

# Stand Up for Kids



After 30 years of looking the other way, officials in Washington have finally proposed a voluntary “ban” to protect U.S. children from junk-food marketing. Quebec has banned all advertising to children under 13 since

1980. Now it’s time for Canada to extend the ban nationwide.

The last time the United States tried to protect kids from marketing madness was back in 1979. The U.S. Federal Trade Commission (FTC) proposed a ban on all TV ads directed to young children as well as warnings in ads for sugary foods aimed at youngsters aged 8 to 11. (The Centre for Science in the Public Interest, publisher of *Nutrition Action*, and another consumer group triggered the proposal by petitioning the FTC.)



It’s time to protect Canadian kids from all ads that target them.

Sadly, the food, toy, broadcasting, and advertising industries won that battle. They got the U.S. Congress to ban the FTC from protecting kids from unfair advertising.

In 1979 the Quebec National Assembly also stood up for kids when it voted unanimously to prohibit all ads targeting children under the age of 13. A big, litigious toy company sued, but in 1989, the Supreme Court of Canada upheld the law.

Meanwhile, outside the legislatures and courtrooms, an obesity time bomb exploded. The percentage of school-aged children who are obese tripled in Canada and the United

States, and officials began to question the wisdom of exposing unsophisticated children to sophisticated advertising for pizzas, hamburger-and-fries meals, sugary drinks, and the like.

The voluntary U.S. guidelines would limit unhealthy fats, sodium, and added sugars in foods advertised to children under 18. Advertised foods would also have to include some fruit, vegetables, extra-lean meat or poultry, or other healthful ingredients.

If the guidelines are finalized, Canadian kids who watch NBC, ABC, and other U.S. channels should see fewer ads for sugary drinks, candy, and other unhealthy foods. But Canada should do much more.

A November 2011 meeting of federal, provincial, and territorial health ministers is being touted as decision-time on childhood obesity. Why not protect kids from all ads that target them? Surely the 75 per cent of Canadian children who live outside Quebec deserve as

much protection as Quebec kids.

If you’re concerned about children’s health, send an e-mail to your Member of Parliament by visiting <http://petition.web.net/cspi/> or drop us a line at [nahalert@istar.ca](mailto:nahalert@istar.ca).

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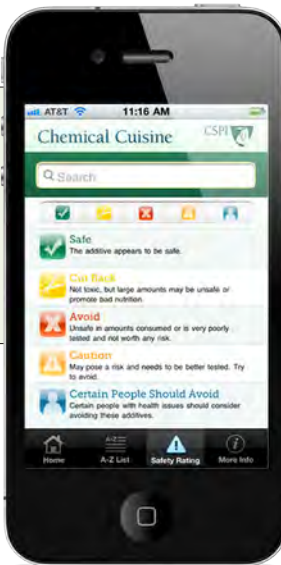
## Smartphones Get Smarter

The Centre for Science in the Public Interest has released its first app for iPhones and Android-based smartphones. “Chemical Cuisine” provides the latest information about all the common food additives, and rates their risks to the entire population or vulnerable groups. One reviewer, AndroidGuys, said, “give yourself a real wake-up call with Chemical Cuisine.” Download the app for just 99 cents from iTunes or the Android Market.

The contents of NAH are not intended to provide medical advice, which should be obtained from a qualified health professional. The Centre for Science in the Public Interest (CSPi) is the non-profit health-advocacy group that publishes *Nutrition Action Healthletter*. CSPi mounts educational programs and presses for changes in government and corporate policies.

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