

Food Marketing to Children:

State and Local Policy Options

Though food marketing by national companies on television, print, radio, and the Internet may be addressed best by federal-level policies, there are many state and local policy options to reduce junk-food marketing to children.

State and local policy changes could be accomplished through legislation, regulation, litigation, school wellness policies, media advocacy, contracts, voluntary agreements, zoning, and other approaches. Here are some policy options to address junk-food marketing in/near schools, in restaurants, and elsewhere in the community.

Marketing In/Near Schools

- Prohibit the *sale* of low-nutrition foods in and by schools.
- Prohibit *marketing* of low-nutrition foods and brands in and by schools (e.g., posters, signs, vending machine exteriors, curricula, event sponsorships, etc.).
- Negotiate specific school contract terms with vendors to limit junk-food marketing in schools.
- Prohibit fundraisers that involve the sale/promotion of low-nutrition foods and brands in/by schools.
- Provide incentives for sales of healthier foods in and near schools.
- Limit the *sale* of soft drinks, fast food, and other low-nutrition foods near schools, either at all times or before or after school (e.g., limit mobile food sales near schools such as hot trucks, ice cream trucks).
- Limit *marketing* of low-nutrition foods/brands near schools (e.g. on billboards, posters in stores, etc.).
- Institute closed campus policies (to reduce exposure to unhealthy foods and marketing near schools).

Restaurant Marketing

- Require chain restaurants to list nutrition information for foods and beverages on menus and menu boards.
- Require restaurants and other food-service establishments *on government property* to list nutrition information for foods and beverages on menus and menu boards (e.g., government buildings, parks, highway rest stops, airports, etc.).
- Require restaurants and other food-service establishments in hospitals to list nutrition information for foods and beverages on menus and menu boards.
- Encourage restaurants to use competitive pricing strategies to promote healthier menu items.
- Urge restaurants to make healthy options the default with kids' meals.
- Prohibit fast-food restaurants from giving away toys with unhealthy children's meals.
- Require restaurants to limit marketing of low-nutrition foods as a condition of license.
- Limit the number of fast-food outlets in certain locations, such as near schools, using zoning policies.

Marketing in the Community

- Levy state/local taxes on low-nutrition foods/beverages, such as soft drinks, and use funds to pay for public health, nutrition, and physical activity programs (e.g., social marketing, school meals, bike trails, etc.).
- Limit the sale of low-nutrition foods or provide incentives for healthy food offerings on government property (e.g., require 50% of vending machine slots to have healthy options, provide healthy options as default for children's meals, offer better field space if they have healthy concessions, etc.).
- Urge/require retail outlets (e.g., drug stores, supermarkets, electronics stores, gas stations, etc.) to remove candy and other low-nutrition foods from checkout area (i.e., move them out of the view or reach of children).
- Limit food sales in non-food retail outlets (e.g., through conditions of license).
- Prohibit the sale of low-nutrition foods through private binding contracts (or other means) with zoos, YMCAs, children's museums, boys and girls clubs, stadiums and other athletic venues, and other settings frequented by children.
- Use the courts to compel companies to stop marketing low-nutrition foods to children.
- Secure adequate funding for social marketing campaigns to promote and support healthy eating and physical activity.
- Prohibit eating or drinking on public transportation.
- Join national campaigns to pressure companies to change their marketing practices.