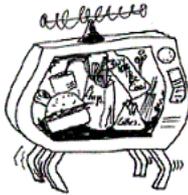


COALITION ON FOOD ADVERTISING TO CHILDREN



PO Box 408. Parkholme. SA 5043.
www.chdf.org.au/foodadstokids

Speaking out against unhealthy food advertising to children

Press Release

1st October 2004

Vote 1 for kids

Three out of four major political parties support restricting TV food advertising to children.

The Coalition on Food Advertising to Children (CFAC) is a national advocacy group made up of peak medical, health and consumer groups including the Australian Medical Association, the Public Health Association of Australia and the Australian Consumers Association. CFAC is calling for a ban on television food advertising during programs where children (aged 0-12years) make up a substantial proportion of the viewing audience.

CFAC recently polled the major political parties to find out their position on TV food advertising to children. The results could mean good news for parents – and kids.

The Greens, Democrats and Labor Party all recognise the influence of TV food advertising on children's nutrition and health. The Greens and Democrats agree that the current regulations governing TV food advertising directed at children are not adequate to protect kids from high concentrations of 'junk' food marketing. Both parties would work towards tightening the regulations. The Democrats also indicated that they would work towards restricting TV food advertising directed at children "as part of a comprehensive approach to addressing obesity".

Both the Labor and Liberal Parties failed to respond to our poll, but Mark Latham has already publicly voiced the Labor Party's view on this issue, stating that a Labor government would ban all food and drink advertisements during P, C and G programs clearly aimed at children.

The Prime Minister John Howard has also made his views clear, likening a ban on TV food advertising to a 'nanny state' and stating that children's diets are the responsibility of parents.

But surveys report that 86% of mothers want limits placed on advertising of fast foods and snacks to children because parents know how difficult it is to constantly say 'no' to demands fuelled by television advertising.

There is mounting evidence that TV food advertising that bombards kids with messages to consume junk foods contributes to childhood obesity. Australia holds the dubious 'honour' of having the highest number of TV food advertisements during children's programming in the world. And more than three quarters of food ads are for energy-dense, nutrient-poor foods.

CFAC wants a ban on TV food advertising directed at children. Children are unable to differentiate between advertising and information and the effects of TV food advertising can be harmful. With up to 30% of Australian children now overweight or obese, it is heartening to see most of Australia's potential leaders putting children's health interests before commercial interests.

For further information:

A copy of CFAC's report "Children's health or corporate wealth? The case for banning television food advertising to children" is available at www.chdf.org.au/foodadstokids

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