

Marketing to Children –Issues & Remedies

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Introduction

It is hard to believe that a child end up its life while trying to imitate a character shown in the advertisement..... But unfortunately this is the fact!

A child wakes up in his Disney character pajamas, rolls out of his Barney sheets, his toothbrush, toothpaste and perhaps even his soap covered in cute licensed characters. Gathering up his Pokemon cards and strapping on his Rugrats backpack, he heads off to school. But the commercialism does not stop even in the schoolyard.

Marketers pay special attention to children, who are considered as the most vulnerable audiences because they enjoy advertisement to the maximum extent. Children initially take advertisement as entertainment and having soft heart; force their parents for product purchase. This is called as a 'Nag Factor'.

Industry spending on advertising to children has exploded in the past decade, increasing from a mere \$100 million in 1990 to more than \$2.5 billion in 2005. Parents today are willing to buy more for their kids because trends such as smaller family size, dual incomes and postponing children until later in life mean that families have more disposable income. As well, guilt can play a role in spending decisions as time-stressed parents substitute material goods for time spent with their kids. Children represent an important demographic to marketers because they have their own purchasing power, they influence their parents' buying decisions and they're the adult consumers of the future. Marketer tries to draw children's attention through various means like TV, Magazines, Stickers, etc. Young children, in particular, have difficulty in distinguishing between advertising and reality in ads, and ads can distort their view of the world. Additionally children are unable to evaluate advertising claims. Obviously attracted children by the marketing practices; get adversely affected most of the time.

Childhood overweight and physical inactivity have reached epidemic levels taking a terrible toll on health. Skyrocketing obesity rates are a symptom of current community norms shaped by a market driven economy that promotes overeating and sedentary behavior. Both children and adults are targets of intensive marketing campaigns promoting soda, fast foods, and high-calories snacks, along with passive leisure-time activities, including TV, movies, and video games. High-calories foods are more readily available in schools and communities than are healthy eating options, and physical education and walking, and other exercise opportunities are lacking in many neighborhoods.

This paper is divided in to different sections. Section one introduces us to the theme of the paper as a whole. Part two tries to focus on growing children market & marketing to children. Part three talks about, adverse effect of marketing on children. Role of parents, government, media, industries & schools to educate children explained at the end followed by the Conclusion.

Why Marketers target Children?

Children represent three different markets. In addition to the direct money that children spend and the money they influence, children also represent a third major market and perhaps the most significant and that is the future market. Advertisers recognise that brand loyalties and consumer habits formed when children are young and vulnerable will be carried through to adulthood. Retailers and manufacturers have two sources of new customers, those who they can persuade to change from their competitors and those who have not yet entered the market. Those who switch are less likely to be loyal than those who are nurtured from childhood.

No longer little children, and not yet teens, teen are starting to develop their sense of identity and are anxious to cultivate a sophisticated self-image. And marketers are discovering there's lots of

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money to be made by treating teen like teenagers. The marketing industry is forcing teen to grow up quickly.

Children under 12 year of age spend an estimated \$25 billion, and, through their parents, may influence another \$200 billion of spending per year (Mc Neal 1998, Strassburger, 2001). Adolescents spend an estimated \$ 140 billion a year on food and beverages.

Young children are easily exploited because they do not understand that commercials are designed to sell products and because they do not yet possess the cognitive ability to comprehend or evaluate advertising. Preteens, aged 8 to 10 years, possess the cognitive ability to process advertisements but do not necessarily do so (Strassburger , 2001). Not until early adolescence, at 11 to 12 years, do children think multidimensionally, with abstract, as well as concrete thought. Yet adolescents, like adults can be persuaded by advertising messages, which play in to the their vulnerabilities, including concerns related to appearance, self identity, peers, and sexuality.

List of some products targeted at children & youths

Beverages	Cold drinks	Mobile phones	Snacks
Bicycles	Cookies	Mosquito killer	Soaps
Bike	Cosmetics	Nail paints	Soda
Biscuits	Dolls	Noodles	Sports item
Body creams	Detergents	Note books (stationary)	Telecom services
Body spray	Fast food	Pen	Tobacco
Born vita/ Horlicks	Garments	Pencils	Tours
Cadbury	Goggles	Perfumes	Toys
Candy	Hair colour	Rain coats	Umbrella
Cartoon network	Huggies	Sanitary Napkins	Video games
Chocolates	Ice-cream	School bags	Watches
Cigarettes	Jeans	Shampoo	Water parks/fun parks
Coaching classes	Medicines	Shoes	Website

Some Interesting facts

In Australia, children under 18 have an average \$31.60 to spend each week and they influence more than 70 per cent of their parents' clothes and fast food purchases.

In the US there are over 57 million school age children and teenagers who spend about \$100 billion each year of their own and their family's money on sweets, food, drinks, video and electronic products, toys, games, movies, sports, clothes and shoes.

Forms of Marketing to Children

Marketing channels include television advertising, in-school marketing, product placements, kids clubs, the Internet, toys and products with brand logos, and youth-targeted promotions, such as cross-selling and tie-ins. Foods marketed to children are predominantly high in sugar and fat, and as such are inconsistent with national dietary recommendations.

Today's kids have more autonomy and decision-making power within the family than in previous generations, so it follows that kids are vocal about what they want their parents to buy. "Pester power" refers to children's ability to nag their parents into purchasing items they may not otherwise buy. Marketing to children is all about creating pester power, because advertisers know what a powerful force it can be. Nagging can be divided into two categories—"persistence" and "importance." Persistence nagging is not as effective as the more sophisticated "importance nagging." This latter method appeals to parents' desire to provide the best for their children, and plays on any guilt they may have about not having enough time for their kids.

Advertisers not only feature cartoon or other characters from children's television programmes to gain their endorsement for their products (known as host selling) but they sometimes even place those advertisements in the breaks of the television programmes about those characters, thus blurring the distinction between programming and advertising and taking advantage of the affection children feel for those characters. Television advertising makes up about 70% of the total amount spent on advertising to children in the US but total advertising expenditure makes up only about 15% of the total amount of money spent on marketing to children. In fact much marketing to children now consists of sales promotions such as direct coupons, free gifts and samples, contests and sweepstakes, and public relations such as using celebrities and licensed characters which visit shopping centers and schools. New technologies have also provided new opportunities such as the Internet and telephone services that enable "new, personalized promotions" aimed at children. Marketing in schools is also a rapidly growing arena.

Kids clubs, organised by retailers, producers and media outlets, have proliferated in recent times. They offer an opportunity to develop a more personal relationship with each child, get information about the children for marketing purposes that can be used for mailing lists and data bases, and to promote products to children of particular age groups and geographical locations.

Following are the forms of marketing to children-

A) Product sales

- Product sales Exclusive contracts to sell soft drinks on school grounds
- Contracts to sell food on school grounds
- Credit rebate Credit awarded for coupons collected by schools or children
- Internet sales from which a percentage is given to a school
- Fundraising through sales of candy (confectionery), cookies, etc.

B) Market research

- Surveys or polls Student questionnaires or taste tests
- Internet panels Use of the internet to poll students' responses

C) Direct advertising

- Advertising Billboards in school corridors
- Advertising on school buses
- Product displays in schools
- Corporate logos on school furniture and equipment
- Corporate logos on posters, book covers and assignment books
- Publications Ads in sports programmes, yearbooks, school newspapers
- Media Televised advertisements by Channel One or commercial stations
- Computer-delivered advertisements
- Samples Free snack food

These additional forms of marketing have supplemented rather than replaced advertising as the importance of the children's market has grown. Their aim however is the same as advertising, to create brand loyalties and customers amongst children. Also, those wanting to sell goods recognise that some older children become somewhat cynical of advertisements and therefore publicity in children's newspapers and magazines as well as other marketing strategies are alternative ways of reaching these children.

Contemporary Issues In Marketing To Children

Advertising is the most influencing tool in the hands of Marketer. Marketers are using AIDAS Model to target & generate more customers. Advertising first catch the attention of the children , then create interest in the mind of children about the product seen through the advertisement, then develop a desire to have that product, then children acquire the product by buying it or forcing their parents to buy it & then get satisfied after using the product.

A	:-	Attention
I	:-	Interest
D	:-	Desire
A	:-	Acquisition
S	:-	Satisfaction

Effect of Advertising

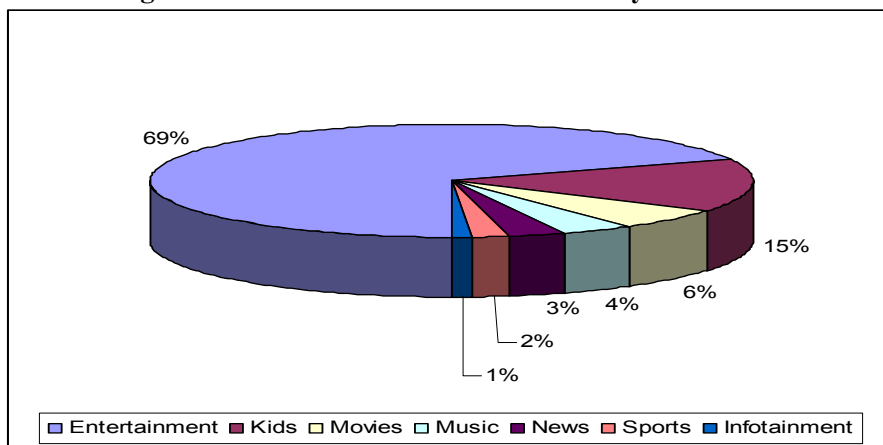
- Advertising has both immediate and cumulative effects. While immediate effects are relatively easy to demonstrate, long term exposure is the more likely agent that increases consumption as a consequence of marketing to youth.
- Advertising not only sells specific brands in specific product categories, it also creates general view points, values, and conceptions about how one should behave under a variety of conditions.
- Advertising and promotion efforts operate in the context of numerous interrelated factors that effect behavior on their own and enhance the behaviors promoted through advertising.

A) Television Advertising & Television viewing

Now a day it becomes very easy for the company to create the awareness about the product among children through Television Advertising.

- Children view between 20,000 and 40,000 commercial each year (strassburger, 2001).
- The incidents of obesity is highest among children who watch 4 or more hours of television a day and lowest among children watching an hour a less a day (crespo. 2001)
- Pre schoolers with TVs’ in their rooms are more likely to have weight problems then those without TVs (Dennison, 2002)
- 60% of overweight in children age 10 to 15 may be due to excessive television viewing (Gortmaker, 1996)
- Among teen agers, the incidence of obesity increase by 2% for every additional hour of television watched (Dietz, 1985)
- For many children, reducing television viewing reduces weight (Robinson, 1999)
- Food is the product advertised more than half of all ads targeting children (gamble, 999, kotz, 1994, coon, 2002, taras, 1995).
- Children view an average of one food at every 5 mins of TV viewing time (kotz, 1994)
- The heaviest food advertising is targeted to young children. (zollo, 1999)

Maximum advertising on entertainment channels followed by Kids channels



Source: TV AdEx 2005

B) Use of Internet

Advertisers and marketers have begun to target the rapidly growing number of children using the internet with variety of new interactive techniques that can seamlessly integrate advertising and

website content (Montgomery, 1996, 2001). Almost all the major companies that advertise and market to children have created their own websites, design as ‘branded environment’ for children (Montgomery, 2000, 2001).

Among kids the most popular online activities include:

- Playing and downloading music
- Sending and receiving email messages
- Surfing for fun
- Playing and downloading games

For example KFC

1. www.kfckorea.com
2. www.kfc.co.uk
3. www.kfc.com
4. www.kfc.co.th
5. www.kfc.com.sg
6. www.kfc-panama.com
7. www.kfccostarica.com
8. www.kfc.co.uk/family/healthyeating.html (2003)
9. www.kfc.co.uk
10. www.kfc.com
11. www.kfc.com.my
12. www.kfc.com.sg
13. www.kfc.co.jp
14. www.kfc.pl

New technology and software can collect data about the viewing habits and specific interest of children without the knowledge or consent of either the children or their parents. For e.g., interactive websites ask children about their interest, habits, and preferences through surveys or quizzes embedded in the games or activities featured on the sites. Marketers can use their information to tailor their marketing messages and to encourage impulse buying of products featured in programming and advertising. Web-based ‘advergams’ are becoming increasingly popular, such as nickelodeon ‘jimmy neutron gotta blast’ and life savers ‘candy stand’.

Interactive television which allows TV viewers to link directly to a website from a television program, allows advertiser to target individual viewers with personalized ads, increasing the likelihood of impulse purchasing (center for digital democracy, 2001). Eventually broadcasters hope to integrate television programming content, marketing and data collection.

Advertisers will be able to target children whenever they are watching (whether or not the programs is considered a children’s’ program) and to transmit advertisements for products that are design to appeal to children or more specifically , children of certain gender , age, household income or with certain interest.

A new arena for advertising is the internet. It is estimated that about four million children are using the internet world-wide and this figure is bound to increase dramatically over the next few years. Children as young as four are being targeted by advertisers on the internet and often the interaction with the children is unmediated by parents or teachers. These advertisers elicit personal information from the children by getting them to fill out surveys before they can play and offering prizes such as T-shirts for filling in "lengthy profiles that ask for purchasing behavior, preferences and information on other family members."

C) Cross promotions

Cross promotions among media companies, food sellers, and toy companies advance the corporate goal, as one marketing expert put it, “to establish a situation where kids are exposed to their brand in as many different places as possible throughout the course of the day or the week, or almost anywhere they turn in the course of their daily rituals”.

D) Buzz or street marketing

The challenge for marketers is to cut through the intense advertising clutter in young people's lives. Many companies are using "buzz marketing"—a new twist on the tried-and-true "word of mouth" method. The idea is to find the coolest kids in a community and have them use or wear your product in order to create a buzz around it. Buzz, or "street marketing," as it's also called, can help a company to successfully connect with the savvy and elusive teen market by using trendsetters to give their products "cool" status.

Buzz marketing is particularly well-suited to the Internet, where young "Net promoters" use newsgroups, chat rooms and blogs to spread the word about music, clothes and other products among unsuspecting users.

E) Toys and product with brand logos

Food companies increasingly market branded toys and products to pre schoolers and young children to promote brand awareness and preferences. The food industry have partnered with toy manufacturers to create toys that advertise food.

F) Entertainment

These new marketing concept is based on food as entertainment. According to marketing literature, the fact that the food tastes good is no longer sufficient it has to be fun as well. In fact, today's food commercial targeting children rarely talk about taste. Instead, they link the product to a desired emotional state (e.g. Mc Donald's new campaign slogan, 'I'm lovin' It!').

Today, many marketers use specific images that are meaningful to this audience: celebrities such as sportsman, entertainers, rap singers and athletes; models in fashionable dress; models using specific cultural associations expressed in language and mannerisms; youth representing peer approval; and popular music unique to a specific group of children of color. Other marketing strategies lure young consumers with routine "low" and special discounted prices for over-size amounts of foods and beverages, such as McDonald's Meal Deals and 7-11's Big Gulp oversized beverages.

Many beverages and fast-food marketers also engage in "community marketing", in an effort to build relationships within the communities where they do business by giving something back to the community. Mc Donald's, for example, has worked with a Better chance Foundation to offer college preparatory school scholarships to black students in underprivileged areas. It has also developed the Black History Makers of the future program, which highlights 30 African-american children whom McDonald's feels will be among the leaders of tomorrow in the company's national TV ads. In another example, Kraft/General Foods supports expanded school and summer meal programs in inner cities.

It is these types of target marketing that allow McDonald's, for examples, to equate its high-fat burgers and fries with love, caring and family happiness, or allow Mountain Dew or 7-UP to equate sodas with adolescent values of independences and identity. Targeted marketing not only links cultural values and norms with brand name products, it also shapes and changes norms and values. Targeted marketing ultimately influences behavior by equating unhealthy foods and beverages with freedom, independences, belonging, love, and caring.

G) Youth-targeted Promotions

Promotions are a commonly used marketing method for reaching children and adolescents and include cross-selling, tie-ins, premiums, and sweepstakes prizes. Cross-selling and tie-ins combine promotional efforts to sell a product. In the US, the food industry has forged promotional links with Hollywood and Network studios, toy companies, and sports leagues. Burger King has formed a linkage with Nickelodeon, and McDonald's with the Fox Kids Network. Burger King has sold chicken nuggets shaped like Teletubbies. Disney has launched cross-selling campaigns and tie-ins worth millions of dollars to promote its films and characters. In 1996, Disney signed a ten-year global marketing agreement with McDonald's. In 2001, Coca-Cola and Disney partnered to build Disney character-branded children's beverages. Kellogg's also has an agreement with Disney to extend the Disney characters to cereals, Keebler cookies and

Eggo waffles. McDonald's has formed partnerships with the National Basketball Association. Pizza Hut, Taco Bell and Wendy's have linked with the National Collegiate Athletic Association.

H) Promotions & Premiums

Premiums and sweepstakes prizes have increased recently and are often used to appeal to children's and adolescent's tastes and desires. Premiums provide something free with a purchase, whereas sweepstakes and contests promise opportunities to win free products. Fast food restaurants typically use premiums in children's meals, giving away simple toys. Sweetened cereals also commonly give premiums in the form of toys, cards or games. Premiums can increase short-term sales since children may desire the item over the food, but they also can help elevate the image of that brand in children's minds.

I) Product placement in Films & TV Programs

Product placement in movies, on TV, and increasingly in video games, has become a commonplace marketing technique. Product placement in feature films and television reaches millions of consumers, over and over again. With the advent of technologies such as TiVo, which allow consumers to edit out TV commercials, product placement is taking on an even greater importance. TV producers are looking for new ways to integrate advertising and content. Basing an entire show around a product is one technique; and giving viewers the capability of immediately purchasing products featured on the program is another. In the near future, Interactive TV will allow users to order a pair of pants that your favourite TV star is wearing, merely by clicking on them.

For Example-

Movie	Product/Brand
Krish	Bournvita

J) Use of celebrity Endorsement

Children easily get influenced by the presence of their favorite personality in the advertisement. Children have their own role models and they try to mimic the advertisement as well as the action of their role model. These role models of children may be Film actor or actress, Sportsman, Athenian, VJ, etc

For Examples-

Indian chocolate market is almost totally depended on purchases of kids. In recent times, the chocolate majors, Cadburys and Nestle took major initiatives of endorsing the brand through celebrities to bring in grown-ups into this market.

Advertiser	Brands	Celebrity
Cadburys India Ltd.	Cadburys Bytes	Harbhajan Singh
	Cadburys Celebrations	Amitabh Bachchan
	Cadburys Dairy Milk Chocolate	Amitabh Bachchan
	Cadburys	Prity Zinta
Nestle India Ltd.	Nestle Munch	Rani Mukherjee
	Nestle Munch Coconut	Rani Mukherjee

K) Sponsorship

In sponsorship, the food companies provide funds and other resources to an event or activity in return for access to the exploitable commercial potential associated with that event. Sponsorship has the benefits of reaching globally at less cost than conventional advertising when the event sponsored is broadcast worldwide. Food companies sponsor wide range of activities like sporting events, television programs and musical events. The main advantage to the marketer under this strategy is that being a sponsor, he may have influence on the program content and cause program dilution where much publicity for his company and products would be demanded and created

among the audience. Some of the regulations under sponsorship include banning sponsorship of children's program, not encouraging purchase or rental of the products or services of the sponsor, etc.

L) Sales promotion:

Under the sales promotion technique, the marketer creates an incentive scheme to make the consumer buy a product or service at the point-of-sale. Door-to-door selling, ballyhoo, prizes, hawking, price discounts all come under sales promotion. With regard to sales promotion, there are very general regulations like sales promotion must be fair and sometimes are very specific like not allowing any sweepstakes etc.

Marketers Strategies attracting Children (Selective Examples)

1) KFC Fast-food restaurants create loyal customers through children's clubs and events.

- **In Thailand**, coordinates a singing contest, to gain children's support and local media coverage.
- **In Singapore**, KFC runs zoo visits & birthday parties. Individual children can be rewarded by their photos appearing on the national KFC website.
- **In Panama**, the Chicky Club is a central feature of a national campaign to encourage children to view KFC as a fun place to eat. Fast-food is especially appealing to children with limited pocket money, and increasing freedom to buy their own snacks. Low-cost offers are a regular feature of marketing campaigns.
- **In Malaysia**, KFC also sponsors the popular children's Cartoon TV Hour, explaining, 'We intend to be part of Malaysia's growing up years in entertainment.'

2) McDonald's techniques used to target children:

- Advertise during children's TV and cinema
- Sponsor children's TV
- Link up with popular children's films (Disney)
- Offer free movie tickets
- Link up with celebrities
- Offer collectable toys with children's meals
- Run birthday parties
- Include games and offers on websites
- Run email promotions
- Offer fast food as a 'reward' to children for achievement in school
- Pay literacy assistants to work with children in schools
- Sponsor sporting and pop music events
- Sponsor children's football clubs
- Make the food available as widely as possible
- Adapt to local cultures

Effect on Children

Growing Children view an estimated 10 000 acts of violence each year. Each year, teenagers view nearly 15 000 sexual references, innuendoes, and jokes. Data like these are alarming, but are the media actually responsible for episodes of child aggression, teen homicides, and increased rates of teenage drug use and sexual activity. Or, as the entertainment industry maintains, do the media merely mirror an increasingly violent, drug-oriented, and sexualized society.

Children watching athletes in television commercials thought that the athletes paid to be in the advertisements to promote themselves rather than the products. They believed children in advertisements were real rather than paid actors and they often confused advertisements with news items. Generally they did not understand the commercial intent and manipulation behind advertisements.

"Young children, in particular, have difficulty in distinguishing between advertising and reality in ads, and ads can distort their view of the world". Additionally children are unable to evaluate advertising claims. For marketers, kids represent a lucrative demographic with enormous am

Following are the various adverse effects of marketing to children

a) Impact

Media exert a significant displacement effect-2 to 3 hours per day spent watching television or playing video games means less physical activity, reading, and interaction with friends-but such data do not speak to cause-and-effect concerns. Likewise, content analyses can only demonstrate what the average child or adolescent will view. Even so, such analyses are disturbing when they reveal what the average child or teenager is exposed to annually.

b) Violence

Children view an estimated 10 000 acts of violence each year. Most recently, the National Television Violence Study examined nearly 10 000 hours of television programming throughout 3 years and found that 61% contains violence, with children's programming being the most violent. In addition, 26% of violent interactions involved the use of guns.

c) Sex

Each year, teenagers view nearly 15 000 sexual references, innuendoes, and jokes, of which <170 will deal with abstinence, birth control, sexually transmitted diseases, or pregnancy. The so-called family hour of prime time television (8 to 9 PM) contains more than 8 sexual incidents per hour. Nearly one-third of family hour shows contain sexual references, and the incidence of vulgar language is increasing dramatically as well. The Internet offers unparalleled access to hard-core pornography with just a few keystrokes.

d) Alcohol / Drugs

A recent content analysis found that alcohol, tobacco, or illicit drugs are present in 70% of prime time network dramatic programs, 38 out of 40 top-grossing movies, and half of all music videos. Several studies document that smoking is making its unbeatable stand in Hollywood & bollywood movies. Children & youths view approximately 20 000 commercials each year, of which nearly 2000 are for beer and wine. Alcohol and tobacco advertisers are becoming an increasing commercial presence on the Internet .Data like these are alarming, but are the media actually responsible for episodes of child aggression, teen homicides, and increased rates of teenage drug use and sexual activity.

Worldwide Concern

In India, food advertisements feature in early evening children's viewing times, and expressed concern about food sponsorship of sport events and education materials in schools, especially for fast food, confectionery and soft drinks.

In Japan, children were also targeted through TV and sporting events, and identified advertising as one of the top negative influences on children's diets.

In Argentina, food advertising on TV and unhealthy foods available at school as key negative influences.

In Bangladesh, use of free toys and cartoon characters to sell food to children.

In Belarus, full range of marketing techniques, from TV advertising to free toys and sports sponsorship, persuade Belarusian children to eat unhealthily.

In South America, advertising, free toys, cartoon characters and poor food and nutrition education in schools all contribute to unhealthy diets

Remedies to Protect Children

A) The marriage of psychology and marketing

To effectively market to children, advertisers need to know what makes kids tick. With the help of well-paid researchers and psychologists, advertisers now have access to in-depth knowledge

about children's developmental, emotional and social needs at different ages. Using research that analyzes children's behaviour, fantasy lives, art work, even their dreams, companies are able to craft sophisticated marketing strategies to reach young people.

B) Role of Schools

School-based media education program in the context of protecting children and adolescents against crucial public health problems such as early sexual intercourse, interpersonal violence, and drug involvement, however, such programs take on a new urgency. Schools can adopt policies to refuse to accept sponsorships from companies and to disallow food beverage marketing on campuses. They can mandate and implement adequate physical education and nutrition education programs.

C) Role of Parents

Parents are in a unique position to feel the effects of marketing on their children. They should partner with researchers to help them determine how children respond to food and beverage marketing.

They should also let their elected representatives know how marketing impacts their ability to provide a healthy diet for their families. In addition, parents can be involved both in the day-to-day monitoring of what their children purchase and eat, and in preparing healthy meals at home. Parents of young children have an important role to play in protecting their kids from invasive marketing, and in educating them about advertising.

Here are some tips on talking to kids about advertising.

1) Distinguishing advertising from reality

Until the age of six or seven, children have difficulty distinguishing advertising from reality and may not understand that ads are there to sell something. In fact, children watching TV often find the commercials more engaging than the programs! Talking to children about advertising from an early age encourages them to become active - not passive - consumers of commercial messages.

2) Explain how advertising works.

Talk about how the job of marketers is to play on human insecurities by creating ads that imply their products will improve our lives and bring us happiness. Have kids make a list of the good things in their lives (the things they value) and then make a list of the things they wish they could buy. Have them compare the "real life" list with the "wish" list. Do they think the things on the wish list will bring them happiness? If so, why?

3) Point out the tricks of the trade.

Explain that advertisers use many methods to get us to buy their products. Some common "tricks of the trade" include pulling on our heartstrings by drawing us into a story and making us feel good; using misleading words, such as "the taste of real . . .," "studies have shown" and "for a limited time only"; making exaggerated claims about a product; and using cartoon characters or celebrities to sell products or brand names.

4) Explain how marketers target young people.

Look for examples of how marketers try to build brand loyalty in young children. Talk about cross-marketing - show how the release of a new kids' movie is usually preceded by a huge marketing campaign involving tie-in toys, fast food, clothing and books. Explain how marketers target image-conscious pre-teens and teens with messages about being "cool" and attractive.

5) De-construct food advertising.

Most food advertising aimed at kids is for fast food, candy and pre-sweetened cereals. Point out misleading language in food commercials, such as a description of a sugary cereal that is "part of a nutritious breakfast" or "natural fruit roll-ups" that don't contain any fruit. Explain how food is prepared by special artists to look perfect in ads. Talk about how fast food restaurants use tie-ins with popular movies and TV shows in order to attract kids.

6) Talk about the value of money.

One of the most important lessons we can teach our children is how to be smart about money. Our consumer culture promotes spending over saving, so we have to counter that message on a regular basis by discussing purchasing decisions and money-management skills with kids.

7) Discuss how to be a wise and responsible consumer.

Show kids how to comparison shop, read reviews and investigate warranties. Talk about the effect of mass consumerism on the environment. Encourage them to think about ways they can cut down on buying non-essential consumer products.

8) Co view television with their children.

Parents should ensure that the kid is accompanied by some elder person in the house. This can help them to keep a close watch & control over the wrong messages getting explored to their kids. Not only this but also it will help in spotting the problem at the root and clearing all the doubts and quarries of their children on the spot.

D) Media Advocacy

Both parents and health professionals need to begin engaging vigorously in media advocacy— "the strategic use of mass media for advancing a social or public policy initiative.

E) As a Government

Government must ensure the healthy growing environment for the children. Government should impose several regulations and restrictions on industries, media owners and advertisers to maintain bare minimum ethical standards.

Comparisons of controls on advertising to children reveal a patchwork of different rules in different countries:

- **The Belgium** Flemish region does not permit advertising five minutes before and after programmes for children under 12.
- **Denmark** allows no advertising breaks during programmes and in 2000 implemented a voluntary ban on advertising to children (overturned in 2002).
- **Norway** is seeking a ban on advertisements before, during or after children's programmes.
- With some narrow exceptions for certain types of magazines, the **Canadian** province of Quebec has for the past two decades prohibited all advertising directed at children under the age of 13.
- **Sweden** does not permit advertising aimed at children under 12, does not allow programmes to be interrupted by advertising and does not permit advertising before or after children's programmes.
- **In Australia** there is a ban on all advertising during pre-school children's programmes.
- **In the Netherlands** there are limits on the volume of advertising during children's programmes.
- **In Finland**, McDonald's cannot promote toys in its advertisements.
- **In Denmark**, Finland and the Netherlands, characters or presenters from children's programmes cannot appear in advertisements.
- **In the US**, complaints can be made to the Federal Trade Commission, state regulators or self-regulatory bodies, but none are obliged to respond. Delays are common: for example, a routine consumer group complaint over deceptive advertising involving calcium claims for Kraft Cheese took seven years to resolve.

F) Legislation: Acts and regulations

The Marketing Practices Act

Section 8(1) of the Marketing Practices Act sets out that-

‘Marketing activities directed at children and young people must be framed with reference to their natural credulity, lack of experience and critical sense, as a result of which they are readily influenced and easy to impress’.

Section 8(1) is a benchmark reference which calls on business and trade to be careful when framing marketing activities directed to children and young people. The provision sharpens the consequences of infringing other rules of the Act which are likely to apply in connection with children and young people. These are section 1 on good marketing practice; section 3 on misleading statements and section 4 on identification of commercial communication. Violations of section 8(1), cf. section 1 are punishable by injunction, order or even penalty. The latter is conditioned upon the offence being a concurrent violation of e.g. sections 3 or 4, violations of which are punishable by fine.

Section 8(2) sets out that-

‘Marketing directed at children and young people must not directly incite them to violence, use of intoxicants (including alcohol) or other dangerous or inconsiderate behaviour, not make unwarrantable use of violence, fear or superstition in order to influence them’.

G) Audiences and stakeholders.

- The main audiences and stakeholders who must be engaged for programs to be effective in changing food marketing to children reflect the societal sectors most closely associated with food, marketing, and health:
- The food and beverage industry could take several actions to address its role in the childhood obesity epidemic. First, food and beverage marketers should take steps to avoid using promotional tactics that attracts children to unhealthy eating. The industry should research and adopt a code of ethics for marketing aimed at vulnerable populations, including children. Restaurants owners and food purveyors should label the nutritional contents of food and menus. They should also avoid price and large portion specials that encourage overeating.
- The entertainment industry should alert viewers when paid product placements appearing in television programs and movies. When unhealthy food products are placed in programming, television and movies producers could sponsor equal time for healthful products.
- Employers, for whom obese children will mature into a work force with diabetes and other limitations, should be encouraged to create work environments where employees have to access to healthy foods and physical activity opportunities in an effort to create healthier habits in the employees and their families.

H) Insures, who will have to pay the costs associated with obesity and diabetes, should be engaged in underwriting programs to change environments as well as societal attitudes and behaviors.

I) Youth and communities can monitor marketing and promotions of unhealthy foods and work with parents, community groups, and elected officials to determine the proper public response as well as engage in counter-marketing efforts, including protests against marketing practices contributing to their poor health.

J) Policymakers can sponsor legislation that protects vulnerable population from excessive or unfair advertising and promotions practices.

K) Health professionals can paper to document and elucidate the consequence of food and beverage marketing targeting children. They can engage in community education and act as powerful advocates for community health issues.

Other Federal, State and Local Policies can be applied:

- Taxing fast foods and using proceeds for education about healthy eating.
- Eliminating advertising of unhealthy foods in schools and within a certain distance from school.
- Establishing media literacy and nutrition curricula.
- Monitoring the media .
- Funding nutritional messages in television programming and video games.
- Start on the local city or country level and work up to state and federal-level change.

- Use after school & community-based organisations to direct intervention strategies.
- Tailor messages to particular audiences and cultures; in particular, work with children in order to communicate message that “capture the voice of the kids” and help them engage in public debate and civic decision-making.
- Consider strategies employing young people as advocates in peer-to-peer interventions.
- Appeal to teens’ interest in the entertainment industry by considering roles entertainers could have in an outreach, communication, and public relations plans.
- Bring attention to marketing practices aimed at undermining parental authority.
- Identify” best marketing practices “ and reward companies that comply.
- Use litigations to foster public awareness of the issue.
- Conduct campaigns to educate and inform the national conference legislature to increase their awareness of the childhood obesity epidemic and the role marketing plays in promoting unhealthy foods and beverages to children.
- Develop a media advocacy strategy to shame food industry executives into putting their money where their rhetoric is & stop contributing to childhood obesity epidemic.
- Limit access to unhealthy foods and beverages in schools.
- Legislate for junk and fast food taxes.
- Establish best practices guidelines for broadcast advertising to children.
- Establish digital marketing regulations that protect children.

Conclusion

Young children, in particular, have difficulty in distinguishing between advertising and reality in ads, and ads can distort their view of the world. Additionally children are unable to evaluate advertising claims. Children represent an important demographic to marketers because they have their own purchasing power, they influence their parents' buying decisions and they're the adult consumers of the future. Marketer tries to draw children’s attention through various means like TV, Magazines, Stickers, etc. Obviously attracted children by the marketing practices; get adversely affected most of the time.

A comprehensive approach is needed that involves voluntary actions on the part of industry, regulation policies on the part of government and advocacy strategies to bring a stronger voice and more attention to our imperative to arrest childhood obesity. Marketing activities should not directly nor indirectly incite nor condone violent behaviour, other dangerous or reckless behaviour or make improper use of violent effects, fear or superstition. Marketing should not encourage to acts of violence, victimising or the like; nor should it contain representations of murder, violence, abuse or other criminal actions.

To conclude, it is not only in the hands of food companies or Government or the interested groups at large to create a healthy society but a more patronage and sustaining is required from the consumers themselves to make the world a better place to lead a quality life.

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