

# Food Marketing to Youth: The Best and the Worst of 2012



# Worst: McDonald's and Coca-Cola Sponsor 2012 Summer Olympics



Coca-Cola and McDonald's sponsored the 2012 Summer Olympics and used a host of strategies to target children and teens, including interactive musical campaigns, advergames and themed products and contests.

# Worst: Children's App Games Promote Unhealthy Food



Food companies spread their messages and build brand loyalty among children by embedding their products in simple and enticing games for touch-screen phones and tablets. Children may spend hours viewing ads disguised as games.

# Worst: Coca-Cola Sponsors Soccer Camp for Texas Youth



Coca-Cola sponsored a soccer camp for Texas adolescents that promised to teach participants “the best way to stay healthy and active.” One 12-ounce can of Coca-Cola provides 87% of the added sugar that active 13- to 15-year-olds should have all day. The camp is also sponsored by McDonald’s.

# Worst: Pop Star Promotes Pepsi



A year after recording a dance video for the First Lady's 'Let's Move!' campaign, pop star Beyoncé signed a \$50 million deal with Pepsi. The contract includes regular advertising like commercials as well as a funding to support her chosen “creative” projects. The ads show a hyper-sexualized women of color pushing products that are known to contribute to obesity and related diseases.

# Worst: Kellogg's Promotes Sugary Cereal to Kids



Kellogg introduced Krave cereal, a product that appears to target “tweens” and which quickly amassed a large social media following. The company initially said that Krave, whose first ingredient is sugar, was not targeted to children, however, 6- to 11-year-olds saw more TV ads for Krave during the first quarter of 2012 than any other age group. In December 2012, the sugary cereal was added to the industry’s “better-for-you” list of approved products that can be advertised to children under 12.



# Worst: Domino's Smart Slice Program Delivers to Schools



Domino's Smart Slice program delivers "healthier" pizza that meets national school lunch nutrition standards to participating schools. Although Domino's uses this opportunity to advertise their pizza as healthier and good for kids, the Smart Slice pizza is not available for home delivery, nor do they have a nutritionally comparable option.

# Worst: Capri Sun Expands Marketing to Young Teens



Teens were the purported target of a marketing campaign for the newly-launched Capri Sun Big Pouch. The pouch is 11.5 ounces, 70% larger than the original and Capri Sun said the product is intended for 13- to 15-year-olds. The sugar in one pouch exceeds recommendations for inactive teens and provides 2/3 of the daily added sugar allowance for active 15-year-old males.



# Best: Green Giant Encourages a Veggie Pledge



Green Giant launched a marketing campaign that encouraged children and families to increase their fruit and vegetable consumption. The “One Giant Pledge” focused on eating at least one vegetable each day for a month, and was advertised through TV commercials, the brand’s social media accounts, and promotional activities.

# Best: Disney Restricts Junk Food Advertising to Kids



Disney became the first major media company to introduce standards for food advertising and programming targeting children. All foods marketed on Disney's mediums must align with nutrition standards. Ideally, other broadcasting companies will follow suit.

# Best: Birds Eye Spends Millions to Market Vegetables



Birds Eye joined the Partnership for a Healthier America and announced that from 2012-2014 it will spend a minimum of \$2 million per year on marketing campaigns that encourage increased vegetable consumption among children. As part of the campaign, Birdseye has partnered with tv show “iCarly.”

Only \$11.4 million was spent on marketing fruits and vegetables to youth in 2006, representing less than 1 percent of the \$2 billion spent on all food marketing to youth, according to the National Fruit & Vegetable Alliance and the Federal Trade Commission.

Food and beverage companies use traditional forms of marketing, such as television advertising and promotions on product packages, but companies are increasingly using more unique and invasive techniques.



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To learn more about food marketing to children visit: [www.yaleruddcenter.org/marketing](http://www.yaleruddcenter.org/marketing)

Marketing Food to Children and Adolescents: A Review of Industry Expenditures, Activities, and Self-Regulation. Federal Trade Commission. 2008 July: 1-120. <http://www.ftc.gov/os/2008/07/P064504foodmktngreport.pdf>

National Action Plan: To Promote Health Through Increased Fruit and Vegetable Consumption. National Fruit & Vegetable Alliance. 2010: 1-28. <http://www.nfva.org/pdfs/nfva/FINALNAP2010.pdf>