

California Medical Association Health Food Marketing for Children

Author: Adam Schickedanz, MD

Resolution: 111-11

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WHEREAS, food and beverage advertising to children has a significant influence on food preferences, purchases and consumption, just as tobacco and alcohol advertising to children significantly increases the use of these harmful products; and

WHEREAS, current food and beverage marketing rarely encourages healthy food choices, and instead often promotes food high in fat, sugar, or salt that puts children's long-term health at risk by predisposing them to obesity, diabetes, hyperlipidemia, hypertension, and other food and nutrition related diseases; and

WHEREAS, research has shown that children are cognitively and psychologically defenseless against advertising, and the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) concluded that it was unfair and deceptive to advertise to young children; and

WHEREAS, the FTC recommends that all food products most heavily marketed to children ages 2-17 should meet basic nutrition standards, that marketed foods should meaningfully contribute to a healthful diet, and that marketed foods should minimize nutrients that in excess are known to be detrimental to long-term health (including saturated fat, trans-fat, excess sodium, and refined sugars); and

WHEREAS, the World Health Organization and representatives from its member states have responded to the international obesity epidemic by resolving to restrict unhealthy food and beverage advertising to children; therefore be it

RESOLVED: That CMA support efforts to regulate the advertising and marketing of unhealthy food and beverages to children; and be it further

RESOLVED: That CMA discourage the advertising and marketing of unhealthy food and beverages in public places frequently visited by children or adolescents, such as schools and be it further

RESOLVED: That CMA encourage media education programs to reduce the harmful health influences of food and beverage marketing to children and to promote the consumption of healthy foods; and be it further

RESOLVED: That this be referred for national action.