice as likely to visit Kashi.com and Danimals.com compared to all youth.

Marketing to black youth

In 2014, black children saw 64% more snack food ads on TV compared to white children, and black teens viewed more than twice as many versus white teens. On average, black children (6-11 years) viewed 2.7 ads per day and black teens viewed 3.1 ads per day.

- This disparity in exposure increased dramatically from 2010 to 2014. Black children and teens viewed 29% and 49% more snack food ads on TV, respectively, in 2014 than in 2010, while exposure for white children and teens increased by only 16% and 25%, respectively.
- Black teens saw 129% more ads for savory snacks compared to white teens, an increase from 2010 when black teens viewed 71% more of these ads.

- Of note, black teens also saw approximately 80% more TV ads for fruit and yogurt compared with white teens, while black children viewed approximately 50% more compared to white children.
- On the internet, black youth were, on average, almost 50% more likely to visit the most popular snack food websites compared to all youth visitors

We also identified several brands that appeared to target black youth as evidenced by high ratios of ads viewed by black versus white youth. High ratios indicate that companies purchased advertising during programming that black youth were more likely to watch.

- Doritos had the highest targeted ratio for black teens who viewed three times as many Doritos ads than white teens viewed.
- Additional brands with high targeted ratios included Tostitos and Lay's Potato Chips, Oreo Cookies, and PopTarts; black teens viewed 2.6 to 3 times as many ads for these brands compared to white teens.
- On the internet, black youth were 3.6 and 2.6 times as likely to visit Danimals.com and Motts.com, respectively, compared with all youth.

Conclusions

These comprehensive analyses identify several positive developments in the nutrition and marketing of snack foods to children and teens over the past five years.

Companies offered a variety of nutritious snack food products, especially yogurts, and they have dramatically increased advertising for healthier fruit and nut brands to children and teens.

- Snack food companies have taken positive steps to develop nutritionally improved sweet and savory snacks that meet Smart Snacks nutrition standards.
- More than one-third of TV ads viewed by preschoolers and children and one-quarter of ads viewed by teens promoted yogurt, and the majority of these products met all nutrition standards evaluated. Although yogurt advertising to children and teens did not increase from 2010 to 2014 overall, GoGurt advertising increased substantially from 2010 to 2014 and the brand ranked number two in TV advertising to children in 2014.
- There was a significant increase in advertising of healthier brands by smaller companies, including Chobani and FAGE Greek yogurts and The Wonderful Company (advertising nuts and clementines). Children's exposure to TV ads for fruit and nuts more than tripled during this period.
- Yoplait Greek and Dole Fruit Bowls appeared to target teens. On the internet, Mott's applesauce ranked second in ads viewed on youth websites.

- Many of the companies that advertised brands in the sweet and savory snack categories have developed significantly more nutritious products that are now offered for sale in schools as Smart Snacks.

Few companies advertised to children on the internet.

- We identified just two child-targeted snack food company websites, and only one of these sites attracted a large number of child visitors (GoldfishFun.com). Both sites were CFBAI-approved for advertising to children.
- Just 4% of display ads for snack foods appeared on youth-targeted websites.

However, these analyses also document troubling developments and considerable cause for continued concern.

The nutritional quality of advertised sweet and savory snack products remains poor.

- Nearly all sweet and savory snack brands advertised on TV failed to meet IWG nutrition standards or achieved a healthy NPI score, and three-quarters of advertised brands did not meet Smart Snacks nutrition standards.

Most CFBAI companies did not advertise healthier snacks to children.

- The nutritional quality of products offered by CFBAI-approved brands (i.e., brands that participating companies have designated as healthy dietary choices that may be included in child-directed advertising) was no better than the quality of products in the same categories that CFBAI companies did not choose to advertise to children directly.
- There were no CFBAI-approved brands in the healthier fruit or nut categories.
- With the exception of General Mills yogurts, the majority of CFBAI-approved advertised products did not meet Smart Snacks nutrition standards and could not be sold to children or teens in schools.
- Furthermore, four out of 10 brands advertised most to children on TV and seven brands advertised on children's websites were offered by CFBAI companies but were not brands they had approved for advertising to children.

Youths' relative exposure to TV advertising for more nutritious snack food categories and brands did not improve from 2010 to 2014.

- Yogurt TV advertising to children and teens did not increase. Fruit and nut ads increased exponentially, but remained a small proportion of total snack food ads viewed by youth.
- Savory and sweet ads continued to dominate snack food TV ads viewed by children and teens. There was a 32% increase in TV ads to children for savory snacks, and a 62% increase in savory snack ads viewed by teens, as well as a 17% increase in sweet snack ads to teens.

- PepsiCo advertising doubled for children and tripled for teens from 2010 to 2014. The company's Tostitos brand ranked in the top-10 brands advertised to children, and its Lay's Potato Chips, Cheetos, and Doritos brands also ranked in the top-10 brands advertised to teens on TV. Furthermore, the company's savory snack brands were responsible for 80% of snack food ads viewed on Facebook, and its websites promoting Frito Lay Snacks ranked third and fifth in snack food websites visited by teens.
- Among sweet snack brands, PopTarts from Kellogg Company targeted teens with its advertising and almost doubled the number of TV ads viewed by children and teens from 2010 to 2014. PopTarts also ranked second in snack food ads viewed on YouTube. In addition, General Mills increased TV advertising to preschoolers for Betty Crocker Fruit Snacks by 23%, and the brand ranked number one in TV ads viewed by young children.

Companies may be moving from more traditional forms of internet advertising (i.e., company-sponsored websites and advertising on third-party internet sites) toward newer forms of digital marketing.

- Snack food companies placed 163 million internet ads monthly on Facebook and YouTube, social media sites popular with older children and teens. As social media sites enlist teens to market unhealthy products virally to their friends, this form of marketing raises additional concerns among health experts.
- The majority of youth exposure to social media now occurs on mobile devices; however, data are not available to measure youth exposure to advertising on mobile websites or apps.

Disparities in unhealthy snack food advertising to black and Hispanic youth have increased.

- From 2010 to 2014, the nutritional quality of advertising targeted to Hispanic youth on Spanish-language TV worsened. Advertising for yogurt declined by 93%, while sweet snack advertising increased by 30% and savory snack ads went up 551%. Just five companies advertised 13 brands on Spanish-language TV in 2014, led by Cheetos, Nature Valley Snack Bar, PopTarts, Sunshine Cheez-It, and Pringles. No fruit or nut brands advertised on Spanish-language TV.
- Disproportionate exposure to unhealthy snack food ads by black youth compared to white youth also worsened from 2010 to 2014. In 2014, black children saw 64% more snack food ads than white children saw, and black teens saw more than twice as many ads compared with white teens. This disparity in exposure was higher for savory snacks than for other snack food categories. Highly targeted brands included Doritos, Oreos, Tostitos, Lay's Potato Chips, and PopTarts. In addition, black youth were 50% more likely to visit snack food websites.

The introduction of nutritionally improved Smart Snacks for sale in schools is a positive first step, but companies could do more to encourage young people to consume healthier snack choices.

- Differences in the nutritional quality of Smart Snacks versus TV advertised varieties of the same brands may lead to consumer confusion and potential misperceptions about the nutritional quality of advertised snacks.
- Furthermore, many brands offered nutritionally improved Smart Snacks products for sale in schools that were not available outside of schools (i.e., look-alike or "copycat" products). Similar packaging for these products to the advertised versions also increases the potential for consumer confusion.
- Smart Snacks nutrition standards represent minimum requirements for snack foods sold in schools. Although Smart Snacks in the sweet and savory snack categories were of better nutritional quality than advertised snacks offered by the same brands, the majority did not meet other nutrition standards for foods that children should be encouraged to consume.

Recommendations

The findings in Snack FACTS indicate three primary areas of improvement to help reduce the harm associated with marketing of unhealthy snack foods aimed at children and teens.

Improve CFBAI self-regulatory pledges to protect children from continued aggressive marketing of unhealthy snack foods.

- CFBAI companies should implement Smart Snacks nutrition standards for products advertised to children. Foods that cannot be sold to children in schools should not be advertised to them in the media.
- Loopholes in the CFBAI definitions of child-directed advertising should be closed to reduce children's exposure to advertising for unhealthy snack foods. As recommended by a panel of experts commissioned by Healthy Eating Research, companies should define children as youth up to at least 14 years old (up from the current age of 11); expand the definition of child-directed media to include all venues where children are the intended audience; incorporate qualitative measures to identify advertising with significant appeal to children; and ensure that brands marketed to children include only products that meet nutrition standards.
- Companies should implement meaningful measures to protect children under age 6 from all advertising, as promised.

Stop marketing practices that disproportionately target unhealthy snack foods to young people of color.

- As black and Hispanic children are exposed to more food advertising than white non-Hispanic children, suggested improvements to CFBAI pledges will provide even greater benefits for children of color.
- Snack food brands should stop targeting advertising for high-calorie, nutritionally poor foods to all young people, especially advertising aimed at youth of color.
- Industry commitments to increase sales and marketing of healthier products should also address advertising in black- and Hispanic-targeted media, where healthier snacks are now significantly underrepresented.
- Media companies should also set nutrition standards for advertising to young people, particularly those with large audiences of Hispanic and/or black youth. Media companies could also provide lower rates for advertising that promotes nutritious foods.

Further improve the nutritional quality of Smart Snacks sold to children and teens in schools.

- Schools should encourage companies to continue to develop and offer Smart Snacks for sale to children and teens in schools that exceed minimum nutrition requirements.
- Companies should not concentrate their in-school offerings on less unhealthy versions of heavily advertised brands of unhealthy sweet and savory snacks, including cookies, chips, and crackers. In particular, look-alike versions of unhealthy brands that are not available outside of schools should not be sold to children in schools.
- Alternatively, companies could agree to sell and advertise only the healthier versions of their snack food brands outside of schools, if they also offer them for sale to students in schools.

Companies have recognized the business opportunity in marketing healthy snacks to young people. Now, they must also recognize that aggressive marketing of unhealthy snack foods to children and teens exacerbates the crisis of poor diet and related diseases among young people. Increasing profits at the cost of children's health is not an acceptable trade-off.