

Overview of Television Food Advertising to Children

Championing Public Health Nutrition Conference

Brian Cook, PhD
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How is Children's Advertising Regulated?

- Primarily regulated by industry itself
 - Advertising Standards Canada
 - Broadcast Code for Advertising to Children
- Overarching federal and provincial regulations also apply
 - Food and Drugs Act (Health Canada)
 - Competition Act (Industry Canada)
 - Ontario Consumer Protection Act
 - CRTC also has role

Industry Self Regulation

- Avoidance of direct harm, marketers must not exploit children's credulity, lack of experience or sense of loyalty
- No more than 4 minutes of TV ads per half hour
- "...any commercial message scheduled for viewing during the school-day morning hours should be directed to the family, parent or an adult, rather than to children"



Industry Self Regulation

Gaps

- Aims to prevent direct harm and promote trust in ads rather than specifically address public health concerns
- Does not address cognitive limitations of young children
- Does not address overall exposure, only individual ads
- Focused on traditional ads, not Internet and others
- Regulatory process lacks transparency

Canadian Children's Food and Beverage Advertising Initiative

Recent industry voluntary changes



- 8 companies will not direct ads to children under 12
- 8 companies will direct 100% of children's ads to "healthier" dietary choices

Canadian Children's Food and Beverage Advertising Initiative

Gaps

- Products defined as "healthier dietary choices" for children:



- Narrow definition of children's programming
 - > 30-50%+ of audience must be <12
 - > Quebec law uses 15%+

Canadian Children's Food and Beverage Advertising Initiative

Gaps

- Restrictions on licensed characters in ads does not apply to advertiser-generated characters



- Ban on school food ads excludes fundraising initiatives, displays, public service messaging and educational programs.



TV Food Ads to Children Global Project

- 12 country TV ad research project, coordinated by Cancer Care Australia
- Top children's channels recorded (Jan 2008) in Alberta, Ontario and Quebec
- 4 days of TV programs coded, 6am-10pm
- Ads coded for:
 - Product
 - Food type (healthy vs unhealthy)
 - Promotional characters
 - Premium offers



Significance

- Last children's TV ad analysis in Canada – 1991
- Industry argues children's TV ad expenditure very small in Canada
- Access to official TV ad data very expensive for NGOs to do analysis



Teletoon and YTV

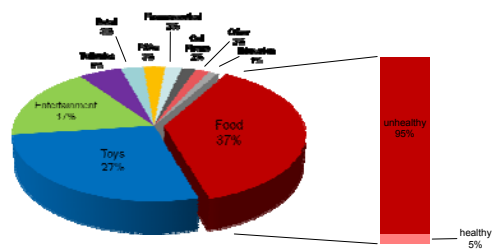


- Top ranked Canadian children's specialty TV networks
- Teletoon reaches 2.6 million child viewers per week (age 2-11)
- "YTV consistently dominates the top 20 ranked kid shows with 15 of the 20 top ranked shows for kids 2-11 and 6-11."
 - www.corusmedia.com/ytv



Preliminary Results

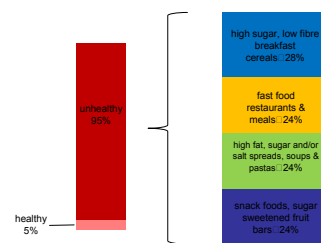
Television Ads - Teletoon & YTV Networks Children's Programs in Children's Peak Viewing Times



Sample: 41 hours of programming – January 2008

Preliminary Results

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Preliminary Results

Television Ads - Teletoon & YTV Networks
Children's Programs in Children's Peak Viewing Times

Ratio of Unhealthy Food Ads to Healthy Living PSA



179 : 2

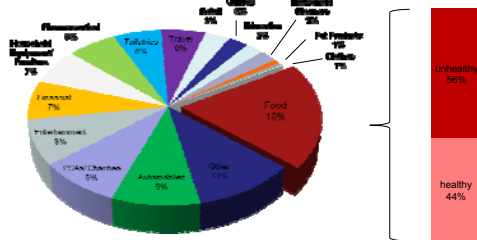
Preliminary Results

Presence of Advertising – Weekday Mornings

	Teletoon	YTV
6:00am	✓	✓
6:30am	✗	✓
7:00am	✗	✗
7:30am	✗	✗
8:00am	✓	✗
8:30am	✓	✗
9:00am	✓	✗
9:30am	✗	✗
10:00am	✗	✗
10:30am	✗	✗
11:00am	✗	✗
11:30am	✗	✗

Preliminary Results

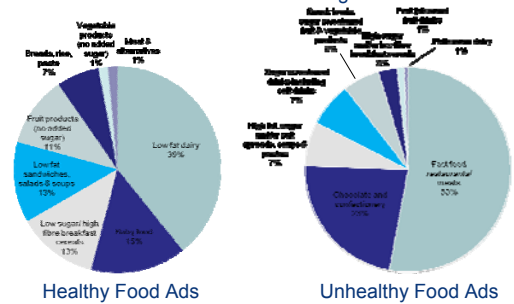
Television Ads - CTV (Ontario)
NON-Children's Programs



Sample: January 17-20, 2008

Preliminary Results

Television Ads - CTV (Ontario)
NON-Children's Programs



Sample: January 17-20, 2008

Summary

- Children's ad self-regulatory system has significant gaps
- Recent industry initiatives ineffective

Preliminary Study Findings

- TV food ads to children dominated by products that undermine parents' and public health professionals' efforts to promote healthy diets and physical activity
- TV food ads in non-children's programming feature much higher percentage of healthy foods

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