



Protecting children from unhealthy food marketing: Reducing unhealthy food marketing through sports

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Marketing...

- ... is any form of commercial communication or message that acts to advertise or otherwise promote a product, its related brand or a service, and is designed to increase, or has the effect of increasing, the recognition, appeal and/or consumption of particular products and services



FCTC: “tobacco sponsorship” means any form of contribution to any event, activity or individual with the aim, effect or likely effect of promoting a tobacco product or tobacco use either directly or indirectly”



Why protect children from marketing?

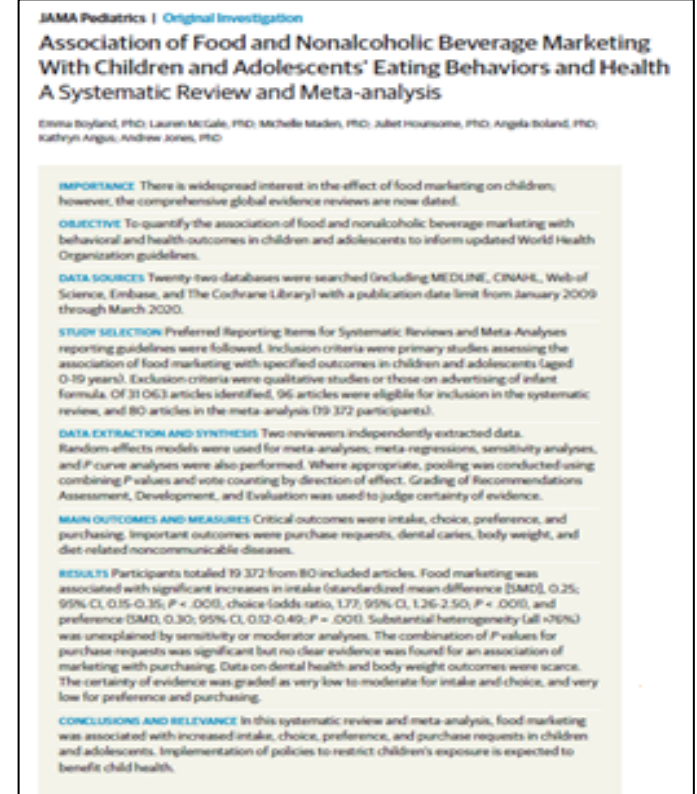
Exposure
(it's pervasive)

Power
(it's persuasive)



... the majority of food marketing is for healthier foods

... and it negatively impacts on
food preference, food choice
and food intake



Impact of sports sponsorship on children

- Impact of unhealthy food sponsorship vs. pro-health sponsorship models on young adults' food preferences (Dixon et al. 2019)
 - Sport sponsorship boosts brand awareness, brand image, appeal and attachment, impacting product preference
- Sponsorship of junior sports clubs and elite sporting teams (Kelly et al. 2011)
 - Majority of children agreed that food sponsors were 'cool', agreed that other children bought food products because these companies sponsored their sport, and agreed that they liked to return the favour to food sponsors by buying their products
 - children receive vouchers from food companies, increasing liking of the company
- Sponsorship of amateur and professional sport (Pettigrew et al. 2013):
 - High recall – ability to match sponsor to the relevant sport

Numerous calls to action to protect children

- Settings where children and adolescents gather (such as schools and **sports facilities or events**) and the screen-based offerings they watch or participate in, *should be free of marketing of unhealthy foods and sugar-sweetened beverages*
- Schools, child-care and **sports facilities** should support efforts to improve children's nutrition *by making the healthy choice the easy choice and not providing or selling unhealthy foods and beverages.*



Country action remains insufficient

Most existing measures:

- only cover younger children (though older children are also influenced by food marketing);
- have a narrow scope and cover a narrow range of media, settings and/or techniques (and e.g. don't cover sports sponsorship);
- focus on marketing that targets children, rather than marketing that children are exposed to (e.g. through sports); and
- rely on nutrient profiling schemes that are insufficiently strict

Sponsorship of large sports events: “triple win for many companies”



it enables promotion of brands to large, diverse audiences globally, including children, and increases brand awareness and preference for sponsor products

it improves the industry’s image and allows it to claim a contribution to the promotion of physical activity

it makes children more likely to consider the company’s products healthy *by association*.



FOOD MARKETING EXPOSURE AND POWER AND THEIR ASSOCIATIONS WITH FOOD-RELATED ATTITUDES, BELIEFS, AND BEHAVIOURS: A NARRATIVE REVIEW



The right to health, food, non-misleading information and privacy are all relevant rights in relation to policies to protect children from the harmful impact of food marketing.

IMPLEMENTING POLICIES TO RESTRICT FOOD MARKETING

A REVIEW OF CONTEXTUAL FACTORS



NEW guidance – to support effective regulatory responses

- WHO guideline on policies to protect children from the harmful impact of food marketing – recommendation on policy design elements
- Joint WHO/UNICEF publication: “Taking action to protect children from the harmful impact of food marketing: a child rights-based approach”



New WHO guideline & recommendations

- Good practice statement
 - Children of all ages should be protected from marketing of foods that are high in saturated fatty acids, trans-fatty acids, free sugars and/or salt.
- Recommendation
 - WHO suggests implementation of policies to restrict marketing of foods high in saturated fatty acids, trans-fatty acids, free sugars and/or salt to which children are exposed, and that such policies:
 - be mandatory;
 - protect children of all ages;
 - use a government-led nutrient profile model to classify foods to be restricted from marketing;
 - be sufficiently comprehensive to minimize the risk of migration of marketing to other media, to other spaces within the same medium or to other age groups; and
 - restrict the power of food marketing to persuade.



Civil society organizations and academia

- Continue to monitor marketing, including through sports
- Continue to generate evidence on the impact of marketing, including through sports
- Continue to advocate for increased protection of children from the harmful impact of unhealthy food marketing, including through sports



Thank you